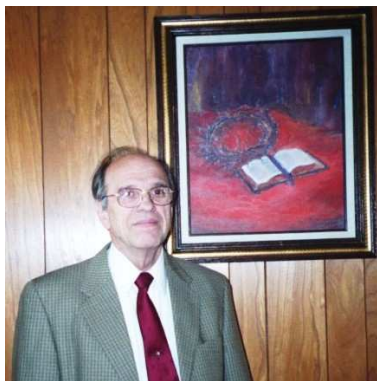

The Sower

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.....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.arthurchofchrist.com

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

July 27, 2008

YOU ARE MADE IN GOD'S IMAGE

"Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness... So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them'" Genesis 1:26-27).

This majestic view of man is thrilling, but what does it mean? Throughout the centuries men have wrestled with the idea that we are created in God's image or likeness.

Some have suggested that man's physical features are a copy of God's physical features, but God is Spirit. Others have called attention to man's upright posture which sets him apart from the animal creation. Still others put emphasis on the fact that man is to have dominion. However, John Willis has observed that "a closer look at the context indicates that man's dominion is the *result* of his being made in the image of God."

Several of the "church fathers" (such as Gregory of Nyasa and Chrysostom) contend that this distinction was lost at the fall. (This is difficult to prove when you examine Genesis 9:6). Many scholars believe that God gave man spiritual qualities like His own...the ability to think on a high level...to look beyond oneself to higher goals...to examine one's own motives, etc. But Gerhard Von Rad says, "One will do well to split the physical from the spiritual as little as possible: the whole man is created in God's image." He continues, "The interpretations...are to be rejected which proceed from an anthropology strange to the Old Testament and one-sidedly limit God's image to man's spiritual nature, relating it to man's 'dignity,' his 'personality' or 'ability for moral decision.'"

So the debate goes on. And I certainly don't have the answers, but I did discover something helpful. I was reading about "love" and saw it defined as "self-surrender." I thought about the fact that "God is love," and that Jesus Christ incarnated perfect love.

That's when I ran across a statement from the pen of Edward John Carnell, "Love is the true point of contact between God and man. Man is made in the image of God, and the image of God is the capacity of self-surrender. The more kind and loving a man is, the more like God he is. A good man prefers others before himself; a bad man is selfish."

--John Gipson, *Windsong Notes*, Little Rock, Ark.

SENIOR HUMOR—

A reporter was interviewing a 104 years-old woman: "What do you think is the best thing about being 104?" he asked.

She simply replied, "No peer pressure."

God grant me the senility to forget the people I never liked anyway, the good fortune to run into the ones I do, and the eyesight to tell the difference
--Submitted by Terry Standerfer, Sullivan

MORE SENIOR THOUGHTS—

- "Inside every older person is a younger person wondering, 'What in the world happened?'"
- "The nice thing about getting older and forgetful is that you can hide your own Easter eggs."

"GAY MARRIAGE"—WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

On May 15 the California Supreme Court overturned a 2000 state ballot initiative in which voters (61%) defined marriage as being between a man and a woman, the court thus opening the gate for homosexual "marriage." California has no residency requirement, thus enabling out-of-staters to come to California for their "marriage," and then return to their home-states and insist that their "marriage" be recognized. What most fail to realize is that more is behind this movement than permission to live together, enjoying the blessings of society. The goal behind this effort is to completely redefine what marriage is. Hear it from the advocates of this change:

One wrote: "A middle ground might be to fight for same-sex marriage and its benefits and then, once granted, redefine the institution of marriage completely, to demand the right to marry, not as a way of adhering to society's moral codes but rather to debunk a myth and *radically alter an archaic institution.*" Another wrote: "Being queer is more than setting up house, sleeping with a person of the same gender and seeking state approval

to do so. Being queer means pushing the parameters of sex, sexuality and family, and in the process *transforming the very fabric of society...* We must keep our eyes on the goals of providing true alternatives to marriage and *radically rendering society's view of reality.*" The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) has this to say about consequences of the California decision: "The fact that California is marrying same-sex couples *will put considerable pressure on the rest of the country to recognize those marriages...* *Cultural change in California is usually a preview of what is to come in the rest of the United States... This was a prize of inestimable value.*" (Quotes from *The Good News* magazine, July/Aug. '08; Sources of info: Associated Press, Cybercast News Service, WorldNetDaily, ACLU website). We can expect moral and judicial chaos.

Would it be "too political" for me to suggest that we ask presidential and congressional candidates (Republican and Democrat) where they stand on this issue? And would they appoint judges that would likely ignore the values and will of the voters (as done in California) to press for a homosexual-"marriage" agenda? --Ron

***"O praise the LORD, all ye nations: praise him;, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the Lord endureth forever. Praise ye the LORD"* (Psa. 117).**

Welcome to today's Bible class and/or worshipassembly. If you are a VISITOR, we extend to you a special "**welcome.**" We are thankful for your decision to meet with us today for study and worship of our Lord. We hope you will return at every opportunity.

- "**THE LORD'S SUPPER**" will be this morning's message, with Mark 14:16-25 as the reading. The Lord's Supper will be served after the sermon this week. This evening, being the last Sunday of the month, we will have our monthly **SONG SERVICE.** Let me know if you have any special selections.

- **NEXT SUNDAY morning's lesson** will be, "**A Summons to Return,**" and the reading will be from Hosea 6:1-7. The **evening message** next week will be the first in a series from the book of Galatians: "**Apostolic Authority, Doctrine and Blessing,**" with Galatians 1:1-5 as the reading. The teachings of Paul in this book are essential to a true faith in Christ.

• **A NEW WEDNESDAY EVENING STUDY:**

Beginning this Wednesday evening we will begin a series of studies from the book of *Revelation*. I am not going to pretend to have all the answers to some very complicated questions, nor attempt to interpret every symbol of the book. Mainly, we will approach the book to let it speak to us, not to satisfy our curiosity, but to impart some very practical truths powerfully set forth therein. We hope you will be with us for this study. There is a study sheet available as a general guide, but we will not be following the sheet too closely. This week we will note some basic introductory thoughts which are important.

- **Sunday morning's study** next week should be at the close of Acts 23 or the early part of chapter 24, depending upon this morning's progress.

PRAY FOR: Paul continues to have both good and bad days. Keep him, Nadine and family in your prayers. *** Continue to remember Inez, Dean, Lyla, Doris, Lester, Woody, Rodger, Linda's brother, Charles Moore (Tex.), Lewis Carter (Ind.), our men and women in service, and our nation's and world's leaders as they seek a way for peace.