
THE SOWER

Arthur Church of Christ

415 West 4th Street
Arthur, IL 61911

Times of Worship

Bible Classes.....9:30 a.m.
Morning Worship.....10:30 a.m.
Evening Worship.....6:00 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study.....1:30 p.m.



Ron Bartanen, Minister

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 visited our website lately? (www.arthurchurchofchrist.com)

Be sure to check out the "Christian Evidences"/"Apologetics Press" links Now in both English and Spanish.

January 11, 2009

REKINDLING THE FLAME

An elderly couple had been married for many years when suddenly the husband died. The wife was devastated, so this is what she put on his tombstone:

THE LIGHT OF MY LIFE HAS GONE OUT.

Some time afterward she met another man. They fell in love and were married. After thinking at some length about it, she went to the monument-maker and had him add this to her *first* husband's tombstone:

THE LIGHT OF MY LIFE HAS GONE OUT. P.S.: I Found A Match.

This reminds me of what happened to the church at Ephesus. There was a lot of activity in that congregation. They were commended for their perseverance, for their refusal to tolerate false doctrine, and for their labor for the cause of Christ. But there was something missing. The "light of their life" was going out. They were losing the first love they had for Christ, and it had reached the point that they were doing lots of "religious works" without love as their motivator.

"But I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first...." (Rev. 2:4-5a).

Perhaps you've found yourself in a similar situation. You're doing all the "right" things, but that love you once had for Christ just isn't there anymore. Perhaps you need to find a match and rekindle the flame. It's important to do that before the light truly goes out in our lives: *"...or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place—unless you repent"* (Rev. 2:5b).

—A. Smith, Shelbyville, IL bulletin; slightly edited

THINK ABOUT IT—

“All who have meditated on the art of governing mankind have been convinced that the fate of empires depends on the education of youth.” (*Aristotle*)

“The man who is not permitted to own—is owned.”

“Liberty not only means that the individual has both the opportunity and the burden of choice: it also means that he must bear the consequences of his actions. Liberty and responsibility are inseparable.” (*Friedrich Mayek, Nobel Prize Winning Economist*) -- *Trib-Bits, Decatur Tribune, 12-10-‘08*

PICKING UP THE FALLEN

John Beck used to be the football star for the University of Kentucky. Later on he became a preacher and was named as Chaplain of the U.S. Olympic Teams. For a number of years he traveled with our Olympic Teams all over the world, leading in their devotions, counseling and praying with many of the athletes.

As he watched these young men and women train for the events in which they competed, he decided that this was a picture of what Christianity really ought to be. Here were people who were sincere, fervent and dedicated to the task before them. They were willing to pay any price, regardless of how much suffering or pain they had to endure. They were willing to pay any price to be #1, to win.

Then one day John Beck was invited to visit the Special Olympics. Special Olympics, as you know, is made up of special athletes. All of them suffer from some kind of mental or physical impairment.

He watched them as 8 runners lined up for the 100-yard dash. They all took off when the starting gun fired, and he was amazed at how good they actually were. But as they reached halfway in the race, one of the boys fell down, skinned his knee on the track, and started to cry.

He said that what happened next was both beautiful and amazing. All 7 of the other runners stopped, and all 7 of them turned around and went to the boy who had fallen. Together they helped him to his feet. And the 8 walked to the finish line together. Beck said that he then realized that he had seen the true meaning of Christianity, not in the Olympics, but in the Special Olympics.

Our highly competitive world seems always to be saying that the only thing that counts is to be #1. I understand and appreciate the need for excellence, to be number one. But I know a better way. Will you pay the price to pick up the fallen?

Paul said, “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2).

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

SMILE A WHILE—(From the Internet)--AN OLD FARMER’S ADVICE

Keep your fences horse-high, pig-tight & bull-strong. Keep skunks & bankers & lawyers at a distance. Life is simpler when you plow around the stump. A bumble bee is considerably faster than a John Deere tractor. Words that soak into your ears are whispered—not yelled. Meanness don’t jes’ happen overnight. Forgive your enemies. It messes up their heads. Don’t corner something that would normally run from you. It don’t take a very big person to carry a grudge. You cannot unsay a cruel word. Every path has a few puddles. When you wallow with pigs, expect to get dirty.

“O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms” (Psalms 95:1-2).

•“THE ‘I AMS’ OF CHRIST” will be this morning’s lesson, with John 14:1-6 as the reading. The evening message will be “*The Lordship of Christ.*”

•TODAY’S THE DAY that all commodity-donations for **Potter Children’s Home** need to be in. This week their van will be in our area. Suggested commodities are: ziti noodles, white rice, bathroom tissue, 3x5 index cards and microwave popcorn. Checks to help with perishable items would also be appreciated.

•THE NURSING HOME SERVICE will be January 20 at 6:45 p.m. Plan to be with us. All voices are needed.

•IN OUR PRAYERS: Rodger came through his triple-bypass surgery without any problems. He expects to be back home by today. His address is on the “*Members Friends*” list. If you’ve mislaid your copy, more are available, or check the bulletin board. *** Paul and Nadine hope to be back to their home in Arthur this spring. Their home is being remodeled to accommodate his wheelchair. Keep them in your prayers. *** Continue in prayer for: Dean; Inez; Lyla; Lester; Woody; Mary’s mother; Charles Moore (Tex.); Lewis & Mary Carter (Fla.); Lola Hilliard (Tenn.); Doris’s former brother-in-law (cancer); our service men and women; and our nation’s and world’s leaders as they seek a way for peace. Pray that more will come to know Him who is the Prince of Peace.