

THE SOWER

JARTHUR CHURCH OF CHRIST

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LIVING OUR FAITH

The apostle Paul spoke of those “*whose glory is in their shame*” (Philippians 3:19). Such, as Paul taught, are justly condemned. This verse comes to my mind with reference to ISIS, a radical Islamic army seeking to bring the world under Islamic Sharia law through the process of terrorism, torturing, beheading, crucifying and burning alive those who will not confess faith in Allah. They do this without remorse or shame, and, in fact, glorying in their shame, using modern technology to broadcast it visually to the world. One among many such incidents involved 3 young boys in a vehicle, who were stopped, and the question to them was, “Are you a Christian?” They said, “Yes,” and were then dragged from their vehicle and beheaded. They were then put on display to tell the world what happens to “unbelievers.”

Thankfully, there are still those in our perverted world who fearlessly confess their faith in Christ even if it results in dying for their faith. Of course with televisions, computers and cell phones we can now witness things far removed geographically. This isn't happening here, we remind ourselves. At least not yet! While at the present time providentially we are not being called upon to **die** for our faith, we are still called upon to **live** for our faith. And I believe it is safe to say that if we are not willing to **live** for our faith now, when circumstances change we will be found unwilling to **die** for our faith. When a nation forsakes its godly principles, we can expect that nation to reap what it sows, and the harvest is frightful. Unless, as Christians, we are willing to stand up for what is right, and to share God's message of salvation with those around us, we, as Laodicea (Rev. 3:14-22) can surely hear Christ's word to us: “I will spew thee out of my mouth.” And “if judgment begins at the house of God...what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?” (1 Peter 4:17). As Christians, we are called to

be a light in a world of darkness, reflecting the light of Christ. If our light is snuffed out, “how great is that darkness!” (Matthew 6:23).

–Ron

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A CHRISTIAN

- As members of the body, one carries out the will of Christ, the Head. (Colossians 1:18)
- As lights in the world one shines forth for Christ, the light of the world. A(John 8:12; Phil. 2:15)
- As a soldier, one endures hardness for Christ, the captain of our salvation. (Heb. 2:10; 2 Tim. 2:3)
- As a sheep, one follows Christ, the Shepherd. (John 10)
- As a citizen, one obeys Christ, the King. (Colossians 113)
- As a branch, one bears fruit for Christ, the Vine. (John 15:1-6) --*House to House/Heart to Heart*

EVIDENCE FROM BIOLOGY

The ironic life-cycle of a toad-eating horsefly was first documented in the Arizona desert by Thomas Eisner of Cornell University. Dr. Eisner noticed this unusual drama at a muddy desert pond that had a large population of spadefoot toads. Upon close inspection of the pond, he noticed that some of the **toads were being pulled down into the mud as they hopped across the surface**. A little digging revealed that the predator was the horsefly larva. The larva burrows into the soft mud until its head barely sticks out. When an unsuspecting toad wanders by, the larva grabs him with its powerful jaws and pulls him into the mud. The larva injects the toad with poison and drinks the toad’s body fluids. Eventually the larva grows into an adult horsefly, but now it must avoid becoming a meal for the toads that have survived the larva attack.

Even in the desert where food is scarce, God has designed an incredible circular food chain that works in perfect balance. Although mutually beneficial relationships such as this may not have been required

before mankind rebelled, God has provided mechanisms to insure the survival of animals within His creation.

Psalms 104:27 (NIV): “These all look to you to give them their food at the proper time.”

--Logansport (IN) Lifelines

ARROGANCE

I’ve long maintained that the distinction between “professionals” and “amateurs” is often very slight, often amounting to little more than that the former are paid and the latter are not. This is in no small measure because professional arrogance has been known to become intolerable if left untouched.

So it happened that a patient was making his first visit to the doctor. “And whom,” began the physician with utmost dignity, “did you consult about your illness before you came to me?”

“Only the pharmacist down at the corner,” replied the patient.

The doctor could not conceal his contempt for the medical advice of the great “unwashed” who are not qualified to practice medicine.

“And what sort of ridiculous advice did that fool give you?”

“He told me,” replied the patient innocently, “to come and see you....” *--Cybersalt Digest*

NO MORAL ABSOLUTES?

How many times have you heard such statements as “What you consider right or wrong may not be right or wrong to me,” or after you have made a judgment on a moral issue someone replies, “That’s your opinion; we have a right to our opinion”? This is moral relativism—the belief that there are no absolutes—no absolute standard of right and wrong, moral and immoral. Such is the growing culture in today’s society. What it comes down to is that many believe we have no word from God, as in the Bible. Polls indicate that well-over 60% of Americans do not believe in moral absolutes, as seen in broad acceptance of abortion, homosexuality,

etc. We need to heed the words of the prophet Jeremiah , as he prayed, “O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man to direct his steps” (Jer. 10:23). We need to hear Jesus’ prayer: “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth” (John 17:17). –Ron

“EXODUS—A MESSAGE OF DELIVER-ANCE” continues as our theme, with Psalm 106;5-15 as the reading.

UPDATE: A visit to the cardiologist this past week concluded that my pulse-rate was no longer irregular, for which we thank the Lord. However, I am to have a CT Scan of my heart tomorrow. The pressure in my right eye had gone down sufficiently to enable me to have the laser treatment Friday. Barring further complications, the cataract surgery for my left eye will be July 8.