



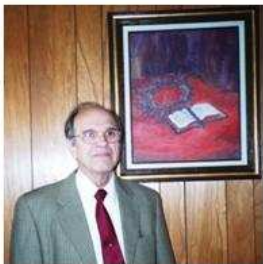
# Arthur Church of Christ

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



## The "Sower"

May 17, 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).

"**CHRISTIANS AS SENT-ONES**" will be this morning's message from John 17:18. The evening lesson will be, "**A Servant of Jesus Christ**," Rom. 1:1 being the text.



**PRAYER LIST:** Continue in prayer for Paul, Dean, Inez, Rodger, Woody, Lester, 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. Also, pray for Doris's niece, Kellie, who continues to suffer pain following surgery. A pinched nerve is suspected as part of her problem

### **WHEN CHRIST IS ABSENT**

What happens to a nation that at least nominally had given honor to God and His Son, Jesus Christ, but has increasingly become secular in its culture? There is a saying, "Nature abhors a vacuum." If Christianity and truth are excluded from society, something else will flood in.

An example of this is England. Some believe it is being targeted to be the first European nation to become Muslim. Immigration has allowed a rapid growth of migrants from Muslim nations, many of whom are influencing the direction in which England moves. Public demonstrations boldly assert Islamic intentions to totally transform England into a Muslim nation, under Shari'ah Law. In fact, Shari'ah Law is already being used to judge disputes in Muslim Arbitration Tribunals, which are now officially a part of the English Legal System. Too, the Muslim Qur'an has been placed on a higher shelf than the Bible in English courtrooms. Although Christianity still is the dominant religion, with 70% claiming to be Christians, a Muslim, Aaqil Ahmed, was recently appointed as Head of Religion and Ethics at the BBC. This has brought about some controversy, especially since Ahmed's prior work at Channel 4 is said to have revealed "a noticeable bias towards Islam and multiculturalism."

The ideals of Christianity and Islam are poles apart. Christianity, while scripturally claiming to present Christ as the one access to God (John 14:6; Acts 4:12), persuasion is through the preaching of the Gospel (Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 1:18), while Islam has historically grown through

intimidation and the sword. Christians respect the freedom to differ, while Islam shows little or no tolerance, allowing no criticism of Mohammed. When the light of Christ is being extinguished in a country, if that light becomes darkness, a nation soon becomes filled with darkness, and "how great is that darkness" (Matthew 6:23). It is troubling to see that light growing ever dimmer in our beloved nation, and it is with concern that we see storm clouds rising. Christians must heed the admonition: "Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:14-16). --Ron

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## **CLEAN YOUR WINDOWS**

A young couple moved into a new neighborhood. The next morning, while they were eating breakfast, the young woman saw her neighbor hanging the wash outside.

"That laundry is not very clean," she said.. "She doesn't know how to wash correctly. Perhaps she needs better laundry soap."

Her husband looked on, but remained silent.

Every time her neighbor would hang her wash to dry, the young woman would make the same comments.

About one month later, the woman was surprised to see a nice clean wash on the line and said to her husband: "Look, she has learned how to wash correctly. I wonder who taught her this."

The husband said, "I got up early this morning and cleaned our windows."

And so it is with life. What we see when watching others depends on the purity of the window through which we look.

--Submitted by Don Henwood, Arizona

## **GOD'S WORD—OUR ONE AUTHORITY**

The story is told of a man who once bought a new radio, brought it home, and placed it on the refrigerator. He then plugged it in, turned to WSM in Nashville (home of the Grand Ole Opry) and proceeded to do the most unusual thing. He pulled all the knobs off! He had already tuned in all he ever wanted or expected to hear, and so he chose to limit his radio reception to one station.

Perhaps if more in the world would do this with regard to the word of God we would have a lot less religious confusion in the world. Too many are tuning in to every "channel" of doctrine. Paul warns, "Be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Eph. 4:14). We must tune only into God's channel—His holy word, for our direction. This is why Jeremiah declared, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23). --Tom Moore, Temple, TX, submitted by Paul Kent

## **DECIDING IN ADVANCE**

(The following article is from the Internet, but I failed to note the source. However, it illustrates an important lesson that is often overlooked. Happiness is largely what we make it. The attitude in which we approach life is more of a determining factor than are the circumstances we encounter.)

A 92-year-old, petite, well-poised and proud man, who is fully dressed each morning by eight o'clock, with his hair fashionably combed and shaved perfectly, even though he is legally blind, moved to a nursing home today. His wife of 70 years recently passed away, making the move necessary. After many hours of waiting patiently in the lobby of the nursing home, he smiled sweetly when told his room was ready.

As he maneuvered his walker to the elevator, I provided a visual description of his tiny room, including the eyelet sheets that had been hung on his window. "I love it," he stated

with the enthusiasm of an eight-year-old having just been presented with a new puppy.

“Mr. Jones, you haven't seen the room; just wait.”

“That doesn't have anything to do with it,” he replied. “Happiness is something you decide on ahead of time. Whether I like my room or not doesn't depend on how the furniture is arranged...it's how I arrange my mind. I already decided to love it. It's a decision I make every morning when I wake up. I have a choice: I can spend the day in bed recounting the difficulty I have with the parts of my body that no longer work, or get out of bed and be thankful for the ones that do. Each day is a gift, and as long as my eyes open, I'll focus on the new day and all the happy memories I've stored away...just for this time in my life. Old age is like a bank account. You withdraw from what you've put in.” So, my advice to you would be to deposit a lot of happiness in the bank account of memories! Thank you for your part in filling my Memory Bank. I am still depositing.

Remember the five simple rules to be happy:

Free your heart from hatred.

1. Free your mind from worries.
2. Live simply.
3. Give more.
4. Expect less.

Have a nice day, unless you already have other plans.

--Thanks to whoever sent me this.

**Italian Proverb: *“The same fire purifies gold and consumes straw.”***