



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

May 4, 2014

P.O. Box 416
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Rockwood, TN 37854
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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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KIND TO THE EVIL

"The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious. Slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness" (Exodus 34:6).

It seems only right to expect bad people to "get what's coming to them." In fact, as humans, we expect a God whose eyes cannot look upon evil, (**Habakkuk 1:13**) to render swift justice to the wicked. We often do not understand why God sends rain on the bad guys as well as the good (**Matthew 5:45**). What this means, is that we do not comprehend God's mercy!

Jonah was no different in his day. He did not want to preach to the evil Ninevites as they deserved to die. He was so set in his mind in this regard that he attempted to hide from God. After eventually preaching God's Word to the city of Nineveh and seeing their repentant response, Jonah becomes angry (**Jonah 4:1**). He is actually angry with God as we observe in **Jonah 4:2**; *"For I know that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster."* Aren't we sometimes like Jonah in that we are happy to see the wicked paid in kind for their evil?

Contrast our response and Jonah's to what God tells Ezekiel; *"As I live, declares the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked" (Ezekiel 33:11)*. Even though we may rejoice at the death of the wicked, God never does. To die in our sins is not in God's plans for mankind. For God *"Is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance" (II Peter 3:9)*.

We see God's mercy in His statement to Jonah; *"Should not I pity Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from their left" (Jonah 4:11)*.

Jesus preached this same message that seems so foreign to us as humans. He declared in **Luke 6:35-36**; *"But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for He is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."*

Terry Ellison

BORING CHRISTIANITY?

I can remember one time when I was a boy; I made the mistake of stating to my mother that I was bored. The next thing I know I was doing chores, carrying firewood, cleaning, and anything else my mother could think of on our small three and half acre farm. I learned two important lessons that day: First, if you are bored don't broadcast it, and second, if I am bored it probably means I am not doing anything.

Often I hear that church is boring, the worship service is boring, and the preaching is boring. Sometimes people do not state it with words, they show it with their feet, they do not show up for church services, and are uninvolved with the life of the church. My guess is that if one is saying that Christianity is boring they are either watching a Christian who is lukewarm, and is nominal in their faith or the person stating such is a lukewarm, nominal Christian. Nominal Christianity is boring.

As I think about my 20-plus years of ministry and the six years of my Christian life before I became a preacher, it has been anything but boring. I have preached in several states, two foreign countries, met many wonderful Christians, I have served the Lord in the inner city, in rural areas and in a third world country. I have been in hospitals, nursing homes, prisons, orphan homes, and have been on several mission trips. I have not experienced boring Christianity.

The book of Acts gives the history of the church and it is not boring. Christians worshipped together, prayed for each other, helped those who were needy (**Acts 2:41-47**), fed the hungry (**Acts 6:1-6**), went on mission trips (**Acts 13:1-4**), and they made a difference in the world for the cause of Christ by converting the lost and helping Christians on their journey to Heaven. Christianity as described in the New Testament is anything but boring.

The story is told of a young woman who was once given a book to read. She tried reading it and found it to be quite dull and boring. Later, she fell in love with a young man who was a writer. In a conversation with him, she found out that he was the author of that book. She could then hardly wait to get to her room so that she might read it again. This time she found it to be a very interesting and fascinating book. What was the difference? She knew and loved the author.

Some think the Bible is dull and dry. But if they would read it with the idea in mind that here is a book written by their God and Creator, they would find it to be a challenging message. They need to come to love God. When they do, they will find His book and the life it calls us to live to be both interesting and meaningful. Think about it!!!

Mark T. Tonkery