



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

June 14, 2015

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Elders:

Dana Carter
Kenneth Carter
Don Chandler

Deacons:

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 10:00 a.m.

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BURNING YOUR PRIORITIES

From *Jumper Fables* by Ken Davis

Years ago, when I was a teenager, I sat in a youth meeting and listened to a speaker talk about identifying the important aspects of your lives. "Don't waste your time working towards goals that aren't really important to you," he said. "Figure out what really is important to you, what really matters, what you really want to accomplish – then work toward that."

He gave us five pieces of paper and had us write on each of them one of the top five aspects of our lives. Relationship, abilities, goals, talents, dreams – anything that was a top priority in our lives at that time went onto those sheets.

Choosing those five priorities wasn't easy. Lots of things popped into my mind, and it was hard to choose the top five. It was like writing a Christmas list that can only have five things on it – you feel bad about all the things you are leaving off! I did plenty of erasing and rewriting.

Then he made it even harder. There was a fireplace in the room, and he pointed to it and said, "Okay – now you have to narrow your list to four. Take one of the pieces of paper and throw it into the fire."

Wow – was it ever tough to choose which one to burn! But when we'd done that, he pointed to the fire again and said, "Now narrow it to three."

You know what's coming don't you? He made us narrow our priorities down to one – the thing we wanted above everything else. Today, I don't remember any other details of the man's speech, and I can't even remember his name – but after all these years I still remember what I had written on that last slip of paper!

And I'm glad I had to do that, as hard as it was. Because he was right. Those who succeed in life succeed because they know what they want and are willing to bypass some of the things that might be pleasurable in order to accomplish the one thing they value above all else.

Do you know what you would write on your five slips of paper? Do you know which slip of paper you would keep at the end? And do you know how God and His will for your life fit into those plans. I'm glad someone made me answer those questions early in life.

"Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given you as well." **Matthew 6:33**

IS GOD REALLY INTERESTED IN ME SELLING MY COW?

“Now listen, you who say, today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money. Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, If the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that. As it is, you boast and brag. All such boasting is evil. Anyone then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn’t do it, sins.” (James 4:13-17).

Notice the progression in planning:

First, they plan a trip today or tomorrow. *“Today or tomorrow we will go...”*

Second, they plan to arrive at a destination. *“Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city.”*

Third, they plan to spend a certain amount of time at their destination. *“Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, and spend a year there.”*

Fourth, they plan to engage in and carry through a plan of action while they are in that city. *“Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, and spend a year there, and carry on business.”*

Fifth, they plan for the business to have certain results. *“Today and tomorrow we will go to this or that city, and spend a year there, and carry on business, and make money.”*

Is there harm in planning? Is there harm in intending to go places and once arriving, doing things? No. The point Jesus is making is to go ahead and plan, but do so having a realistic view of life and of God which is, *“Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.”*

To illustrate: A man is walking past a farmer’s field with a cow tied to a rope. The farmer says, “Hey mister, where you going with that cow?” The man replies, “I’m taking it to town to sell it.” The farmer says, “You mean if it’s the Lord’s will you are.” The man says, “Well it’s my cow, and I reckon I can do anything I want with it. It ain’t any of the Lord’s business!”

A short time later the farmer looks up. He sees the man coming back the other way – bloody and beaten up. “What happened to you?” The farmer asks. “Well, just down the road three guys jumped out of the bushes, beat me up, stole my cow and left me for dead.” The farmer says, “Oh no! What are you going to do now?” The man replied, “I’m going home to clean up – if it’s the Lord’s will.”

That’s a funny story, but the harsh reality is that life, in all its blessings and beauty, is uncertain. We do not know what will happen tomorrow, and each one of our lives is a vanishing vapor. Here today...gone tomorrow. Here today...gone today.

So make plans. Set goals. But remember that you were not placed upon this planet simply to go shopping at Wal-Mart, dining at Applebee’s or walking or jogging at the Civic Center. You were placed on planet Earth that, when you do these things, you do them with a realistic view of life and a realistic view of God.

“If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.”

Coy Hathcock