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# The “Sower”

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**August 10, 2008**



**Ron Bartanen: Preacher**

## **Times of Worship**

- Bible Classes.....9:30 a.m.
- Morning Worship.....10:30 a.m.
- Evening Worship.....6:00 p.m.
- Wed. Bible Study.....6:00 p.m.

## **SMILING AT THE STORM**

A little girl walked to and from school daily. Though the weather that morning was questionable, and clouds were forming, she made her daily trek to the elementary school.

As the afternoon progressed, the winds whipped up, along with thunder and lightning. The mother of the little girl felt concerned that her daughter would be frightened

as she walked home from school, and she herself feared that the electrical storm might harm her child.

Following the roar of thunder, lightning, like a flaming sword, would cut through the sky. Full of concern, the mother quickly got into her car and drove along the route to her child’s school. As she did so, she saw her little girl walking along, but at each flash of lightning, the child would stop, look up and smile. Another and another were to follow quickly and with each the little girl would look at the streak of lightning and smile.

When the mother’s car drew up beside the child she lowered the window and called to her, “What are you doing? Why do you keep stopping?”

The child answered, “I am trying to look pretty. God keeps taking my picture.”

Perhaps it would do us all good to have the attitude of this little girl toward the storms that come our way.

“For thou hast been a stronghold to the poor, a stronghold to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shade from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall” (Isaiah 25:4).

May God bless you today as you face the storms that come your way.

--Tom Moore, Temple, Tex., e-mailed by Paul Kent, Georgetown, IL

## I'VE APPROVED OF THIS MESSAGE

How many times have you heard this during this campaign season? Won't you be glad when the national election has passed? Regarding that phrase, it is heard at the end of almost every campaign commercial. I wonder if God would say that about us.

Obviously, preachers and teachers need to present a message that would be approved by God. However, it does not stop there. Isn't the life of every Christian a message that is being presented to a lost and dying world? After all, Christians are to shine as lights in the world. (Matthew 5:4-16; Philippians 2:15)

Live so that God could look at the sermon you are preaching by your life, and say, "I'VE APPROVED OF THIS MESSAGE."

--*The Lantern*, Highway church, Sullivan

## CLOTHED PROPERLY

"Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him" (Matthew 3:13-14).

While Jesus Christ is God's Son and was the sinless one by holy righteousness, he was called by God to commit himself to God's creative and redemptive will by being baptized by John. Though sinless and in no need of personal repentance, Jesus justified God's judgment on a nation that needed to repent. Jesus was a part of this nation. He joined them in a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. In being with his sinful family, he also saw that identification as having its place in God's redeeming action, and so he insisted on fulfilling all righteousness. You can see this illustrated in Galatians 3:26-27. In 3:26, Paul insists that the Galatians are sons of God "through faith" in Christ Jesus, and goes on to say "all of you who were united with Christ in baptism have been clothed with Christ." He's explaining that they became children of God, not by commitment to the law of Moses because it wasn't into Judaism or into the Jewish community they had been baptized: it was Christ they were baptized into, and it was Christ with whom they were clothed. They hadn't come into a particular ethnic,

cultural, or social society by faith. They entered Christ in whom all that divides and segregates humans is done away with.

—Kemp church bulletin

## THE UNCHANGEABLE

In all of our lives we find constant change. We never know from one day to the next what to expect. Some of the changes may be for the good, such as improvement of health, a better job, etc., and some for the worse, such as ill health, the loss of a job, etc. There are some things, however, that never change—and thankfully so.

The laws of nature, for instance, are constant. From creation, a stone dislodged from a cliff would fall at 96 feet per second. That has not changed. Water that thousands of years ago would boil at 180 degrees at sea level will do the same today. It is assuring to know that there are certain absolutes that we can depend upon.

Some obviously believe that God is changeable. Otherwise they would not think to make His word obsolete. We need to share the conviction of the Psalmist who prayed, "Thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end" (Psa. 102:27). And we need to again hear Moses who declared, "God is not a man that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" (Numbers 23:19).

It is as true today as it was almost 2000 years ago, that Jesus is "the way, the truth and the life," the one way to the Father (John 14:6). It is as true today as it was then that response to the gospel by obedient faith in Christ will secure the forgiveness of sins and acceptance into the Lord's body, the church (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38, 47). There is still but one body of faith to guide us, and for which we must contend, and it is unchanging (Jude 3).

—Ron

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***"As the hart panteth after the waterbrook, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" (Psalms 42:1-2).***

**We're thankful** for the presence of each one today, and especially any that may be VISITORS. If you are a visitor, please sign our guest register. It is our hope that you will return at every opportunity.

- ***“THE ALL-SEEING EYE”*** will be this morning's message, with Psalms 139:1-6 as the reading. This evening's lesson will be, ***“A Cause for Concern,”*** the second in a series on Galatians. The evening reading will be Gal. 1:6-12.
- **NURSING HOME:** This Tuesday, the 12<sup>th</sup>, is the evening for us to bring the service at the Arthur Nursing Home. We meet at 6:45 p.m. We hope you will join us.
- **STATE FAIR EXHIBIT:** For any who may be attending the State Fair at Springfield (this week through the 17<sup>th</sup>), be sure to look up the Churches of Christ exhibit. Even if you can't be there, be sure to pray for the success of the exhibit. Tracts will be given out, and some will be enrolled in Bible Correspondence Courses.
- **IN OUR PRAYERS:** Continue to remember Paul, Dean, Inez, Lyla, Doris, Lester, Rodger, Linda's brother, Charles Moore (Tex.), Lewis Carter (Ind.), our men and women in service, and our nation's and world's leaders in all quests for peace.