



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

January 14, 2018

P.O. Box 416
129 S. Chamberlain Ave.
Rockwood, TN 37854
865-354-0855

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

Email:

rockwdcc@gmail.com

Website:

Rockwoodchurchofchrist.com

NOT JUST ANOTHER GOD

Many times in recent years, I have heard statements such as, “all religions are the same,” or “there is no ‘right’ religion.” Coupled with the modern trend of the “Coexist” bumper stickers and a post-modern mindset, Christians of today have faced and will continue to face persecution for our beliefs.

We are told that our God is no different than the Muslim god or any other god, but we must remember that this just simply is not true. There are key differences which distinguish the living God whom we serve and other, false gods.

The first, our God is trustworthy. **I John 5:20** says we serve the true God, and His word is truth. He always has and always will keep His promises to mankind. Even when we are faithless, He, the Creator, is faithful to us, the creation.

Our God is also loving, a key differentiator when considering the undeniable objective morality that exists in our world. Our God, unlike false gods, not only promotes love for one another, but He Himself showed the ultimate display of love through sending His son to die for us, the creation (**John 3:16; I John 4:7**). He is not indifferent towards us, but rather took the most extreme measures to ensure us the choice of heaven.

Lastly, our God “is.” In **Exodus 3:14** God refers to Himself as the I AM. Our God is from everlasting to everlasting, the alpha and the omega. He always has been and always will be, He is.

Let us remember that we do not serve just another God, but we serve the only God.

Jared Higginbotham

IS THE CHURCH BROKEN?

You hear comments in Bible classes that amount to what's wrong with the church, what we're doing wrong, what we're not doing, and what it's doing to us, our children, and the world. You read people's minds through their social media rants, raves, and ramblings, and the bottom line message is that the church is inept, irrelevant, irresponsible, or, worse, insidious. To hear some tell it, the church is not only unhelpful, but actually hurtful. I know that we can be prone to say things out of hurt, disappointment, anger, and bitterness, but the words themselves are no less potent even if influenced by such emotions.

Is the contention, as one Christian sister put it, that "the church is broken," true? Another way to put that is, "Are elders, preachers, deacons, Bible class teachers, and every other Christian broken?" Perhaps we impersonalize it and over-institutionalize it with a nameless, faceless designation of "church." But the church is, as we were taught as children, "the people." People are prone to say the right thing at the wrong time, the wrong thing at the right time, and, sadly, the wrong thing at the wrong time. We disappoint, we mishandle, we poorly execute, we unfairly judge and criticize, and we simply blow it. That is definitely not an excuse or a permission slip for bad behavior. Yet, it is not likely to ever change.

Because the church is made up of sinners saved by grace, the church is broken. We who are quick to condemn the church as broken need to face that we ourselves, as those placed by Christ into that church when we were saved, are broken, too. Show me the perfect person who never mishandles a situation, never sins with the tongue, attitude, or deed, and I'll show you someone who will stand before Christ at the Judgment saved on the basis of their own merit and goodness. That won't happen.

Let's be reminded of what the church is. It is the precious, beloved bride of Christ (**Ephesians 5:22-25; Revelation 19:7; 21:2**). It is that institution purchased by His very life's blood (**Acts 20:28**). It is that which was thought up by God from eternity before time as is the expression of His manifold wisdom (**Ephesians 3:9-11**). It is the place where Christ is glorified (**Ephesians 3:21; 5:27**). It is the present the Son will present to His Father when time is no more (**I Corinthians 15:24**). It is that and truly so much more.

God designed the church. Reckless criticism of it is reckless criticism of Him. All of us should be determined to improve in every area of our spiritual lives, to be for others what we need to be, to conquer faults and sins in our lives. We should also extend to others the grace we intensely desire to receive when we stand before the King at the last day! Yes, the church is broken, but not in the sense that it cannot help, serve, minister, love and encourage. Let each of us strive to be the church we want the church to be. Model and exemplify it. Emit the fragrance of Christ. That way, the broken church can help mend the broken lives that make it up.

Neal Pollard