



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

December 10, 2017

P.O. Box 416
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Elders:

Dana Carter
Kenneth Carter
Don Chandler

Deacons:

Kendall Bear
Larry Brackett
Roger Carter
Steve McCreary

Minister:

Todd Houston

Secretary:

Susan Chandler

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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‘LONG WALK PART OF GIFT’

A missionary’s wife was once teaching some children in Africa about the value of giving. She quoted **Acts 20:35** where our Savior is quoted as saying “*it is more blessed to give than to receive.*” One little African boy soaked in every word and then decided to live out her teaching, but he had no money to purchase a gift for her. Then he had an idea.

A few days later the boy brought the teacher a seashell necklace. It glistened with iridescent beauty. The woman was taken aback. “Where ever did you find such beautiful shells?” the teacher asked. The youth told her that he walked to the coast of the country to a certain spot where these shells could be found.

The teacher knew that it would have taken the young man hours upon hours through difficult and dangerous terrain to walk to the sea. “It’s so beautiful,” she said, “but you shouldn’t have gone all the way to get this gift for me.” The boy smiled and simply said, “Long walk part of gift.”

Certainly we can use this touching story to remind ourselves of the “long walk” of Christ that was a part of God’s gift to man. Jesus was “*foreordained before the foundation of the world*” (**I Peter 1:20**) to come to the earth, walk upon it, live, die, and rise again for the sake of helpless mankind. His trip was difficult and dangerous, but it was all a part of God’s “*eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord*” (**Ephesians 3:11**).

Jesus did this willingly and lovingly. He endured hardship, ridicule, shame, and mistreatment – all for us (**Hebrews 2:17; 12:2-3**). If we were to ask Him, “Why all this trouble, why did You do it this way?” He would smile and say to us, “The long walk was part of the gift.”

Edd Sterchi

TRUE JOY WAS NEVER HIS

Buck Owens has always been my favorite country singer. Throughout his career he had 21 number one songs, and 15 of those were consecutive hits. For 17 years he starred on the television show “Hee Haw,” from 1969 till 1986. In 1996 he was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame. He was also an astute business man, owning several radio stations and a record producing company. When he died in 2006 his total assets were worth one hundred million dollars. Yet, toward the end of his life Mr. Owens reportedly said, “You know, I’ve got everything I’ve ever wanted and I’m still unhappy” (*Buck Owens: The Biography*, pg. 303).

How can a person be that wealthy and that unhappy? The reason is because material possessions are not what makes a person truly happy. The lesson learned is that an individual may be able to purchase any material possession available to mankind; or he may already own everything he could possibly ever want; and yet still be terribly unhappy in life. Such was tragically the case with Buck Owens.

Not until a person has obeyed the gospel of Christ and is living in harmony with God’s will on a daily basis will he or she ever have the true joy and contentment that satisfies the yearning of the soul. This happiness has nothing to do with wealth or material possessions. It has everything to do with knowing that one has submitted to the truth and thus has become a recipient of the forgiveness of one’s sins. Peter told those who came to believe the gospel, “*repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins*” (**Acts 2:38**). This is how one obeys the gospel to become a Christian and member of the Lord’s church. Once the Eunuch confessed his faith in Jesus as the Son of God he was led down into the water and immersed for the remission of his sins. After coming up from the waters of baptism “*he went on his way rejoicing*” (**Acts 8:39**). Notice it was after he had come up from the waters of baptism that he rejoiced, not before. It is no different today.

Don’t make the tragic mistake Buck Owens made. He died a miserable and pathetic man. True joy was never his. Allow him to teach us a valuable lesson pertaining to what true happiness is in life. This is what God wants us to have and freely offers it to everyone.

Stephen Wiggins