



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

December 26, 2021

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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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The End of the Matter

Stephen Covey famously suggested that one of the habits of highly effective people is that they “*begin with the end in mind.*” I was thinking of that phrase recently while studying the book of Ecclesiastes at the very time that we have started a brand new year.

Seeing that this is December of 2021 and 2022 begins this week, it seems appropriate to begin 2022 with the “*end of the matter*” in mind.

“⁹Besides being wise, the Preacher also taught the people knowledge, weighing and studying and arranging many proverbs with great care. ¹⁰The Preacher sought to find words of delight, and uprightly he wrote words of truth. ¹¹The words of the wise are like goads, and like nails firmly fixed are the collected sayings; they are given by one Shepherd. ¹²My son, beware of anything beyond these. Of making many books there is a weariness of the flesh. ¹³The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. ¹⁴For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil” (Ecclesiastes 12:9-14).

Consider the power and value of the Word of God!

- It is given to us by the very Shepherd Himself (v.11).
- It is the truth (v.10).
- It is beautiful and delightful (v.10).
- It will not be changed—it is firmly fixed as by nails (v.11).
- It prompts and guides us to where we need and want to be—like an animal prod (v.11).

Being ready for judgment begins by knowing what is expected of us. Let us begin this year with the end of the matter in mind. Let us be devoted to the words of truth!

Bart Warren (adapted)
South Green Street church of Christ
Glasgow, KY

What Will You Do With The New?

Toward the end of the year, we begin to focus on the “*new*.” We enjoy giving and receiving “*new*” presents, and we look forward to the hope of a “*new*” year. A blank calendar page represents fresh opportunity, but what will we do with it?

Hezekiah was known as a man who received renewed opportunity from the Lord. A godly king, Hezekiah destroyed the idols in Judah (**2 Kings 18:4**) and trusted God (**2 Kings 18:5-6**).

When Assyria came knocking on the door threatening to destroy Jerusalem, Hezekiah prayed (**2 Kings 19:15-19**), and God spared Judah. When Hezekiah fell ill, and God told him that he would not survive, Hezekiah again went to the Lord in earnest prayer, and God extended his life by 15 years (**2 Kings 20:1-6**).

Two challenges in Hezekiah’s day were overcome by going to God in prayer. The nation now had renewed hope, and Hezekiah especially should have been filled with new enthusiasm for the future after God spared his life.

However, when a third challenge presents itself, Hezekiah seems to display resignation and selfishness. Isaiah reveals to him that Babylon would soon come and take away the wealth of Judah, as well as Hezekiah’s own descendants (**2 Kings 20:16-18**). Instead of meeting this challenge with more prayer, Hezekiah says, “*The word of the Lord which you have spoken is good!*” and “*Will there not be peace and truth at least in my days?*” (**2 Kings 20:19**). Hezekiah was given new opportunities, but he was content to live with his personal blessings, and gave no prayer for the future generations.

As Christians, we have been cleansed by the blood of Christ, and walk in newness of life. We’ve had our lives extended eternally! But what about the lost around us? What about future generations? Will we be content with our own salvation, and give no thought, prayer, or action for the salvation of others?

What will we do with the new?

Matt Clifton
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