



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

January 12, 2014

P.O. Box 416
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Elders:

Dana Carter
Kenneth Carter
Don Chandler

Deacons:

Bobby Bear
Kendall Bear
Larry Brackett
Roger Carter
Steve McCreary

Minister:

Kirby Hinds

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

Monday

Ladies Class 10 am

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“PREACHING LIKE JOHN THE BAPTIST”

It is my humble opinion that John the Baptist would have a hard time getting a job today in the field of ministry. Even if you could get him into a suit and tie there is still that context of his to consider. What church today would allow a man to stand up and condemn the arrogance and wickedness of these our beloved United States? Who would allow a man to trace the fall from morality to infidelity? Would he say that we praise with our mouth and blaspheme with our heart?

Some of our lawmakers have recently met with robe-clad religious leaders of the day to figure out the best way to keep the priests from molesting every young child that comes into their presence. When we hear of such things we ask where has our knowledge of God taken us?

I submit to you we are where we are from lack of such knowledge. Where in God's Word do we learn to be tolerant of lies in the name of peace? Churches are not going to be willing to hear harsh language and rebuttal unless her members have humility before our Almighty God. We should be glad to hear of our error if in fact we have error. However, I fear the doctrine of the day calls only for belief in God. There is no call for us to bring forth fruit worthy of repentance (**Matthew 3:8**). Neither is there a call for repentance. Even members of the Lord's body have felt pressure to conform. We need John to tell us through inspiration that religion founded on man begins with a lie and then gets worse. The common cry is to accept all forms of doctrine in peace and let God sort it out later. Can we do this? No, because the price is too high.

Baptism is for the remission of sins (**Acts 2:38**) and is not an option. The sinner's prayer is not in the Scripture. Faith without works is dead (**James 2:17**). We do ourselves a great injustice by speaking half a prophecy. Once saved always saved is not Scriptural (**Hebrews 6:4-6**). We cannot depend on men of the world to tell us of heavenly things and false teaching has its strength in ignorance and indifference. If you do not read and study the Word of God, how can you hope to recognize it? Searching the Scriptures helps us know God.

John was a man not afraid of using inspired words like generation of vipers where it applied but how would that sit with us today. Some looked at John as the prophet of the coming Messiah, others as the lunatic at the river. Be sure to remember, as God's chosen vessel, those that did not accept John did not receive Christ.

Tim Turpin

FRIENDS

An English publication once offered a prize for the best definition of a friend. Some which were received were: “one who multiplies joy and divides grief,” another, “one who understands our silence.” But, the winning definition was “the one who comes in when the whole world has gone out.”

Friends are with us, period. Trials and hardships notwithstanding the friend endures with us. As this definition states, when the world leaves the friend is entering. Others abandon us during hard times, but a friend is a friend all of the time. Jesus, when he walked the earth, was derided by his opponents for those with whom he was a friend. “*The Son of Man came eating and drinking and they say, Behold a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax-gatherers and sinners!*” (**Matthew 11:19**). Friendship in the world is all too often shallow. It rests more on superficial elements such as beauty, status, power or money than anything substantial. Jesus was friends with those who needed Him. True friendship is sacrificial in nature. Jesus also said, “*Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends*” (**John 15:13**). The ultimate example of friendship is the sacrifice of Jesus for us.

God is just such a friend to us. Think of those who have been God’s friends. God did not desert them during the difficult times but remained their friend sometimes even when hurt was inflicted on Himself. Paul teaches that while we were yet ungodly and sinners God loved us and acted on our behalf. In our deepest, darkest hour God is the friend who stays and comforts and continues to love all the while forgiving and forgetting. You see that’s what friends do.

In turn, we are taught that since God so loved us we ought then to love one another. Christianity is also about friendship. Not friendship as the world practices. It is a friendship taught and practiced by God. Even if the world turns away from us God will not turn away, neither will the brethren. This is how friends act. Surely this is what it means, in part, to be imitators of God!

Charles Hill