



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

May 7, 2023

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Elders:

Kendall Bear
Dana Carter
Don Chandler

Deacons:

Larry Brackett
Aaron Evans
Larry Hill
Steve McCreary

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Dale Barger

Service Times:

Sunday

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

Wednesday

Bible Study 7 pm

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Are You 'In Love' With Your Brethren?

It has been said that you should never fall in love with a tennis player—to them, love means nothing. Love should mean something to us. Love is an important concept to God, and it should be to us, as well.

A common phrase we use is “*in love*” meaning that we are in a state of strong emotional attachment with someone. Well, I believe that Christians should be “*in love*” with one another. Doing a search of the phrase “*in love*” in our English Bibles reveals some interesting things concerning Christians’ relationship with each another (note: the following verses are based upon the NKJV).

- “***Bearing with one another in love***” (Eph. 4:2). This means that we are patient with one another – that we are always there for them.
- “***Edifying...in love***” (Eph. 4:15). To edify means to “build up.” We should always be endeavoring to uplift and encourage our brethren.
- “***Walk in love***” (Eph. 5:2). What is meant by walking is a way of life. Our way of life ought to be that of caring for and expressing love for one another.
- “***Esteem...very highly in love***” (1 Thess. 5:13). We should prefer one another and honor one another because we love one another.

If we properly operate “*in love*” with one another, we can see some benefits, as well.

- “***Being knit together in love***” (Col. 2:2). We will grow closer together with the special love bond we have in Christ.
- “***Abound in love to one another***” (1 Thess. 3:12). Our love will grow in intensity and be so abundant that it will literally know no bounds.

“*And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him*” (1 John 4:16).

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A Sound Mind

There is a real need for us to take care of our bodies. The Bible teaches that we are to “*glorify God*” in our bodies, and that we are to present our bodies as living sacrifices to God (**1 Corinthians 6:20; Romans 12:1**). Both of these passages enjoin upon us the responsibility to do what we can to maintain healthy bodies.

The Bible also teaches us to maintain healthy, sound minds. Paul wrote, “*For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind*” (**2 Timothy 1:7**). One who has a sound mind has good judgment, a sensible mind, and is able to think soberly and clearly.

A sound mind leads to a life of balance and self-control. All these things are essential to the Christian life, so maintaining a healthy mind should be important to us all.

We need to be aware that our greatest enemy, Satan, wants to prevent us from having a healthy mind. Scripture warns: “*But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ*” (**2 Corinthians 11:3**). Satan tricked and deceived Eve in the Garden, and he still wants to corrupt and confuse our minds today. Notice in the verse just cited that Satan wants to corrupt our “*minds*.” He knows that if he can get control of our minds, our actions will soon follow where our minds lead (cf. **Proverbs 4:23**).

One way Satan may prevent us from having a healthy mind is through fear. Since “*God hath not given us the spirit of fear*” (**2 Timothy 1:7**), fear must be from Satan. Fear may disturb our minds in many ways and rob us of peace. Satan wants us to fear that we are capable of living a faithful and dedicated Christian life. This fear may be reinforced by memories of past failures and sins. Satan knows that if we dwell on past mistakes, we will not have the courage and confidence to live for Christ in the present. The fear of being rejected or betrayed may dominate one’s thinking and prevent a sound mind. The fear of health problems, growing old, or the fear of dying may prevent a sound mind. Satan can fill our minds with so many lies about ourselves, our sins, and our security that we find ourselves confused, unsettled, and distracted.

However, God has given us “*truth*” in His Word to dispel the distortions and lies of the devil. Jesus said, “*Thy word is truth*” (**John 17:17**). Regardless of our present circumstances, problems, temptations, or challenges the God who gave us His truth can give us clarity and a sound mind.

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