



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

August 8, 2021

P.O. Box 416
129 S. Chamberlain Ave.
Rockwood, TN 37854
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Elders:

Kendall Bear
Dana Carter
Don Chandler

Deacons:

Larry Brackett
Aaron Evans
Larry Hill
Steve McCreary

Minister:

Dale Barger

Service Times:

Sunday

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

Wednesday

Bible Study 7 pm

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Rockwoodchurchofchrist.com

Empty Spaces

Empty space gets filled. Have you never noticed this phenomenon when you move into a larger house? You think to yourself “*oh, I’ll have so much room now!*” But no...as time goes on various things encroach upon that space. You thought you were going to have a home office? Joke’s on you when it becomes your wife’s craft storage room. If you have empty space you might want to figure out what you want to do with it fairly quickly, or someone else might make that decision for you.

Jesus once told a story of a man who finally got rid of an evil spirit. However, the departure of the spirit left an empty space. Then the spirit says, “*I will return to the house I left. When it arrives, it finds the house unoccupied, swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and takes with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first*” (**Matthew 12:43-45**). Empty space gets filled, and often it gets filled with junk—or worse. This man’s problem was that the house was “*unoccupied.*” But if someone else was already there he would have told the evil spirits to take a hike.

We all have to make decisions about what is going to fill the spaces in our lives. If we don’t make the decision the decision gets made for us. So, as for my house, may it be filled with the Lord! If you notice that you have a free half hour in the morning, decide what you’ll spend it on. Why not make that a devotional time to start the day off right? I think that would benefit you greatly, but you have to decide to use that space for that purpose. Otherwise something else, perhaps something much less wholesome, will come in to gobble that half hour up. Then your final condition is worse than if you never had that half-hour free to begin with.

If there is junk in your life clear it out. But don’t just leave the space empty. Fill it with what is good. May God fill us with His goodness so there is no room for evil in our lives. May we all decide that empty spaces belong to God.

Doug Wells
Camden Avenue church of Christ
Parkersburg, WV

Growing in Faith

Have you wondered why we have Bible Classes each Sunday and Wednesday evening? Or why preaching of the Word of God is so essential to our Sunday worship? Or why the Lord encourages us to read and study the Bible daily (**Psa. 1:2**)? It is because Bible study is a faith growing event. **Rom 10:17**, States, *“So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”*

If the *“hearing,”* that is getting the word of Christ into our heads and acting positively upon it, produces faith; shouldn't the Christian be more diligent with spending time with God and His word? Who reading this article can say they have enough faith? Isn't our faith being challenged each and every day? Are we not bombarded by sin and *“hearing”* things that do not produce faith?

Ephesians 6:16 reminds, *“In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one.”* Notice again how essential faith is, not only does God's word produce faith, but it helps us overcome our sin!

Seeing how necessary growing our faith is; why would we as a Christian want to neglect an opportunity to spend time reading and studying God's word? Why do we let the TV, ball games, or other self-interest prevent us from daily Bible study and the services of the church? Are these things more important than spending time with the Almighty? Can the TV help us get to Heaven? Can sports draw us closer to God and help us grow our faith? Can anything else whether it be jobs, family, hobbies, or other self-interest help us deepen our relationship with God, like the word of Christ?

How important is growing our faith to us? What are we spending more time with, things of this world or the things of God? What are we willing to do, sacrifice, or even give up to develop a stronger faith in Christ?

I wonder, how do we compare to William McPherson? A dynamite charge blew up in his face. Damage was severe. He lost his hands. Part of his face was left numb. Realizing how much the Bible meant to him, he set out to find a way he could read it. Without hands he tried to use his lips to read Braille, but numbness made that impossible. He discovered he could use his tongue to decipher the Moon Type system of dashes. This method left his tongue bleeding and very sore, but he kept at it. Gradually it became easier and he learned to read. In sixty-five years he was able to read the Bible through four times with his tongue!

The story of William McPherson makes it clear that we do what we want to do. The one who will not read, or study the Bible, and does not come to the services of the church has no advantage over the one who cannot read, or at least in the traditional way at Mr. McPherson illustrated. Think about it!

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