



“The Sower”

December 13, 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

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

SERMONS



“WHO IS THIS JESUS?” will be this morning’s lesson, with Matt. 16:13-19 as the text. The evening message will be, “The Victory Is the Lord’s”, based on passages from

Psalms 44, 121 and 124.



Donna had surgery this past week, but is back home and doing well. She will be having to undergo

chemotherapy and radiation. *** Paul (Mich.) is taking strong antibiotics for 3 infections. *** A niece of mine (Paula Sneed) has been told she needs a liver transplant. She also has other health problems. She is not sure what her decision should be. *** Continue to remember Lester, Inez, Linda, Rodger, Lyla, Mary’s mother, 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.

PUT IT TO DEATH

“Mommy, my turtle is dead!” the little boy, Freddie, sorrowfully told his mother, holding the turtle out to her.

The mother kissed him on the head, then said, “That’s alright. We’ll wrap him in tissue paper, put him in a little box, then have a nice burial ceremony in the back yard. After that, we’ll go out for an ice cream soda, and then get you a new pet. I don’t want you to....” Her voice trailed off as she noticed the turtle move.

“Freddie, your turtle is not dead after all.”

“Oh,” the disappointed boy said. “Can I kill it?”

Using the mind of a child, it’s easy to see why Freddie felt that way. In his immature mind, the “blessing” of an ice cream soda more than made up for any loss suffered through the death of a pet.

There is a sense, though, in which the benefits of death far outweigh any sadness we might feel. The apostle Paul frequently wrote of the need to “put to death” the sinful behavior that once characterized our lives. We’re well aware of what he’s talking about because we constantly struggle with temptation. Just when we think we’ve given our sins the death blow, they resurface with new life. Putting them to death is not an easy thing to do. It helps to be reminded of the benefits of doing so:

“For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live” (Rom. 8:13).

The thought of “living” with God far outweighs any sadness I might experience from putting to death those “deeds of the body.”

Father, as I look at my sinful behavior which resurfaces from time to time, only to hurt and disappoint you so much—that behavior which you hate even more than I do, enough to sacrifice your only Son—I have only one question: Can I kill it? --Lantern, Highway Church, Sullivan, IL

(NOTE: In the spirit of the above article, we would point out that death to self and the ways of the flesh begins with our acceptance of Christ, but also requires constant affirmation. It began when we were “buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4), and it is



JARED: Doris talked to Mollie this past week, and was told that Jared was expected home from Afghanistan last Tuesday. We found out they now have 3 children, the last being a girl

reaffirmed as we, like Paul, “die daily” (1 Corinthians 15:31.) The old man of sin, as long as we are in this mortal body, persists in seeking to be resurrected. Thus it is necessary that those who are born from above follow the apostle’s admonition in Rom. 6:11: “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”)

CHRISTIAN ONE-LINERS—

- “Don’t let your worries get the best of you. Remember, Moses started out as a basket case.”
- “Some people are kind, polite, and sweet-spirited—until you try to sit in their pews.”
- “Many folks want to serve God—but only as advisers.”
- “It is easier to preach ten sermons than it is to live one.”
- “The good Lord didn’t create anything without purpose. But mosquitoes come close.”

THE LIVING WORD



God’s word may be called the “living word” because it is able both to bring to life, and to sustain the life of, those who receive it.

This life-producing influence of the word may be exerted through several channels. The written word itself, housed in the book we call the Bible, has the power both to convict and to convert those who read and respond in obedience to its instruction. It contains information which can make us “wise unto salvation.”

“Salvation,” however, must not be thought of as merely a state of forgiveness. Salvation is a maturing relationship with God, something we’re instructed to “work out” (Philippians 2:12). It is a transformation that is evidence of the word of God living in us. It is a living condition in which the word has been translated into the language of changed hearts and lives of those who have received it.

Indeed, some may merely read the Bible and discover the solution to their problems. Others may be persuaded by the preaching of the word. But the lost world needs to see the power of the gospel displayed clearly in the love, joy, peace, and sureness of purpose that characterizes those who have been recipients of this Good News, and whose quality of life is a reflection of its transforming power!

Jesus didn’t just come to SPEAK the word. He came AS THE living word OF God! All the blessings of the term “gospel{” are perfectly embodied in Him.

So it should be with those who claim to be His disciples. The changed lives of saved sinners is the translation of the Bible that the watching world is most likely to read, and believe.

May God help us to become His “living epistles!” That’s what it means to “adorn the doctrine” (Titus 2:10) and to live a life worthy of your calling.

--Raleigh Batty

WHERE THERE IS HOPE

A few years ago the psychology department of Duke University carried on an interesting experiment. They wanted to see how long rats could swim. In one container they placed a rat for which there was no possibility of escape. He swam a few moments and then ducked his head to drown. In the other container they made the hope of escape a possibility for the rat. The rat swam for several hours before finally giving up. The conclusion of the experiment was just the opposite of our common conclusion. We usually say, “As long as there is life, there is hope.” The Duke experiment proved, “As long as there is hope, there is life.”

Beloved, “we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and stedfast and entering into that which is within the veil; whither as a forerunner Jesus entered for us, having become a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek” (Heb. 6:19-20). That is why our Hope declared, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (Jn. 14:6) --Tom Moore

“Not only they, but ourselves also, ;which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope....” (Romans 8:23-24a)

IN WHOM IS YOUR HOPE? “If only I had a friend.” “If only my father hadn’t left.” “If only she was more supportive.” “If only....”

People can fail us, but we still pin so many of our hopes on them. We are all fallible and mortal. So while we are involved in the lives of other people, let’s also remember to keep our hopes connected to the Son of God, who “defeated death and brought immortality and life to light” (2 Tim. 1:10), and who will “never leave or forsake” us (Hebrews 13:5). --Selected