



# Arthur Church of Christ

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



## The "Sower"

April 5, 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).



**IN OUR PRAYERS:** Paul continues to have both good days and not-so-good days.

They hope to be returning home from their daughter's in Michigan in either April or May. \*\*\* Continue to remember Rodger, Dean, Inez, Lyla, Lester, Mary's mother, Doris's niece (Kellie), Charles Moore (Tex.), Lewis and Mary Carter (Fla.), our service men and women, and our nation's and world's leaders as a way for peace is sought, and a solution to the nation's financial problems.

*"Praise ye the LORD, for it is good to sing praises unto our God: for it is pleasant; and praise is comely" (Psalms 147:1)*

"**BEHOLD THE MAN**" will be this morning's message, another in our series on the theme, "**We Would See Jesus.**" The text will be John 19:5. The evening lesson will be another on this theme: "**Jesus—His Words and Works,**" with Hebrews 2:1-4 as the text.

### **BITS AND PIECES—**

One learns more of what is really happening in the world from the Internet than from the regular news media. Here is a sampling from this past week or so. I'm calling this column "*Bits and Pieces*" because the items are very brief summaries of much longer articles. Here they are:

**THE "FAIRNESS DOCTRINE" AGAIN:** What has been called "the fairness doctrine" is again being suggested by some in government as a solution to the political "imbalance" on radio—not of the more liberal networks, but of the more conservative radio stations, especially those airing conservative talk shows. This is now seen to be a threat to Christian radio as well. Would the preaching of Christ and the gospel require stations to provide balance with speakers presenting the Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, etc. faiths? Akin to this threat to freedom and religion, is the threat of "hate crimes" being charged against any who might be considered offensive to others? (Source: worldnetdaily.com)

**DOMESTIC JIHADISTS!** World News Daily reports: "A jihadist group responsible for nearly

50 attacks on American soil is operating 35 training camps across the nation, but its name cannot be found on the State Dept.'s list of foreign terrorist organizations." FBI Special Agent Jody Weis noted: "These home-grown terrorists can prove to be as dangerous as any known group, if not more so."

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## THE CENTER OF IT ALL

While there is a growing attitude that says that all religions are basically the same, and therefore all offer a gateway to heaven, there is only one that stands out as unique from all others. All possess certain endearing qualities that recognize some moral and ethical values upon which we can all agree, but only one provides a solution to the fact that man always falls short of doing all that he recognizes as right and good. It is the sin problem. Who would disagree with Paul's assertion, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23)? The missing ingredient in the world's many religions is a solution to man's estrangement from his Creator through sin. Only the Christian faith provides that solution, and it is not in man, but in God. Man devises systems that he hopes will win the favor of the god he serves, but is blinded to the pathway the true God has already provided in Jesus Christ

No event in the Bible, nor in history, is of greater significance than the crucifixion of Jesus. Where man could not save himself, God provided One who was without sin to "be made sin (a sin-offering) for us,,,that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21). The Old Testament looked forward to the cross, the gospels tell of Jesus going to the cross, the epistles relate the Christian life to the cross, and the book of Revelation tells us that the same Jesus who went to the cross will one day return in glory.

The apostle Paul wrote, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Galatians 6:14a). He declared "the preaching of the cross" to be the "power of God" (1 Cor. 1:18). It is not morality, law or rituals, but the cross that makes Christianity unique. It was the preaching of the cross in Acts 2 that caused those present to be "pricked in their heart," and to cry out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Their

repentance and baptism that followed was related to the cross through faith in the crucified and risen Savior—"for the remission of sins" (verse 38).

Indeed, Jesus on the cross is the center of it all. A crossless religion cannot save. Paul declared God's purpose for all, Jews and Gentiles: "that he might reconcile both unto God in one body **by the cross**, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you...for through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father" (Ephesians 2:16-18).

Have you come to the center of it all? Have you come to the Christ of the cross?  
--Ron

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## BRINGING GRACE AND PEACE

In looking at Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, we can learn specifics about God that are very relevant to us in our day as well. One of these is that God fulfills everything that His word declares, even down to the tiniest minutia. As the mobs filled the famous tourist trap of the city of Jerusalem there was a prophecy on the horizon ready to be fulfilled. *"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, your King comes unto you: He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass."* (Zechariah 9:9 [RSV]) God's word is truth. Jesus Christ is truth, and no one comes to the Father except through Him (John 14:6). Everything that is in God's word will be fulfilled. You can count on it. If God says it, it will come to pass. In this scene we see Jesus fulfilling God's word even down to the minutest of details. He rides the donkey into Jerusalem because God's word declared that He would do so. In doing so, Jesus declares what kind of King He is. He will be one that brings grace and peace to a lost and dying world.

We should all lean upon God's word. Everything around you is subject to change and will change at some point. However, this is not so with God's Word, for it is eternal and it will never change. Everything around you will fail you, but God's word will never fail you. Be a person of the word. Read it, study it, memorize

it, believe it, and most importantly, live it. As you do, you will come to be blessed greatly!

So, other than the fulfillment of prophecy, just what was so important about Jesus coming into Jerusalem on the back of a colt? Why not any other animal? In the Old Testament days a colt was considered a noble animal. It was used for service and to carry the burdens of men, but even more significantly and importantly, it was used to carry kings. When they entered a city in peace, they rode on the back of a colt to symbolize their peaceful intentions. When a king entered a city as a conqueror, he rode in on the back of a stallion. So by choosing to enter His city on the back of a colt, Jesus was proclaiming to the people that their King had arrived. Yes, their King had arrived, the Promised Messiah was within their midst, but He was to be a King of peace. Jerusalem, the ancient city whose very name itself meant "city of peace," was to have a reigning and ruling King Who would bring peace to the holy city. 1. *For this Melchizedek, King of Salem, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the Kings and blessed him; 2. and to him Abraham apportioned a tenth part of everything. He is first, by translation of his name, King of righteousness, and then he is also King of Salem, that is, King of peace.* (Hebrews 7:1-2 [RSV]) Salem of old in which Melchizedek was both High Priest and King during the time of Abraham was none other than Jerusalem during the time of Christ, and once again it was going to have both a King and a High Priest at the same time and in the same Person, none other than Jesus Christ.

—David Ferguson, Mattoon

**NURSING HOME:** This Tuesday is the evening we are to have a service at the Arthur Nursing Home. We meet at 6:45. We hope you can join us.

**PRAYER LIST:** Continue to remember Paul & Nadine, Inez, Dean, Lyla, Lester, Rodger, Woody, Mary's mother, Doris's niece (Kellie), Charles Moore (Tex.), Lewis & Mary Carter (Fla.), our service men and women, and our nation's and world's leaders as a way for peace is sought, and a solution to the nation's financial problems..

