



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

May 18, 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:

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Rockwoodchurchofchrist.com

REPUTATION AND CHARACTER

What is the difference between reputation and character? William Hersey Davis wrote the following: The circumstances amid which you live determine your reputation; the truth you believe determines your character.

Reputation is what you are supposed to be; character is what you are.

Reputation is the photograph; character is the face.

Reputation comes over one from without; character grows up from within.

Reputation is what you have when you come to a new community; character is what you have when you go away.

Your reputation is learned in an hour; your character does not come to light for a year.

Reputation is made in a moment; character is built in a life-time.

Reputation grows like the mushroom; character grows like the oak.

A single newspaper gives you a reputation; a life of toil gives you character.

Reputation makes you rich or makes you poor; character makes you happy or makes you miserable.

Reputation is what men say about you on the tombstone; character is what the angels say about you around the throne of God.

There was certainly a difference between Jesus' reputation and His character. His reputation, according to some of His own people, was that He was out of His mind (**Mark 3:21**). The scribes from Jerusalem said, "He has Beelzebub," and "He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons" (**Mark 3:22**). The rulers of the people charged Him before Pilate with "Perverting the nation" (**Luke 23:2**). Yet when Jesus finished the task His Father had sent Him to accomplish it could truthfully be said that He was without sin (**Hebrews 4:15**). The false reputation in the eyes of some and His true character were definitely different.

What produces and determines character? Notice what some have said: E.C. McKenzie wrote, "You can tell a man's character if you know what makes him glad, what makes him sad, and what makes him mad." Marcelene Cox said, "To really know a man, observe his behavior with a woman, a flat tire, and a child." Edna McCann observed, "No man knows his true character until he has run out of gas, purchased something on the installment plan, and raised an adolescent."

It is certainly easier to work on what people think about us than to work on who we are. Are you more concerned about your reputation or your character?

J. Keele, Calvert church of Christ, Calvert City, KY

TACTICS OF A DIVISIVE MAN

If you are wondering whether a man is devious and divisive, check the contents of their conduct with the list below. Lacking the character of a sincere saint, the divisive man:

1. Will seek to play the part of a poor, persecuted soul who is suffering unjustly. He will play on your sympathy and make it appear that efforts to lead him to repentance are just more evidence of “the abuse and unfair treatment” that is being heaped upon him.
2. Almost always enlists others to do his “dirty work.” He will not be the lead spokesman in public, but will put others up front to carry the ball for him. He will make one of his deluded admirers feel important by allowing him to raise contentious questions. The “issues” are simply the divisive man’s agenda, but he will not tell his puppets that. He wants them to feel like they are men of strong faith, so he puts them forth. They do not realize they are his pawns (**Cf. Absalom, II Samuel 15**).
3. Casts aspersions against the elders, or the preacher. If he can sunder the eldership, he will do so. If he can separate the preacher from one of the elders, he will do it. If he can cast doubt about the motives of the elders and/or preacher, he will do that too. Doubt is one of his greatest weapons. Doubt undermines influence and destroys confidence in another. The divisive man knows this, so he plants his seeds of doubt and waits for them to take root in our hearts.
4. The divisive man seeks to bind his human opinions and points to opposition to them as being from those who “don’t love the truth.” He wants to appear as the Savior of the church. He beguiles others and makes them think he is the only one “standing for the truth.” “We’ve got too much money in the bank. Gospel preachers are starving while our elders hoard money.” “The elders aren’t spending ‘our’ money wisely, so I’m not giving any more.” On and on his complaints go. Result? A church is in turmoil because of the wickedness of this divisive man and his followers.
5. Shows false remorse “over the trouble some have caused.” He creates more favor by acting as though he is “heartbroken over all that has happened.” He never, though, will admit any fault or wrong. If he does, he does so to add to his martyr status. Any confession he may make will be couched in “if I’ve done anything wrong.” “I was just looking out for the welfare of the church.” Often, after getting rid of a preacher or trying to uproot the eldership (a few of his hidden goals), he will state how he “wishes it had never come to this.” He may even call the preacher or the elders and express his sorrow “for the way things turned out.” I know this is the way it works because I have received such “apologies” and “phone calls.”

May God help us to avoid the divisive spirits among us and be alert to their tactics. Remember, he will come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly he is a ferocious wolf. Thus by his fruits you will recognize him. Is there any among you who possess the qualities outlined for a “divisive” man? If so, flee from him! Do not listen to him! He is a trouble maker! He is a divisive man!

Larry Haley