

THE SOWER
ARTHUR (IL) CHURCH OF CHRIST
Ron Bartanen, Evangelist

FEBRUARY 24, 2019

Have you visited our web site lately? (www.Arthurcoc.com)

REPAIRING FOUNDATIONS

When a nation that once honored God decides it no longer needs God nor His laws, what is the Christian to do? The question, as found in the Psalms, is, *"If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?"* Psa. 11:3. "By "foundations," reference is obviously made to the principles that undergird society. In the context of this verse is pictured a situation where wickedness and violence prevailed in the abandonment of the laws and principles set forth in God's Law for Israel. The question seems to be that of the Psalmist David's advisors who advise him to "Flee as a bird to your mountain" (v. 1). While they would advise him to go fearfully into hiding, David's decision instead is to put his trust in God: *"In the LORD put I my trust.... The Lord is in His holy temple, the LORD's throne is in heaven..."* (vs. 1a, 4a). It is He who will judge in behalf of the unrighteous, (v. 6).

Are we viewing the crumbling of the foundations of our nation? Any who are at all acquainted with our nation's early history must admit that the founders envisioned a government where Christian principles prevailed. While not all professed to be Christians, there was a profound respect for the Bible and the principles derived from the Bible. The liberty they envisioned was regarded as being dependent upon respect for Scripture. John Adams on June 21, 1776 wrote, "Statesmen, my dear Sir, we may plan and speculate for liberty, but it is Religion and Morality alone which can establish the principles upon which Freedom can securely stand. The only foundation of a free Constitution is free Virtue, and if this cannot be inspired to our people in a greater Measure than they have it now! They may change their Rulers and the forms of Government, but they will not obtain a lasting liberty." This same sentiment had been expressed by Samuel Adams in 1772 when he wrote, "The rights to freedom being the gift of the Almighty...the rights of the colonists as Christians...may be best understood by reading and carefully studying the institution of the Great Law Giver and Head of the Christian Church, which are to be found clearly written and promulgated in the New Testament." Sadly, it seems that every effort is being made by some to undermine these principles. The secular world is regularly assaulting Christian values, opposing a foundation that would define morality. Even the mention of God and the Bible is taboo in schools. Most of the problems we face in our world are due to those who act contrary to these principles. Homes are destroyed, marriage is being redefined, pornography and other sexual sins no longer have shock-value, and God and His word are being removed from public view under the erroneous excuse of "separation of church and state."

But, "What can the righteous do?" All too many would seemingly do nothing. Many churches do not even regard the Bible as the inspired word of God, and see righteousness as something to be redefined by society. But the righteous must, as David, trust God and His word to guide us. May we never give up the stand for what is right and honorable in our lives and in our nation. May we continue to hold to the standard of God's word—to never surrender it, but ever defend it. We must do all we can to repair the damage that has been done, and speak up where others remain silent, knowing that only "the foundation of God standeth sure" (2 Timothy 2:19). May we constantly sound the warning to all who will hear: **"The**

wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God" (Psalms 9:17).

--

Ron

"The biggest problem for a dictator is how to keep the stomachs of his subjects full and their heads empty."

THE HARVEST MOUSE

Every year in the harvest fields of England there are thousands of little tragedies. The victims are those charming little creatures: the harvest mice.

Early in the year the growing corn seems to them the ideal place in which to settle and bring up a family. The rest of the innumerable corn-stocks is their whole world. In it they court and mate and plan and bring up their families. Their happiness seems complete—until the harvest.

When the day comes for the owner of the field to reap his harvest, tragedy inevitably strikes the mouse house. The fields which he thought were his world never really belonged to him at all. The field mouse was deceived because for months he was left to his own devices. He never saw the owner of the field, and naturally he knew nothing about the coming harvest.

Many people allow themselves to be deceived because God, the owner of the world, does not put in an occasional appearance. Thus man imagines the field belongs to him, and that there is no such thing as an eventual harvest.

--www.2bc.edu via *House to House/Heart to Heart*

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Have you ever had the experience of meeting someone and immediately being impressed that this person is likeable and trustworthy, only to find out later that he was a two-faced jerk? Or perhaps the very opposite—feeling that he was not very friendly and maybe even questionable of character, only to later count him as a genuine trustworthy friend? We should learn from this that we should not be hasty in the judging of others. The fact is, we cannot trust our first impressions. I came across the following article in Cybersalt Digest which illustrates this fact in a rather numerous way:

A company, feeling it was time for a shake-up, hired a new CEO. This new boss was determined to rid the company of all slackers. On a tour of the facilities, the CEO noticed a guy leaning against the wall. The room was full of workers, and he thought this was his chance to show everyone he means business!
(Continue in next column)

The CEO walked up to the guy and asked, "How much money do you make a week?"

Undaunted, the young fellow looked at him and replied, "I make \$200 a week. Why?"

The CEO then handed the guy \$200 in cash and screamed, "Here's a week's pay! GET OUT and don't come back!"

Feeling pretty good about his first firing, the CEO looked around the room and asked, "Does anyone want to tell me what that slacker did here?"

With a sheepish grin, one of the other workers muttered, "He's the pizza delivery guy."

THE RESCUE OF LOT

"And if He rescued righteous Lot, opposed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men (for by what he saw and heard, that righteous man, while living among them, felt his righteous soul tortured day after day by their lawless deeds). 2 Peter 2:7-8

Apparently the Lord saw something we don't. When we read the story of Lot's life in Genesis, it leads many to think badly of him. He made many wrong choices that landed him in Sodom and Gomorrah. Among the sins of Sodom, Lot found grace in the eyes of the Lord. Thankfully, God is our judge too. Oftentimes we find ourselves in bad situations, and may be severely judged by those around us. Let's keep our eyes on the Lord and follow His commands. HE will see in us what others miss, and He will rescue us too.
—David Grubb

PRAYER CONCERNS: Sammie came through her surgery fine, and has returned home. *** I've completed the two laser-treatments of my eyes, and am to return for an exam to see if I'm ready for the cataract removal. *** Continue to remember David Ferguson and Bill Livesay (Mattoon, kidney transfer) and Wayne Polk (Shelbyville; recovery from a stroke). *** persecuted believers -in-Christ are suffering the world-over, especially in the Mideast and China. Pray for the persecutors as well, that they might turn to the Lord.