



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

July 17, 2016

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Don Chandler

Deacons:

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Roger Carter
Steve McCreary

Minister:

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

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HOW VALUABLE IS ONE SOUL?

How valuable is one soul? The Master said, *“For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”* **(Matthew 16:26)**. One soul is worth more than “the whole world.”

Every soul is valuable because it is made in the image of God. Since, *“God is Spirit”* **(John 4:24)**, our likeness to Him must be spiritual, not physical. Like Him, we have intellect, emotion, conscience and volition.

Every soul is valuable because Jesus died for it! It is true that *“God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son”* **(John 3:16)**, but let us not lose sight of the value of one soul in the midst of the 7.4 billion in the world today. **Hebrews 2:9** tells us that Jesus died for every person!

Every soul is valuable because it is immortal. The soul is the only part of man that will live beyond this life. The soul – your soul, my soul and every other person’s soul – will live forever! *“For this corruption must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality”* **(I Corinthians 15:53)**.

Every soul is valuable because heaven rejoices over the salvation of just one! When the woman in the Master’s story found her once lost coin, she rejoiced. The Master said, *“Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents”* **(Luke 15:10)**.

Knowing the value of the soul should accomplish two things (1). It should affect how we care for our souls and (2) it should motivate us to care for the souls of others. SOS – Save One Soul! Make this your goal! *“...he who wins souls is wise”* **(Proverbs 11:30)**.

Dwight Fuqua

THE RISE OF CHRISTIANITY

One of the classic works on the history of the Roman Empire is *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* by **Edward Gibbon** (1737-1794). The work was so massive, it took him some 13 years to get all of the volumes published!

Numerous times I have either heard or read from preachers and teachers who have repeated that Gibbon described “five reasons why Rome fell.” Those supposed five reasons are the undermining of the home, higher taxes, the mad craze for pleasure, the building of armaments, and the decay of religion. If such is true, it is a stark warning to our current culture since we have fallen victim to all five of these things.

However, I would like to focus on the reasons Gibbon gives for why he thinks Christianity grew so rapidly during the time that Rome was fading from world prominence. In chapter 15, he writes: “Our curiosity is naturally prompted to inquire by what means the Christian faith obtained so remarkable a victory over the established religions of the earth.”

His proposed five causes were these:

1. The unflagging zeal of the Christians.
2. The doctrine of a future life (the immortality of the soul).
3. The miraculous powers ascribed to the primitive church.
4. The pure morals of the Christians.
5. The active involvement of Christians in the government of the church.

What insight! In fact, it sounds similar to what the Lord expected of the earliest Christians (and us as well).

1. “Do not grow weary in doing good” (**Galatians 6:9**).
2. We have the hope of eternal life (**I Thessalonians 4:13; Hebrews 6:19**)!
3. If God exists, and the Bible is His inspired word, I can know what it teaches is true (**John 20:30-31**).
4. Our godly lives can inspire others to glorify God (**Matthew 5:16**).
5. Our active involvement strengthens the church and impresses outsiders (**Hebrews 10:24-25**).

According to Gibbons – and more importantly, according to Scripture – we can be actively involved in the victory of Christianity over the forces of darkness. Are we up to the challenge?

Bart Warren