

THE SOWER, FEB. 10

Inbox



Ronald Bartanen

Sat, Feb 9,
7:19 PM

to Ronald

HAPPY VALENTINES DAY!

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

February 10, 2019

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

THE LOVE OF GOD

This coming Thursday being Valentine's Day, the thoughts of many are on love. We certainly need more love in this world. Of course not everything that is called "love" is truly love, but often no more than vain, selfish desire. The words, "I love you" may be uttered, but sometimes it is without evidence. All forms of true love need to be seen, not just in words, but also in deeds.

God has not only told us repeatedly in the Bible of His love for us, but has proven that love by His actions. John 3:16 has been often referred to as "the little Bible" inasmuch as it is the heart of the Bible message: "*God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*"

Somebody once commented that it was as if someone should ask Jesus, "How much do you love me?" and Jesus stretched out His arms as far as He could reach. He then said, "This much," and He died. Friends, He stretched out His arms on the cross for us, for without His death on our behalf we could not be saved. If we could be saved by our own merit, Jesus would never have had to come, and He never would have had to die.

Have you put your trust in Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord? Do you believe He is the Christ, (God's anointed), the Son of God who died for our sins, was buried and rose again, now abiding at the right hand of the Father in Heaven, awaiting His return to claim His people? Can you also say with John, "We love Him because He first loved us"? As God demonstrated His love for us in giving us His Son as the offering for our sins, He asks of us the surrender of our

hearts and lives to Him. He not only claimed to love us, but showed that love at Calvary. Is it expecting too much for Him to ask commitment and obedience from us? Believing the gospel (good news) of what He has done for you, have you yet committed your life to Him in repentance and baptism? (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; 22:16). We have nothing of value to offer the Lord but our hearts. Even as baptized believers, may we heed the admonition of James: "Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" (James 2:5).

When the Lord returns, may we not be found guilty of spurning His love, but be seen as those who have loved Him in return.
-Ron

"WELL DONE is better than well said." (Ben Franklin)

DO NOT STOP HALFWAY

A painter was working atop a tall ladder that leaned against the second-story gable of a house. A small boy discovered the ladder, and, as is natural for boys, began to climb. His mother, missing her child, was shocked to find him halfway up the ladder. As she stifled a scream, the painter looked down, saw the child, and instantly perceived the danger.

Signaling the mother to be quiet, he calmly said, "Sonny, look up here to me, and keep climbing."

Rung by rung, he coaxed the boy ever higher: "Come on now, keep looking up, keep coming." At last the child was safe in his arms, and the painter carried him safely back to the ground.

In a sense, each of us is somewhere on a ladder to heaven (cf. Genesis 28:13). If we look down, we may be terrified. If we look around, we may lose our balance. God says, "Look up to me; look up, and you will never be dismayed by whatever is down there."

Let's look up to Jesus, up to where our safety lies. Look up, and keep climbing!

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Corinthians 3:18).

“Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith: who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God”

(Hebrews 12:2).

--Allen Webster, *161 Church Bulletin*

WRITTEN IN SAND AND STONE

Two friends were walking through the desert and got into an argument. One friend slapped the other one in the face. The one who got slapped was hurt, but without saying anything wrote in the sand, “Today my best friend slapped me in the face.”

They kept on walking until they found an oasis. Thirsty, they stopped for water. The one who had been slapped got stuck in the mire, fell in and started drowning. His friend saved him. That evening he wrote on a stone, “This day my best friend saved my life.”

The friend who had slapped and saved his best friend asked him, “After I hurt you, you write in the sand, and now you write on a stone. Why?”

He replied, “When someone hurts us we should write it in the sand where the winds of forgiveness can erase it away. But when someone does something good for us, we must engrave it in stone where it will be long remembered.”

Learn to write your hurts in the sand and your benefits in stone. Someone observed that it takes a minute to find special people, an hour to appreciate them, a day to love them, but an eternity to forget them.

House to House/Heart to Heart

“DO YOU LOVE ME?” will be today’s message, with John 21:15-17 as the reading and text.

PRAYER CONCERNS: Sammie is to undergo surgery at Sarah Bush Lincoln Hospital Friday, the 15th. *** I will be having a laser treatment on my right eye the same day in Decatur. This is in preparation for cataract surgery possibly in March. *** We are pleased to report that the David Ferguson-Bill Livesay kidney transplant went well. The kidney is functioning well. David is at home, and Bill expects to return home tomorrow. *** Pro-abortion forces in New York have won approval for post-birth abortions. That’s the permission to let **children** who survive abortion procedure be abandoned and left to die. Such is being sought in other states as well. Pray for the defeat of this vile practice.



ReplyReply allForward