



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

December 10, 2023

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

Email:

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Rockwoodchurchofchrist.com

Please Do Not Be Discouraged

Many times our “*downs*” outweigh our “*ups*.” We may feel we are going uphill all the while being pulled back. We may be hurting because our loved ones are hurting due to health challenges, financial setbacks, or spiritual deprivation. We may spend our mornings, days, or late nights in tears because of the things life is throwing our way. I beg you not to be discouraged. God’s people can hold on to what is in the Bible! The Scriptures teach security of the soul, true inner peace, and blessed assurance.

“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind” (2 Timothy 1:7).

“For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day” (2 Timothy 1:12).

“Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water” (Hebrews 10:22).

“And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end” (Hebrews 6:11).

Our battles can toss us in many painful directions. God gave us a spirit of power because of Who we have placed our belief as we cling to Him with assurance and hope. Please do not be discouraged!

Allen Jones

South Green Street church of Christ
Glasgow, KY

Precious Wounds

Paul exhorted, *‘Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing’* (**1 Thessalonians 5:11**, ESV). We want to “*encourage one another*” as Christians, but what does that involve? Our minds immediately go to positive remarks and actions that impart courage, confidence and support. Consider another, less appreciated but valuable way of encouraging.

There is an old Sicilian Proverb that says, *“Only your real friends will tell you when your face is dirty.”* Those who love us encourage us. They encourage us when we do right, but they also love us enough to call it to our attention when we do wrong. We call it *“tough love.”* Solomon said, *“Faithful are the wounds of a friend”* (**Proverbs 27:6**). Interestingly, the word *“faithful”* (aman) means *“to build up or support”* (Strong).

You remember the story in **2 Samuel 12**. The Bible says, *“the Lord sent Nathan to David.”* David was blinded by his sin with Bathsheba. Nathan pointed a straight finger and said, *“You are the man!”* Confronted with his sin and sobered by Nathan’s rebuke, David repented. Does anyone question Nathan’s love for God or David? Confrontation takes great courage. I am sure David was thankful for what Nathan did. He was a friend!

No, this is not a license for anyone to become a self-appointed mote-hunter, always critiquing the lives of others. We do not need such judges, but we do need brothers and sisters—brothers and sisters who love us enough to help us when we go astray. We thank God that our parents loved us enough to correct us. The same love and appreciation is needed in the family of God.

We do well to learn from our past! We look back across the years and remember those who loved us enough to correct—our parents, teachers, coaches, friends and brethren. The correction was not easy to accept. We may have been tempted to reject their counsel, even to become bitter. It was a challenge to change, but we did change. The correction was hard at the moment, maybe unappreciated, but now we love those who cared enough to correct! *“Faithful are the wounds of a friend.”*

Colonel Harland Sanders said, *“One has to remember that every failure can be a stepping stone to something better.”* Someone else said, *“A bend in the road is not the end of the road...unless you fail to make the turn.”* We are thankful for the precious friends who inflict the precious wounds that enable us to make the turn!

Dwight Fuqua
Findlay church of Christ
Sparta, TN