



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

March 15, 2020

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Sunday

Bible Study 10 am
Worship Service 10:45 am
Worship Service 6 pm

Wednesday

Bible Study 7 pm

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Our Greatest Concern

Paul was a world traveler. He was a terrific pen pal. He was a teacher. Paul practiced the craft of tent making. He enjoyed reading. He had some health problems. He seemed to enjoy athletics. He was a fund raiser for the hungry of Judah. He had a healing ministry. He worked hard, long hours at preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles. Paul was an accomplished debater. He knew a little about politics and sailing. He was so self-disciplined in body and mind that he could claim contentment in persecution and prison. Paul was well educated, easily handling the subject of philosophy, world religions, and poetry.

Here was a man who had a lot of irons in the fire! Yet, Paul claimed only one goal. *"This one thing I do...I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."* (Ph. 3:13-14). Paul's greatest concern was the saving of his soul. He just wanted to go to heaven! We can see how all of his work and hobbies were directed to apprehending that one great hope.

I know work demands a lot of us these days. It's important to have an enjoyable and relaxing hobby. Organized recreation programs are good for us and our children and involve some obligation. There are more places to go than ever before. We all have a lot of irons in the fire. Yet, commitment to the one hope of heaven must be supreme. Other things or activities should help us apprehend, not steal us from, the fellowship of God. If you can do only one thing, make sure that "one thing" you do is to worship and serve the one Lord.

Cecil May III

Taming Life

James 3 concerning the tongue is fascinating. In a series of word-pictures, James describes the control of large ships and the control of powerful horses by tiny, man-made devices, before stating that all the animals of the land and sea have been “tamed” by man. Then in a surprising twist, James adds, “but no man can tame the tongue.” (**v.8**). The Greek word that James used to describe that process of taming is also used in **Mark 5:4**, in the story of the man who lived among the tombs but had been impossible to control by others.

Life is a lot like that man. We can chain it, guard it, plan it, insure it, and cry over it, but we cannot tame life. It will always be sudden, unexpected and challenging. Even in the life of Jesus, it’s obvious that He didn’t have complete control over the events around him. That’s not to suggest that He COULDN’T have controlled them, but only that He didn’t.

Consider the events of **Matthew 14**. **Chapter 13** ends with Jesus leaving His own hometown, rejected. He then receives word of the death of His cousin, John. He goes away into the desert to be alone but gets followed by the persistent crowd. After feeding and dismissing both the crowd and the disciples, He finally gets some time alone in prayer. He walks across the sea to the disciples and gets to the other side, only to have the multitude swamp Him once more. Even the son of God did not have a tamed life!

Then is there no peace that we can have in life? If what we mean by “peace” is a totally tranquil life, with no unexpected or unpleasant occurrences, then the answer is absolutely... not! That kind of life will never be ours here on earth. We can, however, have the kind of peace that God intended for us, if we will commit ourselves to a few things.

1. We are not in control of our life or those of our family (**Jas. 4:13-16**).
2. The meaning of life is not about heaping up possessions all around us (**Lk. 12:15**) instead “having food and clothing we should be content,” (**1 Tim. 6:6-8**).
3. It is possible to learn to be happy, in whatever circumstances we find ourselves, if we want to be (**Phil. 4:11-13**), even in pain and suffering (**Acts 16:23-25**).
4. Remember that this life is a temporary place and our treasures must not be stored here (**Matt. 6:19-21**).

After pondering those things deeply do the troubles that we face now look any different? Whatever issues do remain, after following the above advice, need two more points; 1) don’t worry about tomorrow (**Matt. 6:34**), and 2) pray for God’s peace (**Phil. 4:6-7**). Life cannot be tamed but we can humble our minds and hearts to tame ourselves.

Tim Orbison