



# Rockwood Church of Christ

## The Proclaimer

March 27, 2016

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**Elders:**

Dana Carter  
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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

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## I DON'T KNOW & I DON'T CARE!

Many years ago, I heard Leroy Brownlow (author of "Why I am a Member of the Church of Christ") use this illustration. "What are the two main problems in the church?" The question was answered with, "I don't know and I don't care."

He hit the nail on the head. Indifference is a tool of the devil designed to rob Christians of diligence in duty.

From a study of Biblical history we learn that after some seventy years of Babylonian captivity, Judah returned in three stages. The first group was led back to Jerusalem by Zerubbabel and Jeshua. They then rebuilt and dedicated the temple. The second group was led by Ezra. It was marked by a great revival among the people – the revival was led by Haggai and Zechariah. The third group was led by Nehemiah. It was under Nehemiah's leadership that the walls were rebuilt.

As you study the background material to the utter destruction of the city walls, you can't help but be impressed with the fact that those walls were rebuilt in just fifty-two short days (**Nehemiah 6:15**). How did they do it? Nehemiah provides the answer: "*So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work*" (**Nehemiah 4:6**).

Though the people as a whole were characterized by great zeal, there were still others who were indifferent. Some were pictured as lazy, and others were just plain negative (**Nehemiah 4:5, 10**). They needed a healthy dose of **James 1:25**: "*But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.*"

There will always be those, even some Christians, who are indifferent – who don't care whether they (or you for that matter) succeed or fail. They will stand in the way of individual and congregational progress. But, don't be duped by this tool of the devil. Like those who returned from Babylonian captivity some 3,000 years ago to rebuild the wall around God's city in just fifty-two days, we too can do great things in short order if we'll have a mind to work.

**Neil Richey**

# THE SIGNIFICANCE OF BAPTISM

Few religious groups in our world today teach the full significance of baptism as it pertains to salvation. There are many who teach that one is saved first and then, baptized. Several others say baptism is necessary as a command of God but fail to see the urgency of it, baptizing an individual a month or two later, when a group of candidates can be gathered, rather than immediately (**Acts 16:33**). The Bible plainly declares that baptism saves us (**I Peter 3:21**). Jesus placed salvation after baptism, not before (**Mark 16:16**). Philip, Paul, and Peter recognized by inspiration that it matters what a man believes in his heart regarding the Gospel and the act of baptism for it to be valid (**Acts 8:36-38; 19:2-5; Romans 6:1-7, 17; I Peter 3:21**).

However, it might be the case in our attempt to teach people the Gospel and in our eagerness for them to be saved that we sometimes do not give the weight of meaning this divine ordinance deserves. We fear that if they view it as a great commitment that perhaps they will be dissuaded from being baptized. Jesus did not shirk from declaring that being a disciple of His was a great commitment (**Luke 14:25-33**). We should not be so hasty to get someone into the water that we fail to portray it as a dramatic change and a colossal commitment.

**Romans 6:6** says that in baptism our old man is crucified and we no longer serve sin. Baptism is dying to self, to one's service to sin. Of course one does not come up out of the water a mature Christian, but a babe (**I Peter 1:23; 2:2**); thus, acts of sin will still occur in the life of an individual who is baptized and God's grace is there to help as the individual continually strives to be more like Christ (**I John 1:7-9**). But the fact remains that the Bible portrays a baptized individual as a completely new and different person from the one who served sin before baptism. When we are baptized in Christ, we are new creatures: old things have passed away, and all things are new (**II Corinthians 5:17**). When John baptized people in preparation for Christ, he refused those who showed no evidence of repentance (**Matthew 3:7-8**). I have heard of some members of the church insinuating that as long as a man is baptized he will be saved. If he should go back to his old lifestyle and never fulfill his commitment to Christ that he made at baptism, and live the rest of his years in a worldly manner away from the church, they say at his funeral, "Well, he was baptized." The point of **Romans 6** is baptism is a commitment to Christ, not a license to sin.

Let us recognize the true commitment baptism is. To those who obeyed the Gospel in the first century, serious persecution was a present threat. In their minds, to be baptized into Christ's death was to pledge to give one's life to Him even if it meant dying at the hands of persecutors as the Lord Jesus Christ did (**Romans 8:17**).

Mark Day