

September 14, 2008

THE SOWER



Arthur Church of Christ, 415 West 4th Street, Arthur, IL 61911

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REDEFINING TERMS

- My idea of unity: Everybody agreeing with me.
- My idea of cooperation: Everybody working with me—carrying out my plans.
- My idea of visitation: Everybody coming to see me.
- My idea of a fine eldership: Elders that I can control.
- My idea of sympathy: Everybody suffering with me.
- My idea of a sinner: The man for whom I have a personal dislike.
- My idea of a righteous man: The man I like.
- My idea of a meek man: The man who yields to me.
- My idea of a contentious man: One who takes issue with me.
- My idea of a wise man: The man who listens to me.
- My idea of brotherly love: Everybody petting me.
- My idea of music: Everybody singing my praises.

--Diotrophes; via *Logansport Lifelines*, Ind.

A SPECIAL DOG—

A minister delivered a sermon in ten minutes one Sunday morning, which was about a third of the usual length of his sermons. He explained, "I regret to inform you that my dog, who is very fond of eating paper, ate that portion of my sermon which I was unable to deliver this morning."

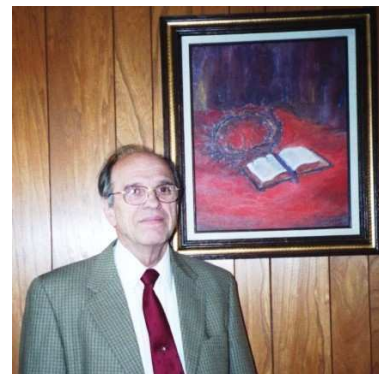
After the service, a visitor from another church shook hands with the preacher and said, "Preacher, if that dog of yours has any pups, I want to get one for my minister."

"A merry heart doeth good..." --Prov. 17:22

Serious question: How much hunger for the Word do you bring on Sundays? Read Matthew 5:6. --*House to House; Heart to Heart*

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.



Ron Bartanen: Minister

AGELESS OBSERVATIONS—

"If you don't read the newspaper, you are uninformed. If you do read the newspaper, you are misinformed." --Mark Twain

"A government that robs Peter to pay Paul can always depend upon the support of Paul." --George Bernard Shaw

"Democracy must be something more than two wolves and a sheep voting on what to have for dinner." --Civil Libertarian James Bovard, 1994

"Giving money and power to government is like giving whisky and car keys to teenage boys." --Civil Libertarian P.J. O'Rourke

"The only difference between a tax man and a taxidermist is that the taxidermist leaves the skin." --Mark Twain

--*Decatur Herald*

“Praise ye the LORD. Praise the LORD, O my soul. While I live will I praise the Lord: I will sing praises unto my God while I have my being” (Psalms 146:1-2).

- **“CHRISTIANITY IS CHRIST”** will be this morning’s sermon topic, with Genesis 1:1-5 and John 1:1-5 as the reading. This evening’s message, another in our Galatians series, will be, **“The Law and the Promise,”** Galatians 3:10-18 being the reading.
- **BIBLES FOR THE UKRAINE:** Sunday, the 28th, is the deadline set by Eastern European Mission, a work of the Prestoncrest church in Dallas, Tex., to raise \$1,000,000 to provide Bibles for 366,000 students in 1,188 schools in the Ukrainian state of Donetsk. This figures out to about \$2.73 per student who will be given access to the word of God. Three CDs and other material concerning this effort are available on the stand in the foyer. If you wish to have fellowship in this work, checks should be made out to Eastern European Mission or to the Arthur church, with EEM on the memo line.

IN OUR PRAYERS



Continue to pray for Paul, Nadine, Dean, Inez, Lyla, Lester, Rodger, Linda’s brother (seriously ill with cancer), Charles Moore (Tex.), Lewis Carter (Ind.), Doris’s former brother-in-law (Frank) and Ed & Norma Stocker (Ind.). *** Jack Hilliard writes that Lola is in the hospital with heart problems. She has a leaky valve, which they hope to treat with medicine rather than surgery. Their address is 841 O’Neal Ln., Henderson, TN 38340.

*** Continue to remember our men and women in service, and our nation’s and world’s leaders as a way for peace is sought. Also, pray that as our nation prepares for the presidential election that the one chosen will have the wisdom to direct our country aright.

GOSPEL MEETING at Shelbyville: The Shelbyville church (S. Charles at 2nd St.) will conduct a Gospel Meeting Sept. 21-24, with Paul Jarrett of Naples, Fla. as evangelist. Evening services are at 7:00. See the bulletin board for details.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

As the prophet Jeremiah lamented the growing corruption of his nation, Judah, a once-God-fearing people, he admonished, “Thus saith the Lord, ‘Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.’ But they said, ‘We will not walk therein’” (Jeremiah 6:16). Jeremiah, by divine inspiration, realized that as the nation rejected God and His standards, defined by him as “the old paths,” they were about to bring God’s judgment upon themselves. His beloved nation was disintegrating before his eyes as he continued to call upon the people to walk again in the way of God. God’s message through him was, “Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? Nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore shall they fall among them that fall; in the time of their visitation they shall be cast down, saith the Lord” (Jer. 8:12). Their “time of visitation” came in B.C. 586 as God ceased to be their protector, and they fell before the kingdom of Babylon.

While Jeremiah 6:16 has often been used to emphasize the need for the church of our Lord to return to Biblical standards, which is good, it may also be seen as a call to any nation that has once acknowledged God and His protective hand, but is turning away from Him. The “old paths” of our nation’s “founding fathers” were found in an acknowledgement of God, His providence and His laws. While the ACLU and other liberal elements endeavor, under the guise of “separation of church and state,” seek to outlaw God—especially the God of the Bible—from our culture, the capstone of the Washington Monument in Washington, D.C. reads, “Praise Be to God,” and, “The heavens declare the glory of God” (Psa. 19:1) is engraved on a Library of Congress wall. While our nation was never a theocracy, yet the “old paths” of our nation were in recognition of the God who has endowed all of mankind with “certain inalienable rights...(as) life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” For us to now turn from Him is, in effect, to thumb our noses at Him.

It must be evident to all, but especially to those of us who are older, that our beloved nation has rapidly given ground to those who would undermine our rich heritage as a God-fearing nation. Do we have cause for concern? I am convinced that we do. While space limits me, I would refer you to two items of interest found on the Internet just recently.

The first is the news that *Hallmark* has now rolled out same-sex wedding cards. While most states still honor the traditional and Biblical portrayal of marriage as a commitment between a man and a woman, the issuing of wedding cards for homosexual relationships recognizes the growing movement to redefine marriage, while at the same time adding to the legitimacy of it.

The second is an item from *Islamist-watch.org* illustrating the increasing danger of Islamic culture as it clashes with a society where freedom has been largely taken for granted. The publication of a novel, *The Jewel of Medina*, by writer Sherry Jones, which concerns the life of Mohammed, was dropped by Random House Publishing due to Islamic threats. This was not the first. “*The Sheikh’s New Clothes*, by Nancy Kobrin, which concerned suicide terrorism, was to be published by Looseleaf. but was dropped for security reasons. While Christian issues are routinely targeted, are Muslim issues to be handled with kid gloves? Is this where political correctness is taking us? As our nation seemingly seeks to shed its Christian image, both secular humanism and Islam now vie to fill the vacuum.

As we see our nation abandoning its Christian heritage, it is not difficult to see that we, not unlike Judah, are in peril. National repentance is needed. May we “stand in the ways and see (what is happening), and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein.”

--Ron