

The Sower

The Lord's Day-----June 25, 2017

Arthur Church of Christ

415 W 4th Street, Arthur, IL 61951

Preacher: Ron Bartanen

Times of Worship

9:30 a.m. (Bible Classes)-----10:30 a.m. (Morning Worship)----1:30 p.m. (Wednesday Bible Class)

New Web Site: <http://arthurcoc.com>

“FAKE NEWS”

The news-media is reported to be losing the confidence the general public has placed in it from the beginning of our nation. Much of it has come from biased reporting of the news, slanting news reports to sway public opinion politically. “Facts” that are reported, often from anonymous sources, are distortions. Quotations make the headlines, but often taken out of context. The result has been what is being termed “fake news.” Given a certain spin, what is factual is conveniently distorted into fakery. Such seems to always find a willing audience. When the fake-news is questioned, the one questioning it is readily attacked as “racist,” “hater,” “homophobic”, Islamophobic”, etc.

Fake-news is not limited to the political scene, however. There is an abundance of such in the realm of religion. There are fake gods, fake prophets, fake teachers, fake preachers, fake scriptures, and even fake churches. This being true, it is not surprising that there would be fake Christians as well. Jesus indicated that it would be so. He warned of “false prophets, which

come to you in sheep's' clothing. but inwardly they are ravening wolves”

(Matthew 7:15). The apostle Peter gave warning that as “there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of” (2 Peter 2:1-2). John, likewise encouraged a wariness of spirit in receiving messages supposedly from God, urging, “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1). Being a true Christian is more than one having Christian parents, going to some church, and living a decent life. It also necessitates discernment between the true and the fake.

God has not provided us with infallible men, but He has given us an infallible standard of identifying the true and rejecting the fake. The holy Scriptures are described as “given by inspiration of God...profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Timothy 3:6-17). We’re living in troubling times wherein the politically correct “call evil good, and good evil, that put darkness for light, and light for darkness: that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter” (Isaiah 5:20). The truth of God, as revealed in the Holy Bible, has been displaced in men’s minds by decisions of church councils, traditions of men, and ever-changing cultures in a world plagued by satanic deception (Revelation 12:9). Jesus Christ alone remains “the way, the truth and the life” (John 14:6), and all else are bearers of fake news. His unadulterated Gospel (Good News) remains “the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth...” (Romans 1:16). In faith, have you yielded to Christ in repentance and baptism “for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38)? Reject the world’s fake news, and embrace the true. -Ron

“Traditionally, organized education in the Western world was Church education. It would hardly be otherwise when the education of children was primarily study of the Word and the ways of God.” --U.S. Supreme Court, 1939

A BIG NAME

When Walter Paepeke started a carton company, and called it Container Corporation of America, his attorney said it was a big name for such a small company. Mr. Paepeke’s reply was, “We’ll take the name and grow into it.”

That’s the task we have before us. We have taken a big name—the name of Christ. Now we must grow into it.

There was a wonderful promise given in Isaiah 62:2: “Thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name.” Think of it. A new name. Given by the LORD! We see the fulfillment of that promise in Acts 11:26: “And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.”

Under the name Christian we are to glorify God (1 Peter 4:16), but we know the name is too big for us. We are an unfinished product, slowly growing into that name. The Bible constantly calls upon us to become more and more like Christ, to “grow into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ” (Ephesians 4:15).

Are we making progress? Do others recognize Christ in me? Do they find some grace, or receive a kind thought when in contact with me? Am I concerned about the welfare of all those about me? Am I ready to love all people without partiality? Do I show compassion, tenderness and concern? Am I willing to step out of selfishness into selflessness? Am I kind and gentle to those who are in distress?

--John Gipson, House to House/Heart to Heart

“There are three states of existence. The lowest state is what you own. The next higher state is what you do. The highest state is what you are.” --Richard Russel, Dow Theory Lettersd

FROM A FORMER ATHEIST—

“My argument against God was that the universe seemed so cruel and unjust. But how had I gotten this idea of just and unjust? A man does not call a line crooked unless he has some idea of a straight line. What was I comparing this universe with when I called it unjust?”

--C.S. Lewis

BAPTISM: SPRINKLING, POURING OR IMMERSION?

While some refuse to take the Bible's word for it when it says, “We were buried with Him by baptism...,” Romans 6:4. (and other such scriptures), maybe they might listen to some whose efforts almost 500 years ago resulted in some of today's denominations:

- “Baptism is a Greek word, and may be translated immerse. I would have those who are to be baptized to be altogether dipped.” (Martin Luther)
- “The word baptize signified to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the primitive church.” (John Calvin)

Before the Protestant Reformation Movement, sprinkling was authorized by the Roman Catholic legislature in the 1311 Council held in Ravenna, not by Scripture. Maybe some might listen to Roman Catholic scholar Dollinger concerning New Testament baptism: “It was by immersion of the whole person, which is the only meaning of the New Testament word” (The First Age of Christ and of the Church, Vol. II, p. 188).

Ron

“WHEN YOU GOTTA MAKE A CHOICE” will be today's message, with Daniel 3:8-21 as the reading.

CONTINUE INPRAYER for: Eva (recovering from cataract surgery); Lyla; Nadine; Linda; Rodger; our nation's leaders that they honor God's laws above their own; and those being slaughtered for their faith