



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

September 16, 2018

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

“YOU DO NOT BELIEVE”

It is very peculiar that we as a body of believers are often accused of not believing in certain things. Here is a list of ideas that from time to time people claim about us:

1. “You are the folks who don’t believe in miracles.” This of course is not true. We believe in every miraculous event recorded in the Bible. We believe that God is omnipotent and that the very universe we live in was formed by His unlimited miraculous power. If we did not believe in miracles, we would have no hope, because the resurrection of Christ was the greatest miracle of all. **(I Corinthians 15:1-20).**

2. “You are the folks who don’t believe in prophecy.” This of course is not true. We believe in every Biblical prophecy recorded. We believe in the prophecies concerning judgment and eternity yet to be fulfilled. We believe that the prophecies about Christ in the Old Testament were fulfilled in the incarnate God, who has accomplished His work **(John 5:39; Luke 24:44).**

3. “You are the folks who don’t believe in music.” This of course is not true. We believe in every example of musical worship displayed by the New Testament church. We believe that this is the pattern we are obligated to follow **(Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 2:12).**

4. “You are the folks who don’t believe others are saved.” This of course is not true. We believe *“He who believes and is baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:16).* We believe *“And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2:38).* We believe *“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).* We believe *“...the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God” (I Corinthians 1:18).*

It is not that we do not believe in miracles, prophecy, music, or the salvation of others. It is simply that concerning these we choose to believe God’s commandments, rather than man’s opinion.

“But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they” (Acts 15:11).

Jeremiah Tatum

THORN IN THE FLESH

In Paul's second letter to the Corinthians he writes about a problem that he was having that he simply refers to as a thorn in the flesh (**II Corinthians 12:7**). Over the years Bible scholars have tried to determine exactly what the thorn was. Some have speculated that it was a vision problem due to Paul's comments to the Galatians regarding giving him their eyes (**Galatians 4:14-15**). Yet, it still seems that there is no way to be certain. What we can know is that there are some lessons to be learned from Paul's words about the thorn in the flesh.

First, Paul stated that the reason that he was given the thorn was to prevent him from being exalted above measure (**II Corinthians 12:7**). This is not surprising since we read that Paul and Barnabas could scarcely keep the people at Lystra from exalting them to the level of gods (**Acts 14:12-18**). If you recall the story of Gideon you will also remember that, Gideon had raised a huge army that God cut down to 300 men. The reason God did that was to prevent the people from thinking that they had delivered themselves (**Judges 7:2**). I suppose sometimes we need to be brought down a notch or two.

The second lesson we can learn is that even Paul had prayers that were not answered the way he wanted. He prayed about this three times, but the thorn remained (**II Corinthians 12:8-9**). John said that we know that if we ask anything according to God's will, He hears us (**I John 5:14**). It simply was not according to God's plan to remove Paul's infirmity. It may not have been the best or the easiest for Paul, but God had a purpose for Paul's situation. He told Paul that his strength was made perfect in weakness (**II Corinthians 12:9**). The answer fits perfectly with the first lesson discussed about Paul's infirmity. Paul's personal weakness revealed the power of God. Paul did not need to be great of his own volition in order for God to use him for something special.

The third lesson comes from Paul's reaction to God's answer. There are many people that get mad at God when He does not answer the way they like. I have heard of people saying things like, "If God does not answer this prayer I will never be back at church again," or "God is not real, because if He was, He would not allow this to happen." Paul, however, did not get mad at God or whine about his situation. Instead, Paul found a reason to take pleasure in his infirmity (**II Corinthians 12:10**).

The next time you are faced with a trial try to keep Paul's situation in mind. God does not speak to us exactly as He did with Paul. Therefore, we may never know why we face a specific trial. This we can know if people see us keep our head held high in times of trouble it gives us an opportunity to be a good example. If we get mad at God we may lose our own soul, as well as the opportunity to help someone else.

Doug Tooley