



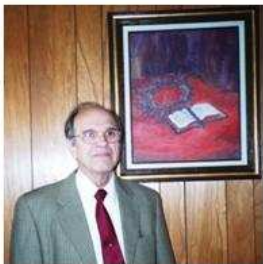
Arthur Church of Christ

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



The "Sower"

May 24, 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).

"**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

"THAT THESE SHALL NOT HAVE DIED IN VAIN"

In 1863, in a ceremony to dedicate the battlefield at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania as a national cemetery for Civil War soldiers who were killed in that battle, Abraham Lincoln gave his Gettysburg Address, a speech that will long be remembered as one of literature's masterpieces. It stands as an affirmation of what truly defines our country. He defined our nation as being "conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." In conclusion, he said, "[W]e here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain: that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom: and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

Could there be anything more tragic than that the sacrifice of life for a just cause should ever be in vain? God forbid that we who remain to enjoy the blessing of freedom should ever so devalue this sacrifice as to take for granted, abuse and even regard as trivial this precious legacy that has been paid for by the blood of others. We should, instead, continually thank God for the countless brave men and women who have counted our nation's honor worthy of the supreme sacrifice. However, we are in constant danger of taking for granted what some have died to secure for us. We are increasingly losing the vision of our nation as a nation "under God," dependent upon Him in life's struggles, and seeing the nation as a nation under government, dependent upon what Washington can do for us from the cradle to the grave. For this heightened sense of security in the world we are increasingly willing to relinquish our freedoms. As God is being removed from our nation's schools, court houses, etc., so are our freedoms. Preaching and even reading the Bible become "hate speech" and even "hate crimes" when those engaged in what the Bible labels as sin and an abomination find it offensive to their sensitivities. Some in government want to make

what is aired on radio and TV politically correct according to government standards, irrespective of stations, broadcasters or even the public.

The inclination of all government is toward power, a fact recognized by the founders and early defenders of our nation. They built into our Constitution safeguards designed to protect us from government. However, judges through unique interpretations seem to be able to read into the Constitution whatever the government or special interest groups wish it to say. Thus abortion, for instance, becomes a protected right, as does the elimination of God, Christ and the word of God from any area considered to be government's sacred ground.

A common symbol for government in the Bible is that of a beast. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, was given a dream depicting the world's great empires—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Roman—as a lion, a bear, a four-headed beast, and a ten-horned beast (Daniel 7). The nature of beasts is to devour, and it would seem that the bigger the beast (government) becomes, the greater is its appetite. When government lures its citizens into dependence, it is inclined to gorge itself, taking more power and control over its citizens, even the control of words, thoughts and conscience.

In conclusion, we would remind you that Jesus made the ultimate sacrifice of His life's blood for our freedom from sin, as Paul declared, "In (Christ) we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins..." (Ephesians 1:7). Did He die in vain for you? He did unless you have shown yourself willing to accept Him in obedient faith. To spurn His grace is to trample His blood under your feet. Freedom from sin is ours through Christ alone, who declared, "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). To despise or even ignore this freedom is to despise the blood of our Redeemer. To ignore His church is to ignore the price paid for His church—the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28). As far as your life is concerned, could you say that "Christ died in vain"?

--Ron---THINK ABOUT IT

Sentence Sermons

- About the time we learn to make the most of life, the greater part of it is gone.
- Cold feet may be a sign your soul is wearing out.

- Many things that are learned by experience should not have been learned at all.
- Sometimes a man holds opinions and sometimes they hold the man..
- The most sought after labor saving device for a woman is a man with money.
- There is a difference between the books that men make and the Book from God that makes men. The Bible is often rejected by the world which is put off by people who supposedly are produced and directed by it. How could anyone be expected to accept and respect a Bible which Christians neglect and a God they represent so poorly?
- "As a plant upon the earth, so man rests upon the bosom of God. He is nourished by unfailing fountains and he draws, at his need, inexhaustible power" (Ralph Waldo Emerson).

--The Encourager, Dongola, IL; via *Bulletin Gold*

AN ABC NETWORK STUDY found 22 to 34 percent of young felons imprisoned for violent crimes said they had consciously imitated crime techniques learned from watching television programs. A TV network study found that TV programming is implicated in 22 percent of juvenile crime. In a survey of 10 to 16 year olds, 62 percent said sex on TV influences their peers to have sex. The National Institute of Mental Health has over 1000 studies confirming that TV violence increases aggressive behavior in children.

--*Trib-Bits, Decatur Tribune*, 1-21-09

"GREAT WITHOUT GLORY" will be this morning's message, with Matt. 20:20-28 as the reading. The evening lesson will be, **"Knowledge of Abiding Things,"** and John 9:1-7, 18-25 will be the reading.

PRAYER CONCERNS: Paul still has both good days and not-so-good days, but he and Nadine are happy to be back home. *** Linda is bothered with severe arthritis. *** Continue to remember Inez, Dean, 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. Doris's niece, Kellie, was found to have adhesions following earlier surgery. She hopes now to finally be on her way to recovery. She thanks us for our prayers.

CHRISTIANS WITH A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW

From 1995 to 2008 there has been little change of perception of “Christians” as it relates to God, the Bible, Jesus, Heaven and Satan, according to Barma Group surveys. These surveys are for determining the percentage of Americans in general and of “born again Christians” as to their biblical worldview. A biblical world view, as defined by Barma Group, would believe:

1. Absolute moral truth exists.
2. The Bible is totally accurate in all of the principles it teaches.
3. Satan is considered to be a real being or force, not merely symbolic.
4. A person cannot earn his way into Heaven by trying to be good or by doing good works.
5. Jesus Christ lived a sinless life on earth.
6. God is the all-knowing, all-powerful creator of the world, and He still rules the universe today.

It was found that among “born again Christians, 18 percent had a biblical worldview in 1995, 22 percent in 2000, 21 percent in 2005 and 19 percent in 2008. Among Americans in general, 34 percent believe that moral truth is absolute, while 46 percent of “born again Christians” believe in absolute moral truth. Fifty percent of all adults firmly believe the Bible is accurate in all the principles it teaches, while 79 percent of “born again Christians” believe this. As to the reality of Satan as a real being, 27 percent of all adults believe this, and 40 percent of “born again Christians” believe it. Forty-seven percent of all “born again Christians” strongly believe it impossible for one to earn their way into heaven through good behavior. Only 62 percent of “born again Christians” are said to believe that Jesus Christ lived a sinless life while on earth.

It amazes me that anyone claiming to be a “born again Christian” could reject the biblical worldview as defined by Barma Group. Could one really be “born again” while believing Jesus to be a sinner? Or by rejecting any of the other teachings, all of which are clearly set forth in Scripture?

--Ron