



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

December 31, 2023

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Elders:

Kendall Bear
Dana Carter
Don Chandler

Deacons:

Larry Brackett
Aaron Evans
Larry Hill
Steve McCreary

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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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A Spiritually Productive New Year

The following is a biblical formula for having a spiritually productive New Year in 2023:

“H”old fast to the faith (1 Corinthians 16:13; cf. 2 Timothy 1:13; Titus 1:9)

“A”ssemble for worship (Hebrews 10:25; cf. Acts 2:42)

“P”ray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17; cf. Acts 12:5 KJV; Romans 1:9)

“P”urify our heart (James 4:8; cf. 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 3:2-3)

“Y”ield not to temptation (1 Corinthians 10:13)

“N”eglect not doing good (James 4:17; cf. Acts 10:38)

“E”xemplify Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1; Gal. 2:20)

“W”ork in the vineyard (John 15:1-8; cf. John 4:34-35; Acts 8:4-13; Acts 20:17-27; 1 Corinthians 15:58)

“Y”ield ourselves first to God (Matthew 6:33; cf. 2 Corinthians 8:1-5; 1 Timothy 1:15-16)

“E”xercise unto godliness (1 Timothy 4:7-8 KJV; Hebrews 5:14)

“A”nswer to others (1 Peter 3:15)

“R”edeem the time (Ephesians 5:15-16; Colossians 4:5)

Brethren, If we will put the above biblically tested formula into practice, we will experience a spiritually productive New Year, doing the Lord’s will! (**Matthew 7:21**).

Mike Riley

Looking Back, Pressing Forward

As a new year approaches, many of us are reflecting upon the past year, and looking toward the hope and promise of what lies ahead.

One passage we often turn to when thinking about hope for the future is **Phil. 3:13-14**. Paul talks about putting to rest things of the past, and pressing toward the future, ultimately the prize of heavenly reward!

Putting away the things of the past can be very appealing to us. Sometimes we carry large burdens of pain, guilt, or stress that we are eager to dismiss from our lives. But when Paul says, “*forgetting those things that are behind,*” what exactly is he encouraging us to forget?

The New Testament shows us that Paul did a lot of looking back. He looked back upon his achievements (**Phil. 3:3-6**), his failures (**1 Tim. 1:12-15**), his trials (**2 Cor. 11:22-33**), his gifts from God (**2 Cor. 12:1-6**), his infirmities (**2 Cor. 12:7-10**), and even upon the people who had harmed him (**2 Tim. 4:14**).

Why did he look back? It certainly wasn't to despair, or cause himself to be depressed (**Phil. 4:8**)! Instead, his looking back was always for two reasons. First, to remember the blessings that God had bestowed on him, and second, to draw upon his experiences to be better able to teach his fellowman. So, Paul doesn't mean to totally forget the past. Instead, it appears Paul is telling us not to rest on past achievements, but to press on in new service to the Lord!

So, as we enter into the new year, look upon the past year, find the blessings, and praise God! Also look upon the past year and find the disappointments. Consider how you might use these experiences to comfort or teach those in similar circumstances. Finally, look upon the coming year as an opportunity to serve God more fully!

Look back, but press forward into the service of our Almighty God!

Matt Clifton
Judsonia, AR