
THE SOWER

ARTHUR (IL) CHURCH OF CHRIST

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JULY 7, 2019

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

CONFUSION REIGNS

What a confused, mixed up world we live in! Some protest the killing of animals for meat and items of clothing, while God used animal skins to provide man's first covering (Genesis 3:21), and authorized the use of meats for foods (1 Timothy 4:1-5). Some—often including the above—are “pro-choice” when it comes to the killing of innocent, but unwanted, human life in the mother's womb—and sometimes out of it, while the child has no choice whatsoever. Some women give birth, and seek to hide the birth by killing the child, and are charged with murder, children may survive abortion, but still be assured by the abortionist that she may still have the child cast aside to die, and she'll be applauded for her courage to stand up for her rights. While some advocate human rights for those who have deprived others of their right to life, God recommends capital punishment (Genesis 9:6; Romans 13:1-4). While the right to discipline a child in class is taken from teachers, children get by with cursing and even attacking their teachers. While some, growing up in a country often called “the greatest country in the world,” with freedom, rights and economic prosperity unequalled by others, yet many advocate for humanistic socialism or communism, which always proves to be destructive of liberties and blessings. Some able-bodied citizens desire a paycheck from working taxpayers as they themselves choose not to work, while God's word declares that those who will not work have no right to eat (2 Thessalonians 3:10). While schools may not permit a child to have an aspirin for a headache without notifying parents, yet a girl may obtain an abortion without parental knowledge or permission. A child may be sent home from school if he wears a shirt that has a Christian message on it, but if he chooses to wear a dress, his decision must be honored, even though natural law and the Law of God forbids wearing garments peculiar to the opposite sex (Deuteronomy 22:5). Some prefer to significantly change our culture to allow us to determine what sex we are, which sex we prefer to marry, and to indoctrinate the children of such so-called rights, while rejecting the Biblical position that males born males will always be male, and that females born female will always be females. Some believe it's child abuse to insist on raising children by the laws of nature and nature's God.

God's prophet, Isaiah warned the rebellious nation of Judah before God's judgment fell upon them. "Woe to those who call evil, good, and good evil: who put darkness for light, and light for darkness: who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter" (Isa. 4:20). Though Paul wrote of God's judgment of those in the past in Romans 1;24, it is perfectly applicable to our nation today: "Because, though they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened." Without God, what a crazy, confused, mixed up world we live in!

--Ron

A VOICE FROM THE PAST—

"The highest glory of the American Revolution was this: it connected in one indissoluble bond the principles of civil government and the principles of Christianity." (John Quincy Adams, 1767-1848, member of the House and Senate and sixth president of the United States.)

KEEPING VISION

About 350 years ago a shipload of travelers landed on the northeast corner of America.

The first thing they established was a town site.

The next year they elected a town government.

The third year the town government planned to build a road five miles westward into the wilderness. (Continue next column)

On the fourth year the people tried to impeach their own government because they thought it was a waste of public funds to build a road five miles westward into a wilderness . Who needed to go there anyway?

Here were people who had the vision to see three thousand miles across an ocean and overcame great hardships to get there. But within a few years they were not able to even see five miles out of town. They had lost their vision.

With a vision of what we can become in Christ, no ocean of difficulty is too great or too vast. Without it, we rarely move beyond our current boundaries.

—Eric Snyder, *KneEmail*

NON-JUDGMENTALISM

Washington—In one passing scene from the HBO documentary *Fall to Grace*, former New Jersey governor Jim McGreevey, a self-dubbed “gay American,” enters a church ostensibly more welcoming than the hidebound Catholic Church of his childhood. The message board on the church front reads, “Jesus, help us overcome the sins of racism, sexism, classism, and homophobia.” Had the message-board been bigger, the good pastor might have added climate-change-denial, Islamophobia, and xenophobia (fear of foreigners). In a postmodern world that prides itself on “non-judgmentalism,” these have emerged as the seven new 7 deadly sins, and God help the man, woman or pizza maker who commits one.

—From the Internet

While some of the above are on occasion legitimate, others are either questionable or completely contrary to Scripture. The world rushes to the one saying of Jesus they have actually memorized—Matthew 7:1: “Judge not that ye be not judged.” As said many times, “Any text taken out of context is a pretext.” He goes on to warn of “false prophets”, those who claim to speak for God, but speak only for themselves, and declares, “Ye shall know them by their fruits” (vs. 15-16) While we acknowledge that God is the ultimate judge, He has indicated He expects us to be “fruit inspectors.” The judgment He requires that we make is found in v. 24: “Judge righteous judgment.” Righteous judgment is that which is in agreement with God’s word, as David declared, “My tongue shall speak thy word, for all thy commandments are righteousness” (Psalm 119:172). Preachers and churches in our society today that are willing to actually “judge righteous judgment” are seemingly getting scarcer and scarcer. —Ron

“EXODUS—MESSAGE OF DELIVERANCE”: *The Trial of Thirst* will be today’s message, the reading being Ex. 15:23-24.

UPDATE: The report on my heart CT Scan was favorable: no heart-arterial disease! My blood pressure and pulse continue in the normal range. However, it’s been a very rough week. Monday p.m. I began itching in multiple areas of my body, and I had broken out in red blotches and streaks from head to the bottoms of my feet. Itching has been both day and night. Tuesday I was given a shot, and it has gradually eased the itching from the second day. Tests have been taken, and I await hearing the results. Meanwhile, plans are to have the cataract removed from my left eye this Monday, barring further hindrances.