



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

September 23, 2018

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:

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

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Rockwoodchurchofchrist.com

WHAT I OWE MY HOME CONGREGATION! I Corinthians 12:27

When I became a Christian, that very action constituted me a member of the Lord's church. I did not "join the church," I was added to the church by the Lord (**Acts 2:47**). It was not God's plan that I would be a member of the church at large, but that I would identify with, be a part of, and worship and work with a local congregation. As such I would be under special obligation to a local body of believers and worship and serve under the shepherds of that local church. It is here –

That I owe a wholesome influence in the community. I owe the example of a godly life. The light of Christ is to shine through me every day, everywhere – at home, at work, in recreation, in my neighborhood. I must "*live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world*" (**Titus 2:12**).

That I owe friendliness to all visitors. I want them to feel at home with the warmth of a smile and a hearty greeting. An attitude that says we are glad you are with us, we love you and please come back.

That I owe regular and consistent giving. The local church has financial obligations that must be met. Since I am a member of the body, I have the privilege to give each week as God has prospered me. And though there are times when I must be absent, my contributions should find their way to the treasury of the local church. Even when on vacation, I should leave my weekly contribution or make it up when I return.

That I owe faithful and consistent attendance. The attendance is the life of the church, and demonstrates in a visible way what the church means to me. It is a valid measurement of my love and faithfulness to God.

That I owe encouragement and support to the elders of the local church. My elders need my prayers to help them be strong and efficient in their leadership. Their families need our prayers and thoughtfulness as well. Our attitude of "*esteem for their works sake*" will lighten the burden they bear.

That I owe outreach toward the lost and hurting. In my own way I want to contribute to the noble work of leading souls for Christ (**Luke 19:10**). I want to share what I know of Christ in word and deed. Jesus' mission was to "*seek and save the lost*," and I must develop a passion for souls, using every available means to reach them.

That I owe warmth, fellowship, forgiveness and edification. I must not allow the church to become a cold, frigid place, but a place of warmth and love. A place where we go, glow, and grow!

Do you have that sense of belonging? What the local church becomes depends upon our participation!

Clarence DeLoach

THAT YOUR JOY MAY BE FULL

How do we achieve happiness? Isn't happiness what we all want in life? We do things every single day that we believe will make us happy or at least add to our own sense of satisfaction or completion. The majority of those things are physical in nature. We eat what we want. We go where we want. We do what we want. We think about what we want. Ultimately our happiness is usually predicated on how much we get what we want in life. Ironically, this is why we struggle to have a joy that is full.

Just before Jesus went to the cross He spoke to His apostles about joy. When He spoke of it He said nothing about finding it in temporary blessings. He mentioned nothing about good circumstances or the fulfillment of personal wishes. He basically narrowed joy down to two things and He encouraged His disciples to understand how those things would lead to their peace.

Jesus said there is joy in bearing fruit. (John 15:1-11). Read these verses and you will see that God expects us to grow and bear spiritual fruit in Him. As the true vine, Christ is the source of our daily nourishment. As the branches, we are dependent solely upon Him for our ability to be healthy and fruitful and grow in the world.

Jesus pointed out that joy in this passage included abiding in Him and His love, as well as keeping His commandments and working for His cause. Notice He speaks nothing about doing the things we want to do that give us momentary pleasure. Joy is a fruit of the Spirit. How can we expect to have fullness of joy when our attempts to gain it are based on things that are totally unassociated with its true identity?

Jesus said there is joy in overcoming the world (John 16:33). It is not in the absence of problems that we find happiness. We often try to create for ourselves a world that is perfect in our viewing – with all the things we need for comfort that is at same time shielded from any of the things that can cause us pain. This is wasted effort, for Jesus said simply, *“In the world you will have tribulation.”*

It may be hard for us to accept, but life is going to be full of troubles (**Job 14:1**). The sooner that we realize we cannot prescribe the conditions of our own existence the better off we will be. The disciples did not want to believe that Jesus was going to suffer and die and eventually leave them. Every time he began to mention it they even tried to rebuke Him and tell Him to say it would not be so. Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection proved to His followers that true happiness and joy is not the absence of pain and disappointment. It is instead found in the faith that brings each of us the victory over the cares and anxieties of living in the world.

The best thing we can do from the outset in our search for joy and happiness and peace is to realize that there are going to be obstacles that will constantly get in our way. When we stop and consider what Jesus was able to accomplish in order to overcome the pain that comes with sin and death we will be inspired to toughen up in times of difficulty and remember that our ultimate goal is to live in Heaven with God.

What a beautiful thought given to us by the Savior – *“These things I have spoken to you, that in Me, you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world”* (**John 16:33**).

Our joy can be full, but only in Christ.

Jeremiah Tatum