

UPDATE ON RUBY BRADD: I had completed this issue of The Sower before receiving an update on Ruby Bradd's progress, so will report on it now. Prior to her last treatments, Ruby's condition was in stage 4 of cancer throughout her body. Following CT and other scans and tests, no cancer cells are detected! Praise be to the LORD. The doctors do recommend that her treatments continue to prevent a recurrence. Many prayers from many people have gone up, and we need to continue in prayer for her. --Ron

**THE SOWER
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JANUARY 19,, 2020

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

TIME IS FAST PASSING

Where did 2019 go? Here we are already past the middle of January, 2020! The icy winds of winter are biting us! Old Man Winter has definitely come through the door! How quickly time passes.

So it is with life. We are born, go through childhood, are educated, get a job, marry, and raise a family. Then what? Then comes grandchildren, retirement, gray hair (or lack of any), and mysterious aches and pains. The farther you are down the list, the more often you are probably reminding yourself of how quickly time is passing by. Life's seasons move by ever so quickly.

James spoke of the brevity of life, saying, "*What is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a while, and then vanishes away*" (James 4:14). Time marches on, and eternity is constantly nearer.

As we think of the direction our old world is going, we are made to wonder how much longer the Lord will put up with us. As the bitter winter night has enveloped us, we would all do well to heed Paul's admonition in Romans 13:12: "*The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.*" Even in the darkest night of the winter of life we must remind ourselves that the radiance of spring will quickly come. As Christians, we should remind ourselves of the words of Jesus spoken to His disciples

prior to His departure, when speaking of the tribulations of life: *“When these things begin to come to happen, look up, and lift up your heads, because your redemption is near: (Luke 21:28).*

Yes, time is fast passing. Are you ready for eternity?
-Ron

ERODING VALUES—

(I failed to note the source of the following article from the Internet, but thank the one who sent it.)

What we’ve witnessed for decades in America is the deterioration of civil society. The result? Increased crime. And all the way back in the late 1900s Chuck Colson explained why the prison population was exploding:

“The surging moral relativism in our culture was eroding our value system. The family was breaking down. Sleazy television, movies and music poisoned the minds of young people, dulling their consciences.... And the schools no longer taught right from wrong—only tolerance. Young people had no moral compass, and many of them followed their parents’ footsteps into prison.”

“ROLL THE GOSPEL CHARIOT ALONG”

Many of you know the song children sing during VBS entitled, “Roll the Gospel Chariot.” This was one of my favorite songs as a young boy, especially when we got to do the line that said, “When the Devil’s in the way, we will roll right over him.” When we sang that line, we would roll our arms as fast as we could, imitating the turning of a wheel, and we would “roll over the Devil” at high speed!

What I could never understand as a child is why we would sing the line, “When the sinner’s in the way, we will stop and pick him up.” From my understanding at the time, I didn’t want to “stop

and pick them up.” I wanted to “roll right over them”, too! I mean, why not? If we were going to run over the Devil in our “Gospel Chariot,” why wouldn’t we also run over the sinner who was believing the Devil?

As an adult, I understand what I didn’t understand as a child. We must learn to make distinction between the sin and the sinner. While we are to hate sin (Romans 12:9), we are to love the sinner (Romans 5:8; Luke 19:10). However, if truth be told, although we may understand the meaning of the song, we may, in practice, be guilty of “rolling right over” the sinner instead of stopping and picking him up.

Maybe we need to do a little introspection. Does your “Gospel Chariot” slow down for sinners, or mow them down? Give it some thought. --Steve Higginbotham, *GracEmail*

LOOK WHAT YOUR TAX DOLLARS HELPED ACCOMPLISH LAST YEAR: The figures are in. In the course of 2019, according to a Planned Parenthood report, abortions increased by 12.915%, an increase of 345,672 abortions, over 1000 per day. Eighty abortions were performed for every one adoption referral through Planned Parenthood. Taxpayer funding increased to \$616.8 million dollars. Isn’t it comforting to know that you helped pay for it? After all, we’re told it’s in support of constitutional “women’s health.” --Ron

WHEN A NATION FORGETS GOD

When a nation that once honored God and His laws decides to reject Him from their schools, courthouses and other public sites, choosing to enthrone man and humanly devised standards in their place, what happens?

The apostle Paul in Romans 1 speaks of a people who once “knew God” but became unthankful, and departed from Him (vs. 21-28). The results were idolatry and nature-worship (vs. 22-23, 25), fornication (v. 24), homosexuality and lesbianism (vs. 26-27) and a host of other violations of God’s laws (vs. 28-31), **subjecting themselves to God’s judgment (v. 32)**. However, while we may look in condemnation of such, Paul, in chapter 2, makes it plain that both the idolatrous Gentiles and Jews under Mosaic Law are guilty before God (vs. 1-3, 11-16). In chapter 3 he reminds us again that “there is none righteous, no, not one” (v. 10) and “all have sinned and come

short of the glory of God” (v. 23). Later, he makes it plain that since all sin, we are all condemned, saying, “The wages of sin is death” (6:23a),, but then adding, “but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” In chapter 4, he quotes scripture showing God’s blessing available, with the forgiveness of sin (vs. 7-8), through faith in Christ, not in the observance of the Law (vs. 5, 16). This faith is in the atoning work of Jesus Christ, “who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification” (v. 25). Through faith, we identify ourselves with Christ in his death and resurrection in being “baptized into Jesus Christ...baptized into his death...buried with him by baptism into death” and rising to “walk in newness of life” (6:3-4).

So, what happens when a nation forgets God? Man becomes his own God and forms his morality on the basis of popular opinion. Living together without marriage becomes the norm. Entertainment must be violent or sexual in nature. Men-with-men and women-with-women sexual relationships (and even “marriages”) become a “right.” Those who oppose such must be bigots who seek to “impose their values upon others.” The major “sin” is “intolerance” of others’ lifestyles. In other words, man, as his own god, feels free to set his own standards of right and wrong. **Do you know of a nation that has become like this? God’s word gives warning: “The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.”**
--Ron

PRAY FOR: Ruby Bradd (Clinton, cancer); Wayne Polk (minister in Shelbyville, hardening of the arteries in his legs, upcoming cataract surgeries); Larry Miles (our Web manager, cancer recovery); Mary’s nephew, Gavin (serving our country in Iraq); the many, especially in communistic and Islamic countries, who are suffering for their faith in Christ.