



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

January 1, 2023

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

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:

rockwdcc@gmail.com

Website:

Rockwoodchurchofchrist.com

A New Year: Time to Take Inventory

As we begin a new year, may we “*take inventory*” of our spiritual lives. Most businesses or organizations (the ones that are successful) will ask three questions in terms of their direction: “*Where have we been? Where are we? Where are we going?*” Our spiritual lives are of far greater importance than any business or organization. The church is paramount and is no comparison to some man-made organization or institution. But we can draw a few parallels when taking inventory of our spiritual lives. **Second Corinthians 13:5** says, “*Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? —unless indeed you are disqualified.*”

Please consider the following questions as we plan our spiritual growth for 2022:

- Am I known as a Christian where I work?
- Is Christ more loved or respected because of the way I live?
- Do I criticize the church and Christians in front of my children?
- Do people know me as one who has Christ in the center of my life?
- Is it possible that I claim to be a Christian and nurse revenge on others?
- Do I find time every day for Bible study?
- Can I work with other people? Can other people work with me?
- Do I have a secret longing to be first? Or can I truly say I do not care who is second, third, or fourth as long as Jesus is first?
- How can I do a better job of leading others to Christ?
- Have I grown as a Christian in knowledge and service compared to three years ago?

As the days roll by this year, may we seek to truly walk with Christ as well as grow closer to Him.

Allen Jones
South Green Street church of Christ
Glasgow, KY

The Year Ahead

“For who can tell a man what shall be after him under the sun?” (Ecclesiastes 6:12).

An issue of Time magazine thirty years ago gave examples of men who tried to do what man cannot do—predict the future. Here are some of these predictions made in the 1900’s as listed in Time, Fall, 1992:

- Henry Adams, considered to be one of America’s foremost thinkers, said in 1903, *“My figures coincide in setting 1950 as the year that the world must smash.”*
- In 1901, two years before Kitty Hawk, Wilbur Wright told his brother Orville that man would not fly for another 50 years.
- Not long before the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, Admiral William Leary told Harry Truman, *“This is the biggest fool thing we have ever done...the bomb will never go off.”*
- Some even claimed that scientists would create machines that would be able to read our minds!

Here we are years later feeling the same curiosity and anxiety about the future. This time, however, the uncertainty is more far-reaching. Our world has changed dramatically. The year 2020 was like an earthquake and every year since has been like an aftershock. Our laws, our economy, our population and our entire culture is changing so rapidly that it is hard to make plans for anything.

There is only one way to have peace and clarity in a world that has been turned upside down: hold to God’s unchanging hand and trust in His all-seeing eye. Remember that the Lord said, *“I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done” (Isa. 46:9-10)*. God has always known everything in the future. Nothing surprises Him. He saw the Civil War, the Great Depression and COVID coming long before they broke into history. He knows every detail of the results of each crisis and works all things for the good of His people (**Rom 8:28**). We will never be able to see what God sees, but that should not keep us from trusting that He does.

The Bible teaches us not to brag about the future or worry about it. Solomon said, *“Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth” (Prov. 27:1)*. Jesus said, *“Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble” (Matt. 6:34)*. We need faith in these turbulent times to keep us from going to either extreme.

The great book of Ecclesiastes gives us wisdom we cannot find anywhere else. It tells us, *“That which has been is what will be, that which is done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun” (Ecc. 1:9)*. It reminds us of the cycles and phases of life: *“To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven” (Ecc; 3:1)*. One of the best things Christians can do these days is turn off the television, leave social media alone, read the book of Ecclesiastes, and perhaps sing the chorus, of *“God Holds the Future in His Hands.”*

Kerry Duke (adapted)
West End church of Christ
Livingston, TN