

**THE SOWER**  
**ARTHUR CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
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**ARTHUR, IL 61911**

**MARCH 15, 2020**

Have you visited our web site lately? ([www.arthurcoc.com](http://www.arthurcoc.com))

**“GET WITH IT”**

God has never promised anyone that life would be easy. Far from it! The future is not always filled with sunny days, but frequently with dark clouds and thick darkness. For the Christian, difficulties, grief and frustrations serve as a constant challenge to our faithful endurance. However, God abundantly supplies the resources needed to achieve a favorable outcome in life. Chief among such resources is the record of God’s people as recorded in God’s word, set as examples for us. The apostle Paul wrote the Christians at Rome: “Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope” (Rom. 15:4, ESV). One among many “former-days” examples is Joshua, a successor to Moses, chosen by God to lead Israel in conquest of Canaan following their 40-year trek through the wilderness. The first chapter of Joshua records God’s commission to Joshua. He is to lead Israel to take the land in Canaan, which God had centuries before promised to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. In essence, God is telling Joshua, “You are my man. Heed my word. Rid yourself of all fears. Fulfill my purpose for you. Now, get with it!”

While Joshua may well feel overwhelmed by the task set before him, God does not leave him without divine assurance. Four times within this short 18-verses chapter God encourages him, saying, “Be strong and courageous” (vs. 6, 7, 9, 18). For Joshua and the army he leads there must be no retreat, for this is God’s battle. He is assured, “No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you” (v. 5). Faith in God’s presence, and obedience to His word, will assure him of victory. The fact that the Lord told him to “be strong and courageous” four times would imply, first of all, that God **meant** it, and second, that Joshua **needed** it.

Joshua, through 40 years of wandering with God’s people through the wilderness, knew them in all their fickleness. He must have heard them ask a hundred times, “Where is God?” The “God is dead” cry is not anything new to our generation. We would not be surprised if many times he heard comments like, “Maybe God spoke to Moses, but maybe not.” Now, could he trust the people to not be faithless as they faced Jericho?

Remembering that this was written “for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope,” the Lord’s promise to us is unchanged: “Behold, I am with you

always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20, ESV). We can hear God saying to us, “I’ve given you life, with all its challenges. You are my man (or woman). Heed my word. Rid yourself of all fears. Fulfill my purpose for you. Now, get with it!”  
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Ron

***“Let us unite, therefore, in imploring the Supreme Ruler of nations, to spread his holy protection over these United States: to turn the machinations of the wicked to the confirming of our constitutions, to enable us at all times to root out internal sedition, and put invasion to flight: to perpetuate in our country that prosperity which his goodness has already conferred, and to verify the anticipation of this government being a safeguard to human rights.”*** (George Washington, Nov. 19, 1794, in his sixth Annual Address)

## **VOTE YOUR CONSCIENCE**

With election-day soon approaching (March 17), let all do some serious soul-searching. I will not tell you who to vote for—that will be your decision. Candidates of both parties remind me of fussing children, tattling on each other, making up or embellishing stories to put others in a bad light. I do believe, however, that, as Christians, we not only have a right to vote, but also an obligation to inform ourselves, as best we can, as to the support of Christian values, or opposition to them, by each candidate, and then to vote our conscience. Christian values should head the list of objectives of candidates for a child of God. “Political correctness” is not on a par with the word of God. Where do candidates stand on God-given human rights, including the right to life? Will the sacredness of a husband and wife marriage be upheld? Will our God-given rights, guaranteed by the Constitution, take precedence over Muslim bondage under sharia law? Will our Christian liberties be upheld—not only the freedom to worship, but also the freedom to serve Christ according to Scripture, and to speak His word publicly, whether it is politically correct or not? Would those who serve our country in our armed forces be allowed the same freedoms of belief, speech and practice as the rest of us? Will our children be subjected in our schools to anti-Christian indoctrination and harassment?

Other issues have a degree of importance as well, but if God is permitted to be shoved out of our nation’s culture, we cannot survive. Christians are here as a “light of the world” (Matthew 5:14-16)—a light that is not to be hidden, supporting at all costs the principles of Christ and His word. To do otherwise is to “give comfort to the enemy.” A vote for a candidate is a vote for his values, and if those values are contrary to godly standards, we need to heed John’s warning: “He that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (2 John 11). So, vote your conscience.  
—Ron

**“It is when people forget God that tyrants forge their chains.”** (Patrick Henry)

## WALKING A MILE

**“Count It all joy, brethren, when you encounter various trials. Know that the testing of your faith produces endurance, and let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.” James 1:2-4**

I walked a mile with pleasure,  
She chatted all the way,  
But left me none the wiser  
For all she had to say.

I walked a mile with sorrow,  
And ne'er a word said she,  
But oh the things I learned from her,  
When sorrow walked with me.

(Robert Browning Hamilton)

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. Thank you, Lord. *—David Grubb*

***“CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH” (Part 2)*** will be today’s message, Jude 1:1-4 as the text.

***PRAY FOR:*** Gavin Harlin has been sent to Iraq; Ruby Bradd (Clinton; cancer); Wayne Polk (Shelbyville minister; improving, but now facing cataract surgery); David Ferguson’s (Mattoon minister) mom (in hospital); \*\*\* China is reported to be increasing its persecution of Christians, closing churches (even “legal” ones), demolishing their buildings, raiding house-churches and imprisoning people of faith. It also seems persecution of both Christians and Jews is on the increase, not only in communist and Muslim nations, but world-wide. Pray for those who seek to put “the kingdom of God and His righteousness” above this world