



# Rockwood Church of Christ

## The Proclaimer

October 8, 2023

P.O. Box 416  
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**Elders:**

Kendall Bear  
Dana Carter  
Don Chandler

**Deacons:**

Larry Brackett  
Aaron Evans  
Larry Hill  
Steve McCreary

**Minister:**

Dale Barger

**Service Times:**

**Sunday**

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

**Wednesday**

Bible Study 7 pm

**Email:**

rockwdcc@gmail.com

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Rockwoodchurchofchrist.com

## The Excellent Ones

*“As for the saints in the land, they are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight” (Psalm 16:3, ESV).*

In the passage above, David revealed his love for his kinsmen. They were God’s people, which made them majestic and noble. That’s high praise for people who weren’t perfect. David’s fellow-Israelites made their share of mistakes. They had their flaws. They committed their sins. Yet, inspired of the Holy Spirit, David called them “*excellent*” – warts, blemishes, and all.

Does David’s complimentary language imply approval of sin? Hardly. Every adult who has ever received proper commendation, even commendation directly from God, has received it in spite of his or her sins (except Jesus, of course, who was sinless). David’s assessment of God’s people was a general statement intended to highlight their exalted status as God’s chosen ones.

God still has an exalted opinion of his people today, even though we are far from perfect. Christians are “*a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession*” (1 **Pet. 2:9**). “*But the Lord takes pleasure in those who fear him, in those who hope in his steadfast love*” (Psa. **147:11**). God loves us so much that he calls us his children (1 **John 3:1**). Jesus is not ashamed to call us his brothers and sisters (Heb. **2:11**).

But doesn’t God know we have weaknesses and flaws? Yes. Doesn’t he know that we mess up from time to time and sin? Yes. Doesn’t he know that we can’t be perfect no matter how hard we try? Yes. God doesn’t love perfect people only. He loves you (1 **John 4:8,19**). He chose you (Eph. **1:4**). He honored you (Heb. **2:6-8**).

Doesn’t that make you want to serve him with all your heart?

Eddie Parrish  
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# The Formula for Failure

I believe each of us desires to succeed. We want to succeed at our business, our families, and in life in general. I think I can also confidently say that we all want to succeed spiritually. It is often said by many a Christian, “*I want to hear the Lord say to me, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant.’*”

However, the harsh and sobering reality is that many will fail. They wish for it but don’t work at it. They adopt the philosophy of the Christian life, but they never truly apply those philosophies, and thus they fail.

Looking to the example of the man who buried his talent, I believe we can find a proven formula for failure. I am sure you have read this section of scripture in Matthew 25 many times. Jesus tells this parable to explain a point about service, accountability and judgment. It serves as a source of encouragement for those who devote themselves to service for their master, and a warning against idleness.

We are well aware of the choices of the man who was given one talent (a rather large sum of money), and the Lord’s condemnation of that man (see **Matt. 25:26, 30**). Certainly, everyone would agree that the one-talent man failed (see **Matt. 25:15**). If we look at his reasoning and his actions, I believe we see a formula for failure.

First, we see that the one-talent man was guilty of faulty thinking. When he was required to give an account, the one-talent man basically said of his master, “*You are a man who is hard to please.*” He reasoned that nothing he did would please his master, so he decided to do nothing (see **Matt. 25:24**). Many today reason in a similar way. They will say it is just too hard, or it is someone else’s duty to do “*so and so.*” They conclude in their thinking (although they will rarely ever admit it), that the Christian life is too demanding and difficult, so why even try? (However, attending some or all of the services of the church, that is doable.)

Next, we can observe that fear played a major role in the decision making of the one-talent man. The man said, “*I was afraid*” (**Matt. 25:25**). Therefore, he did not do what he was called to do. He was crippled, paralyzed, and frozen by the emotion of dread and anxiety known as fear. There were things he had the “*ability*” to do (**25:15**), there were things he “*ought*” to do (**25:27**), but he did nothing.

Looking briefly at the example of the one-talent man, I believe we can note a formula for failure.

Here it is: **FAULTY THINKING + FEAR = FAILURE.**

Whether we are talking about personal growth via your Bible study, your personal prayer life, or your service to the Lord (e.g. evangelism, visiting, benevolence, etc.), if you want to fail, just apply the formula above.

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