



# Rockwood Church of Christ

## The Proclaimer

September 2, 2018

P.O. Box 416  
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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

**Email:**

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Rockwoodchurchofchrist.com

## YOU ARE BEING STALKED!

There have been a few times when I have been followed, stalked if you will, by animals. Once by a cat that wanted to play, once by a skunk on the UAM campus (who didn't want to play), and once by a large dog that I am sure was trying to hamstring me. We have heard stories of animals hunting men as prey, even tigers taking children from villages, or a bear following a hunter. Most of us probably won't have to face threats like these, but we are being stalked every day by something far scarier and far more dangerous than an animal. We, and our families, are at risk, yet most people ignore the stalker.

We walk through life ignoring the threats that often surround us. Did you know that Satan is out there right now, stalking you like prey? *"Your adversary, the Devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour"* (**I Peter 5:8**). Jesus warned about false prophets who *"Come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves"* (**Matthew 7:15**). Paul warned elders: *"Savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock"* (**Acts 20:29**).

We face dangers every day, yet we have grown accustomed to them. Our spiritual enemies can do us tremendous harm. None of us would knowingly ignore a coyote, wolf, or prowling lion, that was stalking our family on a walk. But that is what we do when we allow sin to "tag along" with us! Each day we become more comfortable with the world, each day we move just a little farther away from God until Satan devours us.

Of course, we cannot hide. In fact, Jesus sends us out, calling us, *"Sheep in the midst of wolves."* But He warns: *"Be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves"* (**Matthew 10:16**). Don't ignore sin as it stalks your family. If you do, you will eventually get bitten. We must walk abroad in this world, but we must be vigilant as we go! Surround yourself with other Christians to help, and keep your eyes open to spiritual dangers that surround us.

**Brad Tolbert**

## A FEW GRAY HAIRS

*“Gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not” (Hosea 7:9).*

“I see some gray hair!” We all hear those words eventually. The hoary head is one of creation’s Way of reminding us that our lives are like a flower. They bloom and fade quickly.

Hosea did not bring up the subject of our hair turning gray just to teach us that it is a sign of aging. As he does so often in this book, he uses a simple fact of nature to illustrate a spiritual truth. Gray hair is a sign of aging and with aging comes a loss of strength. The first part of **Hosea 7:9** says, *“Strangers have devoured his strength and he knoweth it not.”*

Age comes upon us before we know it. We lose strength before we realize it. Like a man who is beginning to age, the Israelites had lost their spiritual vigor. The prophet said “strangers” had consumed their strength. The strangers were ungodly heathen. How did these people drain the spiritual strength of the Israelites? The preceding verse tells us *“Ephraim, he hath mixed himself among the people; Ephraim is a cake not turned” (Hosea 7:8)*. The people of Israel had blended in with the Gentiles. They had accepted their ways and even worshipped their gods. They went along to get along. In the end, they were like a half-baked cake.

Like a man who doesn’t realize his hair is beginning to turn gray, these Israelites lost their strength of their convictions before they knew it. They did not see how weak they had become. They were oblivious to their true condition, so Hosea holds up a mirror to show them.

The prophet Hosea may as well have been talking about Christians today. Many children of God have mixed with the world. They have closed their eyes and compromised. They have given in on one point and backed down on another until there is little spirituality left. They have learned to think, talk, and live like the world. The people around them use bad language, dress indecently, and have sex outside of marriage, so they go along with those things to have friends. They have been taught to be tolerant and respectful of all religions, so they refuse to disagree with false doctrines because they tell themselves that arguing with people is not Christlike. Little by little, they give in until their convictions are so diluted that others cannot tell the difference between them and the world.

But like a man who is unaware that his hair is becoming gray these Christians don’t realize how weak they have become. They may even smile and tell themselves they are as strong as they ever were. The pleasures of this world and the deceitfulness of riches have sapped their strength and they don’t even know it.

*“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever” (I John 2:15-17).*

**Kerry Duke**