



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

October 18, 2015

P.O. Box 416
129 S. Chamberlain Ave.
Rockwood, TN 37854
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Elders:

Dana Carter
Kenneth Carter
Don Chandler

Deacons:

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 10:00 a.m.

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“WHEN ALL IS SAID AND DONE...”

We’ve all heard the statement, “When all is said and done, there is often more said than done.” Words are cheap. Work is costly. It is much easier to talk about doing something than it is to do it. It is challenging to practice what we preach.

Jesus warned his disciples about the scribes and Pharisees. *“Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do” (Matthew 23:3).* The NIV reads, *“They do not practice what they preach.”*

While we may say that this describes the way politicians operate – they tell what they will do but then don’t do it, or they say one thing and do another – let’s be honest, it also describes Christians. It may describe you and me more than we would like to admit.

We sing “O How I Love Jesus.” Do we show love for Jesus? The Lord said that *if we love Him we will do what He says* – obedience (**John 14:15, 21, 23**). We believe it and teach it; do we do it? Which of His commandments are we ignoring and neglecting?

We teach the “golden rule” principle (**Matthew 7:12**) treat others as you would want to be treated. Easy words to pronounce. Do we practice them? Are they mere words we utter? Is this an obligation for others but not ourselves?

We preach that Christians are to be forgiving and merciful toward others (**Ephesians 4:32; James 2:13**). Does our practice reflect our preaching? It’s hard to forgive. It’s easy to hold a grudge. Have you justified the harboring of resentment? Who do you need to forgive but you’re refusing to do so?

We instruct that Christians are to give into the church treasury on the first day of every week according to prosperity (**I Corinthians 16:2**); it’s also to be according to a personal plan or purpose as opposed to a haphazard offering or wonder what’s in my pocket today, type giving (**II Corinthians 9:7**). What words really describe your giving to the Lord? Do you make up your giving after you have been absent from the assembly?

We urge people to repent, for that’s what the Bible teaches (**Acts 2:38; 3:19**). Of what sin is God still waiting for you to repent? Is repentance something others need to do, but not you? When all is said and done, there is often more said than done.

Read **Matthew 23** carefully; Jesus had a label for those religious people who refused to practice what they preached – he called them “hypocrites!”

James Cudd

DRIVEN OR DRAWN?

Several years ago, long before children were required to be in car seats, a mother was having trouble with her young daughter staying seated and in her seat belt. The little girl, like most children of that time, wanted to stand up and see where she was going. The mother repeatedly told her daughter to “sit down and buckle up!” The daughter became rebellious, and continued to stand up in the seat while her mom was driving. Finally, the mother pulled over and threatened the little girl with something she could not resist. But, as she reluctantly sat down, the little girl defiantly said, “I may be sitting down, but in my mind I’m still standing!”

I’m afraid many Christians are like the little girl. They feel forced to do God’s will, when in their hearts, if they had their way, they would do something else. They feel compelled; they feel obligated; they feel it’s their duty to obey God. In other words, they feel driven to do God’s will because of the guilt of their sin and the desire for forgiveness instead of being drawn to do God’s will as a response to His love and grace. They are obedient but not surrendered. Think of the differences between cowboys driving cattle and a shepherd leading his sheep (**John 10**). While there are times we will need to obey God’s will even when our hearts are not in it, being drawn to follow God’s way is always better than being driven to follow God.

Jesus said, “*But I, when I am lifted up from this earth, will draw all men to myself*” (**John 12:32**). That’s exactly what happened in **Acts 2**. The preaching of the cross (**2:22-24**) so stirred the hearts of the crowd that they had to ask how they could be saved (**2:36-37**). Their hearts were pierced by the preaching of the cross, and they were drawn to surrender to Jesus as Lord and Christ. Yes, they wanted the forgiveness that came through baptism (**Acts 2:38**), but they wanted more than that. They were drawn by Jesus into changing their whole lives, as evidenced by being devoted to following God (**Acts 2:42**) and being devoted to each other (**Acts 2:43-47**).

There is a world of difference between being driven by fear and guilt and being drawn by love and grace. Fear of consequences may force a little girl to sit down in her seat, and it may drive a person to seek forgiveness from God, but responding to fear and guilt alone rarely changes the rebellion in a person’s heart. That may be a necessary place for some to start, but somewhere in our spiritual journey our hearts need to grow deeper than the external pressures of conformity into the transformational draw of a renewed mind (**Romans 12:2**). A spiritually mature Christian grows beyond duty to desire, beyond obligation to longing, beyond strict obedience to total surrender. It is difficult to remain faithful to God if our hearts are driven only by fear; it’s difficult to fall away if our hearts are drawn by Jesus’ love.

Joe Chesser