

# The SOWER

## Arthur Church of Christ

415 West 4<sup>th</sup> 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.....6:00 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](http://www.arthurchurchofchrist.com))

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

February 24, 2008

## *WHY "GO TO CHURCH"?*

In a "Letters to the Editor" column of a certain newspaper, a churchgoer had written this letter complaining that it made no sense to attend church every Sunday. He wrote:

*"I've gone for thirty years now, and in that time I have heard something like 3000 sermons. But for the life of me, I can't remember a single one of them. So I think I'm wasting my time, and the preachers are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all."*

This resulted in an outpouring of letters for the column, which continued for weeks until someone wrote the following:

*"I've been married for 30 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But for the life of me, I cannot recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals. But I do know this: They all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work. If my wife had not given me these meals, I would be physically dead today. Likewise, if I had not gone to church for nourishment, I would be spiritually dead today!"*

What benefit is there is "going to church"?

- In going where the gospel is preached, you learn of the salvation God has provided, and how to accept Christ as Savior and Lord in your life (Romans 1:16; 5:1-6:18).
- As a Christian, you remember Christ in the weekly partaking of the Lord's Supper as He instructed (1 Corinthians 15:23-26; Acts 20:7).

You are instructed by the teaching and preaching of God's word (Acts 20:32; 2 Timothy 4:1-4; Matthew 4:4).

In meeting to worship God together, you encourage fellow believers (Acts 2:42; Ephesians 5:19; Hebrews 10:25-26).

You are setting the proper example to the children and young people in your life (Ephesians 6:4).

--Ron

If it is true that "to err is human" - some are apparently more human than others. To err is human, but to remain in error is stupid. The longer a person remains in error the more certain he becomes that he is right. --*Bulletin Gold*

# It's a Family Thing" – MARK 3:31-35

God is a binder. He binds Himself to people in covenant relationship and He binds people to each other in family relationships. Much of the Law and wisdom literature of the Hebrews addresses the enduring respect that children are to have for parents and the loving obligation the parents have for children. So strong was this bond that Hebrews preserved genealogies so that their family lineage was traceable back to Abraham through one of the sons of Jacob. Both Matthew and Luke provide such a lineage for Jesus in introducing Him to us in their respective gospel accounts. Family matters. As I like to say, "Blood is thicker than water".

Into this scene of accusation and division caused by the scribes come the mother and brothers of Jesus. As was customary, the others tried to respectfully usher them into His presence. In one of those wonderful moments found throughout His life, Jesus surprises us. Instead of receiving them in honor, He "rejects" them publicly. Has He not just "divided His house against itself"? Is Jesus violating the Law by treating His mother in this manner? On the surface it appears so, and even worse for a respected Rabbi, He apparently contradicted His teaching with His actions. The crowd (with us looking in over their shoulders) is ripe for His powerful point. The family that is bound together by doing the Father's will is the "blood family" of Jesus.

Hebrews were Hebrews by birth. Christians are Christians by being born again. Hebrews were heirs to an inheritance of land and property in the "promised land" by birth (and birth order), Christians are adopted into the family and given full rights of full inheritance in the everlasting kingdom. The family of Abraham was God's chosen vessel to bring Messiah into the world. The family of God in Christ (the church) is God's chosen vessel to bring the saved into heaven. The blood shed on the cross went back in time to cover sins and rolls ever forward in time until time is no more. God is a binder. He binds those who do His will together by the blood of His Son Jesus. Mary and her other sons were to be bound to Jesus more fully and forcefully than by mere genetics. He did not reject them, He gave them the opportunity to receive Him.

In thinking on these things, take a moment to think through the implications of everything that has transpired in the narrative since Jesus appointed the twelve. The minions of evil were cast out so that people could receive truth. The perceived purveyors of truth (the scribes) accused Jesus of working for Satan. Jesus obliterated their false charge and taught us about unity and the seriousness of sin. With the identification of His true family, He brought into clear focus the nature of Christianity. The church is not a club, it is the binding together by blood those who do the will of God in Christ Jesus into a divine family that glorifies its Father. The way that we treat our brothers and sisters is inextricably linked to the doing the will of the Father. It was John to whom Jesus committed the care of His mother, Mary, while He hung on the cross ... and, it was John who penned the thoughts of the Holy Spirit of God, saying, "By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious. Whoever does not do righteousness is not of God; neither is one who does not love his brother" (1 John 3:10). Family matters.

--Lee Jamison, Columbia, Tenn.,  
submitted by Ron Thomas, Sullivan

- "The grand essentials in this life are: something to do, something to love, and something to hope for." -- *Addison*
- "The three non-negotiables of manhood: integrity, commitment, action." --*Bill McCartney, head football coach*
- "People seldom improve when they have no other model but themselves to copy after." --*Goldsmith*

*Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength and my redeemer" (Psalms 19:14).*

- **WELCOME** to today's Bible class and/or worship assembly. We would especially welcome any that may be VISITORS. We hope you will return at every opportunity.
- "**THE 'I AMs' OF CHRIST (Part 1)**" will be this morning's message, another in our series on "**John—the Theologian.**" The reading will be John 6:41-51.

- **Following this morning's worship assembly**, all are invited to remain for our regular Birthday Fellowship (Potluck).in which we will recognize those having birthdays in February or March. [Our birthday folks: (Feb. 3) Mary Taylor; (24) Inez; (Mar. 4) Lyla; (5) Sammie; (6) Nadine & Boyd; (11) Howard; and (22) Rodger.] Then all who can do so are invited to remain for our monthly Song Service. There will be no service this evening.
- **NEXT SUNDAY morning's message**, another in our series in the gospel of John, will be, "*The 'I Ams' of Christ (Part 2)*", with John 10:7-16 as the reading. **Next Sunday evening** we plan to continue the series in **Ephesians**, speaking on "*One Plus One Equals One*," Ephesians 2:11-22 being the reading.
- **BIBLE CLASSES: Wednesday** evening we will begin with point number 12 under "XXX" in our lesson-sheet on the history of the church. At the present time we are considering the contributions made by pioneers in the Restoration Movement. It is valuable to explore our "roots." We hope you will meet with us. Extra lesson sheets are available on the literature table. **Next Sunday**, our study should be about the middle or latter part of Acts 16, depending upon this morning's progress.
- **PRAYER CONCERNS:** Paul has been transferred to Hook's Rehabilitation Center in Indianapolis where he is beginning to undergo therapy. \*\*\* Lester seems to be doing better, and hopes to be able to be with us by next Sunday. \*\*\* Rodger and Donna have both been (and are still) down with the flu. \*\*\* Continue to remember Inez, Dean, Woody, Boyd's brother (Vic), Charles Moore (Tex.), Lewis Carter (Ind.), our service men and women, and our nation's and world's leaders as they seek a way for peace. Pray that more will seek to know Him who is the Prince of Peace.

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