



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

March 26, 2023

P.O. Box 416
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Elders:

Kendall Bear
Dana Carter
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Deacons:

Larry Brackett
Aaron Evans
Larry Hill
Steve McCreary

Minister:

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Service Times:

Sunday

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

Wednesday

Bible Study 7 pm

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What If You Were the Only One!

What if by some happenstance you were the only member of the Church left in your town? Does that seem farfetched? In some places in some cities you might be in that circumstance. If you were to find yourself in this situation, what would you do? Would you simply give up and stay home?

Would you try to find the nearest denomination that you might feel comfortable with and forget what you know is right?

When the apostle Paul came to the city of Corinth he was the only member of the Church in that city. When he left there was a Church in that city.

But we are not alone in our efforts. We have a spiritual family that can add strength to our efforts of reaching the lost and fulfilling our Lord's commandment of **Mark 15:15-16.**

But there might be some value if we were to act and work like we were the only member of the Church left in our cities. Perhaps we would have a greater determination to work all the harder to cause the Church to grow. It might be we would have a stronger zeal for the work of His Kingdom.

Something to think about!

Floyd C. Johnson
Huntington Park Church of Christ
Shreveport, LA

How the Church Can Prosper Today

To answer these questions, we must go back to the book of Acts. It is there in Acts 2 that we read of the establishment of the Church on the Day of Pentecost, just as had been prophesied by the Old Testament prophets. While there are many things that we could say about the beginning of the church, two things in particular stand out as being especially relevant to the topic of how the church can prosper today. First, the church was established through the preaching of the gospel. Second, the church grew because people with honest hearts, who were seeking the truth, obeyed the gospel. When it comes to the growth of the church today, these are two factors which can easily be duplicated by faithful Christians and those seeking the truth.

As has been said before “sometimes to get to where we want to be, we need to remember where we came from.” This, I think, is especially true in striving to be the kind of church that God wants us to be. To figure out what God expects of us as His people, and how we can be successful at meeting God’s expectations it can be very beneficial for us to go back to the beginning of the church. So that we can find out: what kind of people the early Christians were, what kind of activities they busied themselves with and how they were successful at meeting the challenges of Christianity.

With the combination of these two factors, the church experienced an explosive beginning and tremendous early growth. Wayne Jackson reports in his commentary on Acts “that by the close of the first century there were approximately 100,000 Christians in the city of Rome alone.” This is a staggering statistic, but it leads me to a conclusion that I have long held. If we will be as faithful in fulfilling our duties, as the first century Christians were in theirs, then we will once again begin to see the kind of growth that they did.

Is the church as prosperous today, as she clearly was in the beginning? How do we know? Material things cannot be the standard by which we measure the progress of the church (Rev. 3:15-17). Neither can success be measured by the opinions of humans, for they are unreliable at best (Rev. 3:1). So how do we know if we are striving or dying? We can measure ourselves against the successes and failures of the early church.

To do that we need simply to go back to the book of Acts and examine the early disciples of Christ, and how being Christians changed their lives, and as a result of living their faith, changed the world in which they lived. While we certainly have a large cultural gap between Jerusalem in the first century and the world in which we live today, I am convinced that if we will strive to reproduce some of the essential factors critical for a growing and thriving church to exist, then we can be every bit as successful today in winning this world to Christ, as they were nearly 2,000 years ago.

Brian Mitchell
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