



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

March 2, 2014

P.O. Box 416
129 S. Chamberlain Ave.
Rockwood, TN 37854
865-354-0855

Elders:

Dana Carter
Kenneth Carter
Don Chandler

Deacons:

Bobby Bear
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 am

Email:

rockwdcc@gmail.com

Website:

Rockwoodchurchofchrist.com

THE JOY OF FAITH

The joy of serving the Lord is unmatched in this world. Paul said, *“Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice.”* People, things, worry and circumstances will often rob us of our joy! Paul identified four attitudes in maintaining Christian joy in **Philippians**: the single mind (**1:21**); the submissive mind (**2:3**); the spiritual mind (**3:20**) and the secure mind (**4:7**). Biblical joy (**John 15:11; 16:24; I John 1:4**) includes the joy of Salvation (**Psalm 51:12; Acts 8:39**); joy before us (**Hebrews 12:2; Matthew 5:12**); joy of suffering (**Acts 5:41; James 1:2; I Peter 4:13, 16**) and joy of faith (**Philippians 1:21, 25**). Consider what the joy of faith involves:

Personal Faith: *“For to ME to live is Christ and to die is gain.”* When Saul (Paul) was converted to Christ, he considered it a personal conversion (**Acts 9:6**). Paul had been personally crucified with the Lord (**Galatians 2:20**). He knew the Lord personally (**II Timothy 1:12**). Our faith must be personal, in order to defend the truth (**I Peter 3:15**). Only a person with a personal faith can say, “The Lord is My shepherd, I shall not want.”

Purposeful Faith: *“For to me to LIVE IS CHRIST and to die is gain.”* Like Paul, we must have the right purpose (Live for Christ); we cannot serve two masters (**Matthew 6:24**). Too many people are “double-minded” (**James 1:8**). Christians must focus on seeking first God’s Kingdom and God’s righteousness (**Matthew 6:33**). Joshua exemplified a purposeful faith, by saying, *“As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord”* (**Joshua 24:15**).

Profitable Faith: *“For to me to live is Christ and to die is GAIN.”* The word “gain” is a financial term: profit, return, reward, dividend. It speaks of the blessings and benefits of serving the Lord. David asked, *“what shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine and taketh away the reproach of Israel?”* (**I Samuel 17:26**). Moses considered the riches of Christ greater than anything in Egypt because he *“had respect unto the recompense of the reward”* (**Hebrews 11:26**). Faithful living benefits us in this life and in the life to come (**I Timothy 4:8**). David said, *“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever”* (**Psalms 23:6**).

Conclusion: Notice how the joy of Faith was exemplified in Paul’s life. **Personal Faith:** I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. **Purposeful Faith:** I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. **Profitable Faith:** There is a Crown of Righteousness laid up for me. **Cf. II Timothy 4:6-8.**

By Mark N. Posey

MIRROR MOMENTS

Recently I was asked why God repeated his question to Elijah during the incident recorded for us in **I Kings 19**. Before I give you my answer (opinion), let me briefly set the context for you.

Elijah had just achieved great victories. He had confronted the prophets of Baal and challenged them to pray to their god and thus bring fire to sacrifice (**I Kings 18:21**). Elijah, of course, prayed to God and received fire from heaven (**18:38**). Rain also returned to the region in answer to his prayer (**18:42; James 5:17-18**). However, shortly after the victories, Jezebel swore to kill Elijah. With amazement, we read the words, *“Then he was afraid”* (**19:3**). Let me just say this is not a condemnation of Elijah or a criticism of his faith. It is rather, a testimony to the evil and resourcefulness of Jezebel, as well as the power of exhaustion and discouragement on a servant of God.

Because of Jezebel’s threat, Elijah headed south, as far away from Jezebel as he could get. After a long journey, and sustenance by God, Elijah came to Horeb (Sinai). At that time he came to a cave and stayed there. While there, God spoke to him: *“What are you doing here Elijah?”* Elijah answered by recounting the terrible circumstance of the previous years and concluded by saying he was the only faithful person/prophet left. God allowed Elijah to see several unusual events (wind damage, earthquake and fire). Then he heard a whisper. After that, God repeated his question: *“What are you doing here, Elijah.”* (**19:13-14**). The man who was once empowered by God was actually running away from his enemy.

I believe God was asking the question, not for information, but so that Elijah could have a “mirror moment.” In other words, God wanted Elijah to look deeply within himself and decide who he was going to be and what he was going to do. He could have given up or he could have decided to move forward and live for God. Thankfully, Elijah decided to move forward and live for God – and aren’t we glad he did?!

I also believe we all have mirror moments – times in our lives when deep introspection is called for – when we must decide to move forward and allow God to work with and through us, in spite of our fears and misgivings. I think some of those times are: high school graduation, college graduation, wedding day, first day of a new job, birth of first child and retirement. There are others, but I think you get the point: These are the crossroads of our lives, and the direction we choose can make or break us. Far too many people are “walking past the mirror,” taking little or no time to ask themselves, “What are you doing here?”

Well, it may not be one of those times mentioned above, but...what are YOU doing here?

Lance Cordle