

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.arthurchurchofchrist.com)

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

March 2, 2008

"THE DAY OF SMALL THINGS"

When Jewish exiles had returned from Babylonian captivity, and the foundations of the temple were laid, some lamented what they believed to be inferior to the prior temple erected by Solomon. Ezra, a priest and scribe leading the people, observed that many of the older Jews who still recalled the earlier temple "when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice." (Ezra 4:12) As construction progressed, and interest lagged, the prophet Haggai said, "Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? And how do ye see it now? Is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?" (Hag. 2:3) He would later ask, "'Who hath despised the day of small things?' (Hag. 4:10a) They were not taking into account the hand of God, but they are assured that "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than that of the former, saith the LORD of hosts" (v. 9a).

Today is counted as a day of big things: big cars, big malls, big spending, big business and, yes, big churches. The danger is that we begin to rely upon the big things and forget the smaller things. If you were to reply to Haggai's question, "Who hath despised the day of small things?" would you answer, "I have"? Consider some small things that we underestimate—

A kind word—perhaps a compliment, a word of sympathy, or just a friendly greeting can lift a despairing heart. Proverbs 12:25 reminds us, "Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stop, but a good word maketh it glad."

A smile will often gladden where big things fail. Joseph Addison once observed: "What sunshine is to flowers, smiles are to humanity; they are but trifles, to be sure, but scattered along life's pathway, the good they do is inconceivable."

A minute of time can be one of life's precious diamonds. Someone once wrote, "Lost: yesterday, between sunrise and sunset, 2 golden hours, each with 60 diamond minutes. No reward is offered, for they are gone forever." Can you spare a minute to say a prayer, do a good deed, or lift another's burden? To waste that precious minute is to suffer great loss.

Today is a small thing, too often ignored. But the word of God admonishes us: "I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:2).

Let us not be among those that would "despise the day of small things."
--Ron

WHAT IF YOU'D WON MILLIONS?

What would your face look like if you had won a sweepstakes worth millions of dollars? The smiles would be so broad you would get cramps from the strain on long unused facial muscles. Seeing the smile, people would be asking why you were so happy and, try as you might, you just could not restrain from telling others of your good fortune. You'd know all the negative things that would result from people knowing you were suddenly rich, but you would not be able to stop yourself.

Knowing that to be true, isn't it strange that so many Christians walk around with long faces and allow themselves to be burdened down with the mundane things of this life. They know they have something so valuable it is worth more than the whole world, yet they seldom, if ever, tell anyone else about their eternal life with God. They have a mansion in Heaven that is so beautiful it can only be described in metaphors of jewels and precious metals. Why do we Christians not tell people what God has done for us? It wouldn't cost us a cent !!

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Wayne Polk, Shelbyville, slightly edited

"I will praise thee, O LORD, with my whole heart: I will shew forth all thy marvelous works. I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High" (Psalms 9:1-2)

- **WELCOME** to today's Bible class and/or worship assembly. We especially appreciate any that may be **VISITORS**. We welcome you, and invite you to return at every opportunity.
- **"THE 'I AMs OF CHRIST"** (Part 2) will be this morning's message, as we view Jesus as "the Door" and "the Good Shepherd." The reading will be John 10:7-16. The evening lesson, as we continue in Ephesians, will be **"One Plus One Equals One,"** and the reading will be Eph. 2:11-22.

- **GUEST SPEAKER NEXT SUNDAY MORNING:** Ty Nichol, who preaches at Kemp, is to speak here, while I am to be speaking at Kemp. Ty's message will be, **"God Is Anxious to Forgive,"** and the reading will be Luke 15:1-10. **Next Sunday evening** I plan to speak on **"The Mystery,"** in our series from Ephesians, with Eph. 3:1-13 as the reading. You will gain more from these messages if you read and contemplate on them ahead of time.
- **BIBLE CLASSES:** **Wednesday** evening's study will begin with "XXX-19-e" in our latest study-outline on the history of the church. Currently we are studying some of the differences in the early Restoration leaders. Additional lesson sheets are on the literature table. **Next Sunday's** study will be led by Ty, and I am not sure if he will want to continue in Acts, or bring his own lesson.
- **IN OUR PRAYERS:** Doris has been having some chest pains while walking, but Thursday night had bad pains while resting. For the first time she took a nitro tablet, and also an aspirin, which relieved the pain. We contacted her surgeon Friday, and he said he needed to do another heart cauterization, which he did Friday afternoon. There was one blockage of a main artery, so he put in another (her 7th) stent. It had been almost 2 years since her previous ones. She was kept over night, but is home now. *** Paul continues to steadily, though slowly, improve. He is at the Hook's Rehabilitation Center in Indianapolis. *** Continue to remember Dean, Inez, Lester, Woody, Rodger & Donna (flu), 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. Above all, pray that more will seek and find Him who is the Prince of Peace.

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