



# Arthur Church of Christ

415 West 4th St., Arthur, IL 61911-1303



## The "Sower"

April 12, 2009



Ron Bartanen, Minister

### Times of Worship

Bible Classes-----9:30 am

Morning Worship-10:30 am

Evening Worship—6:00 pm

Wed. Bible Study---1:30 pm

**WELCOME** to today's Bible class and/or worship assembly. If you are a **VISITOR**, we especially appreciate your decision to meet with us. It is our hope that you will return at every opportunity.

Have you checked our web site lately?

[www.arthurchurchofchrist.com](http://www.arthurchurchofchrist.com)

Be sure to visit the "Apologetics Press" link, now in both English and Spanish. Also newly added: Sermon Outlines and "Family Minutes" (Dale Smith).

**PRAYER CONCERNS:** Woody was in the hospital recently for 3 days, but is now back at his daughter's in Mt. Zion. \*\*\* Continue to remember Paul & Nadine, Inez, Dean, Lyla, Lester, Rodger, Mary's mother, Charles Moore, (Tex.), Lewis & Mary Carter (Fla.), our service men and women, and the leaders of our nation and other nations that we may have peace and the cause of Christ may have access to all.

**"CHURCH MEMBERSHIP OR DISCIPLESHIP?"** will be this morning's message, with Matt. 28:18-20 as the reading.. This evening's lesson will be, **"Why Obey God?"** Exodus 5:2 will be the text.

## BURDENS

*"Cast your burden on the Lord, and He shall sustain you; He shall never permit the righteous to be moved" (Psa. 55:22).*

This promise tells us that Christians do have burdens. David is not talking about concern for others, although it's good to bear one another's burdens. Instead, he means the burdens that the Lord allows each one of us to bear. One translation reads, *"Cast what he has given thee upon the Lord."*

Burdens help us grow; they help us exercise the muscles of our faith. They teach us how to **trust God** and live a day at a time. The promise also tells us that we can cast these burdens on the Lord. Peter said, *"Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you"* (1 Peter 5:7). The Lord gives us the burden, and then He says, *"Now give that burden back to Me. But don't stop there; give Me yourself as well."* If we try to give Him our burdens without giving Him ourselves, He really can't help us. It's like stepping onto an elevator with many heavy packages and failing to put them down on the floor until you reach your destination. Let the elevator carry both you and your packages.

Notice that the verse doesn't say He'll keep you from problems all the time. He's going to use problems to build your character. But He'll make sure the righteous will not be moved. Cast your burden on the Lord. Let Him sustain you today. -Tom Moore, submitted by Paul Kent, Georgetown, IL

## **WHERE DID IT COME FROM?**

A five-year-old girl from the city was visiting her grandparents on their farm during harvest time. She watched in wonder as they picked produce from their garden. The grandparents, thinking to use this experience as a means of teaching her about God's provisions, let her shuck some corn and break some beans, explaining to her that the corn and beans were blessings from God.. She enjoyed doing something different for a while, but after a few minutes she looked at her grandmother and said, "You know you could buy these things in the grocery store, don't you?"

Such reactions from little children amuses us as we realize that the limited experience of children may not allow them to understand where the things they take for granted actually come from. Milk comes from jugs in the grocery store. Beans and corn come from the produce section. There is little if any thought as to how they got there. While their lack of understanding may amuse us, it is sad to realize that adults are oftentimes devoid of understanding. They take their environment for granted, with little or no thought as to how it got here. An evolutionary explanation becomes acceptable because that makes us without obligation to anyone. Even those who see God as Creator are prone to forget that He is the giver of every good and perfect gift (James 1:17). God warned the people of Israel through the words of Moses:

"When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which he hath given thee. Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God in not keeping his commandments and his judgments, and his statutes which I command thee this day: lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; then thine heart is lifted up and thou forget the Lord thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage;... and thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth. But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God, for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth...." (Deuteronomy 8:10-14, 17-18a).

Isn't it easy to forget where it all came from? After all, we sweat and toil that we might enjoy the fruits of our labors, and forget that we are dependent upon God for our every breath. What I have is mine—my family, my house, my car, my clothes, etc. In actuality, we are but users and stewards of what God has provided for us. He declares, "Every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof" (Psalms 50:10-12).

When God's nation, Israel, forgot where their blessings came from, God reminded them by withholding rain from their land and giving their land to foreign nations. Our nation, we are told, is no longer a Christian nation, overlooking the fact that our forefathers established this nation and its government upon Christian principles, which have been a blessing to us and the world. If we forget this fact, and forget God as our Benefactor, should we be surprised at an economic crisis? He tells us in Psa. 50:22, "Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver." And again: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."  
--Ron

## ***UNDERSTANDING THE VALUE OF THE CROSS***

Some years ago, a 14-foot bronze crucifix was stolen from Calvary Cemetery in Little Rock, Arkansas. It had stood at the entrance to that cemetery for more than 50 years. The cross was put there in 1930 by a Catholic bishop and had been valued at the time at \$10,000. The thieves apparently cut it off at its base and hauled it off in a pickup. Police speculate that they cut it into small pieces and sold it for scrap.

They figured that the 900-pound cross probably brought about \$450. They obviously didn't realize the value of that cross.

That is the problem, of course.—understanding the value of the cross. As the gospel writers relate the story of Jesus' crucifixion, the theme that runs through all the details is rejection. Not only didn't people see the value of Jesus, they also didn't understand the value of His death. May we not be so blind! *"The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God"* (1 Corinthians 1:18)

--Lee Eclov, in the sermon, *"The Agony of Victory,"* *PreachingToday.com*.

## ***A LOVE SO TREMENDOUS***

I saw my Savior writhing in pain,  
I looked away but looked back again.  
HOW could I look away knowing full well,  
HIS suffering and HIS pain was to save me from Hell.

As I look in His eyes as He suffered on the tree,  
His mouth whispered " I LOVE you",  
YES, He was doing it for ME.

A love so tremendous,  
A love so true,  
He DIED for ME.....  
and He died for YOU !

--Catherine J. Carter; submitted by Donneita Fenton, Indiana

