



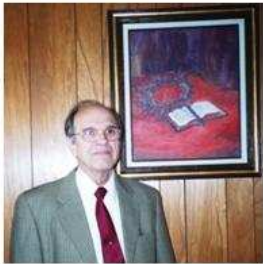
Arthur Church of Christ

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



The "Sower"

June 7, 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---6:00 p.m.

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).

"THOSE WHO DENY THE LORD JESUS" will be this morning's message, with 2 Timothy 2:11-12 as the text. The evening lesson will be, **"The Weakness of the Strong,"** Matt. 26:69-75 being the text.

PRAYER LIST: Juanita Fleener had cataract surgery Wednesday. *** Wayne Miller of Sullivan is to have hip replacement surgery on the 23rd. *** Continue to pray for Paul, Linda, Dean, Inez, Rodger, Lester, Woody, Mary's mother, Charles Moore (Tex.), Lewis & Mary Carter (Ind.), our service men and women, and the leaders of our nation and other nations as a way for peace is sought.

THE RED CROSS BLOODMOBILE will be in Arthur June 11, from 3-7 p.m. at the Arthur Community Building.---**WAYNE SEELEY**, known to most here, will observe his 90th birthday with an open house June 20, 1-4 p.m. See bulletin board.

LOVE LETTERS

Not long ago, my wife and I were cleaning out one of our closets. On the top shelf, in the back of the closet was an unmarked box. So I pulled it down and was surprised to see that inside of it were all the "love letters" that I wrote to her while we were dating.

Well, I had forgotten what I had written, so I pulled out a few to read. Oh my! Talk about corny and embarrassing! Some day my children will get a kick out of reading Daddy's love letters to Mama.

But as I took a break to read some of these letters to my wife, I found that she remembered them. They weren't strange words to her. While I had no memory of these letters, and was busy analyzing handwriting samples to make sure I indeed wrote them, my wife needed no such analysis.. She knew the letters were from me, and she remembered the very words I had written.

The fact that she remembered my letters so well indicates that those letters were cherished by her.

Now here's my point...How well do you cherish God's love for you? You do know that He has written several "love letters" to you, don't you? Have you forgotten their content? Have you even taken the time to open and read what He had to say to you? I might go so far as to suggest that the way to cherish or fail to cherish His words are an indicator of the depth of our love for Him. Give it some thought.

-Steve Higginbotham

EDOMIC PRIDE

Someone once observed that while God has two dwelling places—Heaven and a humble heart, so Satan also has two dwelling places—Hell and a proud heart. John speaks of “the pride of life” as one of the three roots of sin (1 John 2:16). Pride is not difficult to see—in others. We see it in those who would never admit error or accept blame. We see it in those whose egos are easily offended, and in those who never see themselves as offensive. Perhaps the ones Satan most delights in ensnaring by the sin of pride would be those who would boast that this would not be their weakness. How blind is the man who would boast of his humility! Nothing can blind the heart and mind as does pride. Pride is basically self-deceit, a weakness of character that has been with us since mother Eve was persuaded by the Serpent that the forbidden fruit would make her like God. In reality, it made her more like the Serpent, whose downfall seems to have been pride (1 Timothy 3:6).

Such arrogant pride characterized the nation of Edom, descendants of Esau, the twin-brother of Jacob (Israel), but a frequent thorn in the side of the Israelites. When a nation exalts itself in its own eyes against God and His people, it is ripe for judgment. Such was Edom, as described in the book of Obadiah and in Jeremiah 49:7-22. Self-deceived as to her greatness in the eyes of others, she would be brought down. God pronounced judgment upon her through the prophet, Obadiah, declaring, “The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high: that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground? Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD” (Obad. 1:3-4). The nation sought no security in God, but in the rugged clefts of the mountains. Though she relied on alliances with other nations, she was vulnerable to their treachery, as declared in verse 7: “All the men of thy confederacy have brought thee even to the border: the men that were at peace with thee have deceived thee, and prevailed against thee....”

Wherein is our trust? As an individual, do I put my trust in what this world offers? Do we really think this world’s economy is all that secure? Do I put my trust in government officials? What can they offer us but what it will entice us into

bondage? Can I trust any man, when God’s word cautions me, “Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils” (Isaiah 2:22). Do I trust even that which is in my own heart, when I am informed, “The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked” (Jeremiah 17:9)? Rather, we’re instructed, “Trust in the LORD with all thine heart: and lean not upon thine own understanding” (Prov. 3:5).

As a nation, where is our trust? Do we err, as did Edom, thinking ourselves unconquerable? Edom took pride in her military might, but the prophet warned, “Thy terribleness hath deceived thee” (Jeremiah 49:16). They were well fortified in the mountains, with a strong army and no doubt a stockpile of weapons, but God’s warning words proved true: “Edom shall be a desolation...” (Jer. 49:17.) Where today is that proud nation that boasted, “Who shall bring me down to the ground?” (Obad. 1:3)? Edom felt secure in her mountain-fortress, as she stood by passively while Judah and Jerusalem fell before the enemy. (Read Obadiah 10-14.) Are we, who have been so blessed as a nation by God for over 200 years, to assume that we can challenge God and remain secure? The second Psalm speaks of the vanity of nations that rage “against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying, ‘Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us’” (Psa. 2:2-3). We can kill our unborn and try to make sacred what God calls an abomination, but the day will come when, “He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the LORD shall have them ;in derision. Then shall he speak unto them ;in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure” (2:4-5). May all be reminded: “The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God” (Psa. 9:17).

-Ron

YOU STARTED IT!

Reaching the end of a job interview, the Human Resources person asked the young MBA fresh out of MIT, “And what starting salary were you looking for?” The candidate responded, “In the neighborhood of \$125,000 a year, depending on the benefits package. “The HR person said, “Well, what would you say to a package of 5-weeks vacation, 14 paid holidays, full medical and dental, company matching retirement fund to 50% salary, and a company car leased every two years—say a red Corvette?” The graduate sat up, ;mouth agape, and said, “Wow! Are you kidding?”

and the HR person responded,, “Certainly...but you started it!”

That’s the trouble with a lot of young people today (I never thought I would be old enough to say that!)—they want to start at the top and work their way up from there. We as Christians are sometimes the same way, though. We want what’s at “the top” without going through what lies below. For example, we want patience (and we want it right now!), but we don’t want the trials that develop patience. We’d rather start at the top.

James said, “My brothers and sisters, when you have many kinds of troubles, you should be full of joy, because you know that these troubles test your faith, and this will give you patience.” (James 1:2-3, NCV) -- Alan Smith, Highway Church, Sullivan Bulletin, 10-21-‘07

GOVERNMENT CONTROL OF...CHURCHES

As we witness the government’s socialistic power-grab of banks, the auto business, etc., we’re not concerned because it doesn’t affect us. Right? How about government control of churches? Or the right to free speech even when it may not be “politically correct”? An example of this is seen in a report by Gary Bauer in *CitizenLink*, 10-9-’08, which tells of the Ocean Grove Clamp Meeting Assn., a New Jersey United Methodist organization, that has lost its property tax exemption “for refusing to allow a same-sex civil union ceremony to be conducted on its property. Additionally, it is being investigated and charged with violating the state’s nondiscrimination statutes.” This is in spite of state “religious exemptions”. It is foreseeable that as we see more states putting “same sex marriage” on a par with traditional and biblically sound marriage, churches, preachers, etc. will be pressured to comply, or be charged with sexual discrimination and “hate speech.” Freedom of speech and freedom of religion are in jeopardy as the religion of secularism grips the soul of our nation. -Ron

REMARKABLE DOUBLE-SPEAK: “Our goal to promote a non-threatening and productive office environment is to establish language that is gender-neutral, ethnic-neutral, and age-neutral while celebrating our spirit of diversity.”

“**IF YOUR DAY** is hemmed with prayer, it is less likely to come unraveled.”
