



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

May 30, 2021

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

Elders:

Kendall Bear
Dana Carter
Don Chandler

Deacons:

Larry Brackett
Aaron Evans
Larry Hill
Steve McCreary

Minister:

Dale Barger

Secretary:

Service Times:

Sunday

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

Wednesday

Bible Study 7 pm

Email:

rockwdcc@gmail.com

Website:

Rockwoodchurchofchrist.com

A Masterpiece Takes Time

The stereotypical view of artistry is of the chaotic genius giving birth to great works of art and music in fits of creative energy. One moment a blank canvas, the next a masterpiece; one instant an empty score, the next a symphony. However, an investigation into the facts does not support this view.

Beethoven, one of the world's most famous composers, rose at daybreak and worked continuously until two or three o'clock, working on multiple ideas at once. He often worked on musical pieces that he began years before. For many of his ideas he sketched as many as 20 or 30 variants of a theme to arrive at just the right sound.

Well-known master painter Michelangelo produced more than 2,000 sketches and renderings of his work "Last Judgment" during the eight years it took him to complete his masterpiece.

In just these two examples we see that patience and consistent effort were combined to create indelible works of art.

The Christian life is similar in that patience and hard work are required to bring forth a beautiful walk of faith. "*Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure*" (**Phil. 2:12-14**). You see, it takes a blending of the Word of God and patient striving on our part to become conformed to the image of Christ (**Romans 8:29; 12:2**), and the end of that process is eternal life (**Romans 2:7**).

Anything of lasting value requires patient commitment and discipline to come into being. Christian, do not give up. Your life can be a masterpiece!

Matt Clifton
BulletinDigest

We Are What We Choose

A young boy brings home a report card, wondering how he was going to face his parents with such low marks, which were a result of his own laziness and lack of self-discipline. At the supper table he finally gets the courage to present his grades. Handing the card to his parents, he said: *"Here's the bad news, and I can't figure out if it is the result of heredity or my environment."*

Today, we are being led to believe that character and capacity are determined by something other than our own discipline. Some contend that what we are is a result of our environment. Others insist that genes determine character. The truth is we are what we are because we choose to be.

We must know that we can: Alter our environment. Control our desires. Overcome our weaknesses. And rise above our heritage. Joshua said: *"Choose for yourselves whom you will serve... But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."* Joseph chose not to involve himself with Potiphar's wife saying, *"How can I sin this sin against God."* The Hebrews writer tells us Moses *"chose mistreatment rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."* Paul chose to change his life from a persecutor of Christians to proclaiming Christ. Peter says of Jesus: *"When they hurled their insults at Him, He did not retaliate; when He suffered, He made no threats. Instead, He entrusted Himself to Him who judges justly."* How do we do it? How do we alter our environment, control our desires, overcome our weaknesses, and rise above our heritage?

We must correct our thinking: Solomon declares, *"As a man thinks in his heart, so is he."* As we think, we are! Jesus said: *"Out of the heart man speaks, out of the heart comes the issues of life."* Thoughts ultimately control who and what we are. Step number one, then, is clean up the mind, change the heart. We can do this. Paul says, *"We are to have the heart, the mind, the attitude of Jesus."* So it is within our power to change our thinking.

Watch the company we keep: *"Do not be misled; bad company corrupts good character."* Evil companions corrupt good morals and stunt our spiritual growth! We must know that bad company includes more than people. What about the kind of television and videos we watch, the movies we go to, the kind of books and magazines we read, and the websites we visit? Paul admonishes: *"Be not conformed to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."* Do not allow the world to force you into its mold. Yes, we do have control over the company we keep. Amen?

Exercise our will: God created us free moral agents. We make our own choices. Sometimes we must get hold of our *"want-to"* by our *"will"* and determine this is the attitude I'm going to have and this is the way I will behave. We know this is possible because Paul says, *"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."* James contends, *"We are tempted when we are drawn away by our own evil desires."* Know this, temptation does not control us, we control it. God promises we will not be tempted or tried beyond that which we can control.

Understand our weaknesses. Not all of us are tempted by the same sins. Yes, the drunkard, the fornicator, the homosexual, the materialist, the thief and the liar may have a propensity toward their particular sin caused by environment, heredity, or even body chemistry, but the final choice is ours to make. Most of us have a tendency toward overeating, a preference for calories, fat, salt and cholesterol, but the choice is ours. We eat what we choose to eat! We must understand our *"sin weaknesses"* and take the necessary steps to protect ourselves against anything that would invade our weakness, tempting us.

Adapted from Randall Caselman
via Church of Christ Information and Studies