



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

October 26, 2014

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 am

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Rockwoodchurchofchrist.com

EZRA – A TRUE HERO

Ezra is not one of the men I usually think about when someone mentions great heroes of the Old Testament. Yet, this wise and good man left us an example of one who dedicated his life to God's service, trusted God, and served Him with all his heart. The Bible tells us that Ezra "*prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments*" (**Ezra 7:10**).

Ezra lived during the time the Israelites were captives of the Babylonian empire; a time when the Law of Moses was God's law for the Jews. We are no longer under that law. We have been given a new covenant by Jesus Christ. Even though the law has changed, the necessity of hearing and obeying God is no less important under the new covenant than it was in the days of Ezra. God has always desired our hearts and obedience.

Just as Ezra prepared his heart to seek the Lord, we must earnestly commit our hearts to hearing the gospel of Christ (**Romans 10:17**). When Ezra lived, most of the Israelites had long ago forgotten or rebelled against God; yet Ezra studied and obeyed the law given by Moses. Many today look down on those who profess Christ, but we too must continue to study and obey from the heart the gospel of Christ (**Romans 6:17**). Ezra had a desire to teach the law to the Israelites. Jesus has commanded that we go into all the world and teach the gospel to everyone (**Mark 16:15**). When God moved the king's heart to allow Ezra and other Israelite captives to return to Jerusalem, Ezra praised God for putting this into the king's heart. We too, must always thank and praise God for His blessings to us.

Ezra set his heart on obeying God. You and I must do the same today.

Ezra was a true hero for God. May we strive to follow his example.

John K. Willis

HOW JESUS DEALT WITH STRESS

By **Luke 6** in the chronicle of Jesus, His ministry is in full swing. Practically, this meant that while He had not only a following of supporters and disciples, but He also had a company of enemies who followed Him and sought to put His ministry to death.

Around the time we get a glimpse of the hateful atmosphere these enemies sought to create for Jesus (**Luke 6:6-11**). While in the synagogue on the Sabbath, Jesus came upon a man with a withered hand. He knew the volatility of this situation because He knew that if He healed the man of his affliction then He would be breaking the scribes' and Pharisees' personal rules about the Sabbath, rules that God had not authorized, but rules they were nonetheless very protective of.

Yet, could He not do for this man what He could? Even if it lit a fuse of controversy, to prove Himself as the Son of God and to healing an affliction, was He still not obligated to heal the man?

You know this Savior as I do. You know what He did. Jesus commanded the man with the withered hand, "*Stretch out your hand!*" He did as Jesus ordered and his hand was restored.

You would think that anyone with only a grain of compassion would be rejoicing...but not the scribes and Pharisees. **Verse 11** says, "*But they themselves were filled with rage.*"

Try to put yourself in Jesus' place. It is not farfetched to try this because one reason He came to this earth was so that we might connect to Him as "*One who has been tempted in all things as we are*" (**Hebrews 4:15**).

What would you be feeling? Frightened? Panicky? Anxious, to say the least; these men were ready to tear Him limb from limb. Even more importantly, what would you compromise? Give in to their rage and concede?

Well, the next verse reveals what we should consider to be a model of what our own response ought to be when we are in pressure-cooker kinds of situations. It is written, "*It was at this time that He went off to the mountain to pray, and he spent the whole night in prayer to God.*" (**Luke 6:12**) Escape and pray!

Escaping is fairly natural. When under extreme stress, most all escape: to the television, to the lake, to take a walk. However Jesus added a necessary ingredient, He prayed. One has to wonder whether effective stress management can be attained without prayer. Probably not. **Floyd Kaiser**