



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

October 23, 2016

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

Elders:

Dana Carter
Kenneth Carter
Don Chandler

Deacons:

Kendall Bear
Larry Brackett
Roger Carter
Steve McCreary

Minister:

Todd Houston

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

Email:

rockwdcc@gmail.com

Website:

Rockwoodchurchofchrist.com

FREEDOM

We have heard the cry for freedom for many generations. The children of Israel cried out for deliverance from the Egyptians, and all through history men have fought to be free. Many have given their lives to be free from the enslavement of other men. Our own nation has heard the rallying cry for freedom. We have fought war after war in which hundreds of thousands of young Americans have lost their lives in order to preserve our freedom. But all too often, while man was fighting for freedom, he was becoming enslaved to Satan.

What is enslavement to Satan? Those who give in to the *“lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, and the pride of life”* (**I John 2:16**) are under the power of Satan. It is heartbreaking for faithful Christians to see their friends and loved ones caught up in the works of the flesh: *“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness. Lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance. Emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like...”* (**Galatians 5:19-21**).

We enjoy true freedom only in Christ when we obey the gospel plan of salvation: hear (**Romans 10:17**), believe (**Mark 16:16**), repent (**Acts 17:30**), confess (**Romans 10:10**), be baptized (**Acts 2:38**). When we obey from the heart God forgives us our sins, and the blood of Christ continues to cleanse us as long as we abide in Him. As children of God, we have the privilege of going to Him daily in prayer, knowing He will forgive our sins and shortcomings.

Freedom from the oppression of man is indeed a wonderful blessing, but freedom of the soul from Satan’s power is the most important freedom we will ever experience. Only in Christ can we know that joy. When we choose to follow Christ we are told to put away the works of the flesh, and to embrace the fruit of the Spirit in our lives: *“...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law”* (**Galatians 5:22-23**).

Only when we quit living a life of sin can we break the hold that Satan has on us. Real freedom is found in Jesus Christ our Lord. *“You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free”* (**John 8:32**).

Dale Grissom

CHRISTIAN, BE QUIET

I don't know that I have ever heard a sermon on the need for quiet. Yet, the Bible teaches that God will "*quiet you by His love*" (**Zephaniah 3:17**). Peter lauds the need for a quiet spirit, which is "*very precious in God's sight*" (**I Peter 3:4**).

Habakkuk instructs all people "*...the Lord is in His holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before Him*" (**Habakkuk 2:20**).

We need to stop talking so we can listen. We need to turn off the screens so we can meditate on God. We need to shut off the radio, CD player, iPod and turn down the noise of life so we can truly hear God's word.

Being quiet helps us to concentrate on what needs to change in our hearts, minds and lives. So often the voices of worldly passion, selfishness, lust, fear, hatred are present within us. We have skillfully ignored them so long that they blend in with noise of life. As Christians, we can silence those worldly callings as we put off the old man and put on the new.

T.O. Chisholm penned these beautiful words that teach just what I'm trying to say:

*Buried with Christ, my blessed Redeemer,
Dead to the old life of folly and sin;
Satan may call, the world may entreat me,
There is no voice that answers within.
Dead to the world, to voices that call me,
Living anew, obedient but free;
Dead to the joys that once did enthrall me –
Yet 'tis not I, Christ liveth in me.*

Quiet forces us to listen to our inner man as he calls us to reform our character. Many of us don't hear our own soul's cry to seek God's saving grace.

We've turned up the distraction volume knob squelch the pains of guilt and remorse and the cry for repentance.

Why are we so afraid to hear the call of our own broken lives? Some try to drown out the quiet with booze or drugs. Some try to hush the Word of God from working on their conscience by filling every moment with some noisy distraction, foolishly thinking: "if I don't hear it I won't have to deal with it."

Habakkuk knew that focusing on the holiness of the Lord takes a halting of everything else. That is why he calls for silence in God's temple. I wonder if we remember that we are God's temple. God should occupy the throne room of our hearts. This calls for our lives to be sober and reverent reflections of the Heavenly Host reigning in our hearts.

Another need for being quiet is that we should be more careful what we say. We really don't have to insert our opinion into every conversation. We don't need to try to say everything we think. In fact, we would be much better off if we were "*quick to hear, slow to speak*" (**James 1:19**).

Being quiet includes refraining from gossiping, slandering, bragging, boasting, vainly flattering, lying, swearing, cursing, tale-bearing, criticizing, speaking words of contention, course jesting, idle words, and euphemisms, etc. Imagine how much quieter we would be if all this speech was removed from our conversations. **Joe Chase**