



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

June 12, 2016

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Elders:

Dana Carter
Kenneth Carter
Don Chandler

Deacons:

Kendall Bear
Larry Brackett
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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GOD WON'T STOP US

It is undeniable, that as Christians we have responsibilities, duties commanded of us by God and by Jesus, we also know what is right and wrong – but, just like kids have the choice to obey their parents by fulfilling their responsibilities, do what is right and abstaining from what is wrong – or to do the opposite and neglect their responsibilities, and indulge in wrong things. In the same way, we have the choice to do right or wrong in the sight of God and to face or run from our responsibilities. This is free will.

In the past God intervened directly in the world, and when someone deserved rebuking God would do so, and He would correct him or her. The stories of Jonah and Balaam spring to mind.

Jonah (**Jonah 1:3**) decided to run from God's commandment to preach to the people of Nineveh. Consequently, Jonah was thrown from a boat, and was swallowed by a great fish. We know how the rest of the story goes; Jonah recognizes his wrongs and proceeds to do great things in Nineveh. The story of Balaam is similar (**Numbers 22:20-35**). Balaam angers the Lord and tries to do the wrong thing by running away from his responsibility, and so the Lord sends an angel to kill him, but his donkey sees the angel and saves Balaam's life three times. When Balaam realizes what the angel would have done, Balaam promises to correct himself and do the Lord's will.

God wants to protect us from harm. A parent would take precautions to baby proof their home so that their young can't harm themselves, but as a child grows, those preventative measures become less effective as they understand how to open the baby gate, and they may then tumble down the stairs. At this point the parents would teach the child that it is a bad thing to fall down the stairs and listen to parents and be careful around stairs. God acted as a baby gate for Jonah and Balaam, preventing them from running away. But we as people of Christ's church are more like the mature child. God is no longer acting in miraculous ways as our baby gate.

We are no longer toddlers in Christ; we know how dangerous the world can be. We need to be mature Christians, and do what God wants of us, without running from our responsibilities.

Jason Summers

RIGHTEOUS

Are you righteous? The word “righteous” (*dikaios*) appears 79 times in the New Testament. I offer this composite from a study of the original word: (a) a righteous person is one who fulfills his duty toward God and men, (b) a righteous person is one who observes divine and human laws, (c) a righteous person is one who acts in accordance with right, and (d) a righteous person is one who is such as he or she ought to be in character and behavior.

This word (*dikaios*) appears six times in the book of **I John**. A study of these passages is most insightful.

The first passage acknowledges that the Lord is righteous. John wrote, “*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*” (**1:9**). Here the word translated “just” is the Greek word for “righteous” (*dikaios*). Here we learn how we are forgiven and cleansed of our unrighteousness so that we can be righteous.

The second passage again acknowledges that the Lord is righteous. John wrote, “*My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous*” (**2:1**). Jesus Christ is referred to as “*the righteous*.” His people do not want to sin. When righteous people do sin, they seek forgiveness. How wonderful that Jesus Christ the righteous is our Advocate! It is through Him and only through Him that we are righteous.

The third passage combines the ideas of Jesus’ righteousness and our righteousness. John wrote, “*If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him*” (**3:1**). Powerful points! (1) We know that He is righteous! (2) We know that a righteous person, one born of Him, “practices righteousness.”

The fourth passage is the most succinct of all: “*Little children, let no one deceive you, He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous*” (**3:7**). One is not righteous unless he or she “practices,” “practices,” “practices” righteousness. Don’t be deceived!

The final passage in I John where the word “righteous” is found is 3:12. Here John contrasts the wickedness of Cain with the righteousness of Abel. Cain was wicked because “*his works were evil*.” In contrast, “*his brother’s (works were) righteous*.” Put these thoughts together! A righteous person is one who is “*born of Him*” (**2:29**), who has Jesus as his or her Advocate (**2:1**), who is forgiven and cleansed (**1:9**), who practices righteousness (**3:7**) and whose works are righteous (**3:12**). John would later write, “*he who is righteous, let him be righteous still*” (**Revelation 22:11**).

Dwight Fuqua