



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

August 6, 2017

SEND US SOME MEN

The first English settlement in America was at Jamestown. Barely a year old, the settlement found itself in serious trouble. A primary part of the problem was that the colony was made up of “gentlemen adventurers.” Captain John Smith, the leader of the settlement, understood the problem and sent an urgent message back to his sponsors declaring, “Send me some men.” Smith needed carpenters, blacksmiths, and masons. He explained that he had rather have a handful of those men, than a thousand of the ones that he presently had. The ship Good Speed shortly brought six such workmen to Jamestown. Within three weeks, they had cleared a plot and erected a furnace. Furthermore, they had set up a soap works and a sawmill. A little over a month after the workmen arrived, the colonists were inspired by their example and began working also.

Sadly, many congregations, like Jamestown colony, are in need of men. They have “gentlemen adventurers,” but not skilled men. They have watchers, but not workers. Like John Smith, we need to send out an urgent call for laborers (**Matthew 9:37-38**). We need men who will labor together with God (**I Corinthians 3:9**). We need elders, preachers, deacons, Bible school teachers, and soul winners. Like Ezekiel, we need men who will “*Make up the hedge and stand in the gap*” (**Ezekiel 22:30**). Like Jeremiah, we need “*men who execute judgment and seek the truth*” (**Jeremiah 5:1**). For sure, a handful of these men will be worth more than a thousand others.

Wade Webster

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Service Times:

Sunday

Bible Study 10 am
Worship Service 10:45 am
Worship Service 6 pm

Wednesday

Bible Study 7:30 pm

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WHEN CHANGE DOESN'T LAST

A Confederate soldier was captured and sent to a Maryland prison in 1865. While there he decided to write about his experience as a soldier in the Civil War. As he described “the vices of army life,” he revealed an old familiar side of human nature.

Gambling was a favorite pastime of many soldiers. Some were so addicted to it that they would bet half of their food rations in a card game. Any soldier who tried to live right was ridiculed, and a soldier seen reading his Bible was mocked. A funny thing happened, though, when battle began:

“When the shot and shell began to whiz by them, splintering rails and tearing off tree tops, with comrades falling around, they began to realize the great need of religion. One good battery with a good supply of grape and shell holding an elevated position could bring hard-hearted sinners to repentance. It did not require a dozen old sisters with their turkey wings begging them to repent of their sins. They were truly good men. But the great trouble was in keeping them so. If his life was spared the sacred resolution would not be long remembered...In less than a week the Bible reader would be a thing of the past, when gambling would go on as before and would not stop until the next signal for a fight was heard...”

How suddenly men change their attitude when the fear of death fills their souls! Later in 1942 during World War II Army Chaplain William Thomas Cummings said, “There are no atheists in foxholes.” When men walk through the valley of the shadow of death, pride gives way to fear and stubbornness turns to humility.

Sadly, that change can be an easy come, easy go experience. Many go right back to the same old selfish way of living after the storm ceases. In fact, when they have a relapse from their newfound religion, they are usually in a worse condition than before. They become more hardened in rebellion and less affected by the next sign of danger.

Pharaoh was notorious for this fickle behavior. When the plagues threatened to destroy his empire, he appeared to humble himself. “*But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart*” (**Exodus 7:15**). His seeming change was only for a while.

Strangely, many of the Israelites who left Egypt did the same thing. When God descended on Sinai with thunder, smoke, and lightning and caused the earth to shake so violently that they trembled, the Israelites seemed committed to serving God. After their feelings had subsided forty days later, they rebelled and worshipped a golden calf (**Exodus 32**).

When the tragedy of 9-11 occurred, church attendance in many places soared. People prayed more and talked about God openly. They said, “We will never forget.” But they did. As the horror of those images faded from their minds, they went right back to their comfortable and carefree life. Like Israel of old, their goodness was like early dew that soon vanished (**Hosea 6:4**).

Not all men in the Bible who were humbled by tragedy reverted to their carelessness after the danger had passed. Manasseh (**II Chronicles 33:11-16**), Nebuchadnezzar (**Daniel 4**), and the prodigal son (**Luke 15:11-24**) learned their lesson. Whether we are on a battlefield, an operating table, or a dangerous highway, we all decide what we will do with the trials of life that brings us to death's door.

Kerry Duke