

**THE SOWER
ARTHUR CHURCH OF CHRIST
415 W. 4TH STREET\
ARTHUR, IL 61911**

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

AS INIQUITY ABOUNDS

In replying to the disciples' question as to signs indicating the approach of not only the destruction of Jerusalem, but also of Christ's return, among the signs Jesus gave, He declared, "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (Matthew 24:12).

We are urged to be ever-watchful for Christ's return—not by constantly looking at the clouds, but mindful of the moral and spiritual decline we witness around us. While such evidences pointing to His coming are a matter of perspective, yet their existence and growth remind us to "watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come" (Matthew 24:42).

A recent troubling report on the Internet reveals that while 65% of adult Americans identify with some form of the Christian faith, yet this is a drop of 12% within the last decade, according to the current Pew Research Center. Western civilization has long been on a decline, as citizens adjust to permissive moral stagnation. Iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxes cold. While this is happening, the fervor of Islamists abounds, posing a threat to what they would regard as "Christian nations," such as America. As we see what is happening, however, let us not hang our heads in despair, nor raise the white flag of surrender to a godless society, but prayerfully engage ourselves more ardently in spiritual combat with the demonic forces at work in the world. We must not allow our love to "wax cold," but hasten to stir up the dying embers that are ready to go out. The blessing of our Lord, even in times like this, will be upon those servants whom the Lord at His coming "will find so doing" (Matthew 24:46). Now is not the time to give up, but to join forces in the Lord's spiritual army, assured that victory is ours in Him, "for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:4-5).

Ron

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THINK ABOUT IT—

- “God always gives His best to those who leave the choice with Him”
- “You can’t change the past, but you can change the present by not worrying about the future.”
 - “Anger is a condition in which the tongue works faster than the mind.”
 - “One pound of learning requires ten pounds of common sense.”
 - “When the American spirit was in its youth, liberty, sir, was the primary objective.”
(Patrick Henry)

“Everyone is entitled to their own opinion, but not to their own facts.” (Patrick Moynihan)

THANK GOD FOR THE BIBLE

One song in some hymn books begins,

*“Holy Book divine,
Precious treasures mine;
Lamp to my feet and light to my way,
To guide me safely home.”*

Is the Bible precious to you? If you were exiled to a remote island, and could have but one earthly possession, what would it be? The Bible? I fear that to many, even to some who wear the Christian name, the Bible might not even be considered. Although, the last I heard, it is still the “best seller” of all books when purchased, and it may occasionally

“go to church”, but at other times it spends lonely hours on a book shelf or the coffee table.

However, the Bible should be the most loved of all books. It, as no other book, enlightens man’s darkened minds. The psalmist, writing of the small part of God’s word that had by that time been written, exclaimed, “O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day.... Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path” (Psa. 119:97, 105). --Ron

TIBERIUS CAESAR SAW ROME’S DECLINE

Someone once sagely observed, (as best I can recall), “They who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it.” With that in mind, consider the following words of Tiberius Caesar,, which I obtained via the Internet:

“I am a soldier. I am surrounded by sycophants and liars, and in that Diodorus speaks truth. What is lavish and uncomprehending praise given out of self-seeking and fear?... What is flattery if lips that speak it only fawn, and in that fawning profit? That dull ear is servant to a duller tongue. As I soldier, I prefer men of simple truth and without complexities who speak in honor and of patriotism. But where are men today in Rome?... Let me tell you this. Venal Caesars, power-mad Caesars never seize power, never destroy law and their country. Their power is forced on them by an evil and despicable people, a selfish and cowardly people. Where are the guardians of the people’s liberty then? You are silent, you are slaves in spirit, you are thieves and cowards. But a people deserve their lawmakers.... Rome!...Where are the Romans? They have lost their identity. They have lost their tongues, their minds, their souls, their virility. What have I to do with such a Rome. I am not an honorable man! I am what my people have made me. I am their captive, not their Emperor. Here is no escaping the evil of a debased people.... I am here only to do the filthy will of a nation obstinately determined to commit suicide. If I break the law and the Constitution in their greedy behalf, they applaud me. If I have given up my hope of restoring the Treasury, they praise me for having their welfare at heart. Their welfare! Dogs and jackals!”

Remember—these words of Caesar were in Rome’s decline. Do we see any of the same symptoms in 21st century America? He didn’t blame the politicians as much as the citizenry. Whatever happens in a republic basically is due to the demands of the people. “Where are men today” in America? --Ron

“CHRIST IN PHILIPPIANS (#1)—CHRIST, OUR LIFE” will be today’s message, with Phil. 1:20-23 as the reading.

PRAY FOR: Wayne Polk (minister, Shelbyville; St. John’s Hospital); Ruby Bradd (Clinton; undergoing treatment for cancer). Pray for the preservation of the basic freedoms of religion and of speech in our country.