
THE SOWER

ARTHUR CHURCH OF CHRIST

415 W. 4TH STREET

SULIVAN, IL 61911

Rib /Bartanen, Evangelist

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

MORAL ABSOLUTES?

How many times have you heard such statements as, “What you consider to be right or wrong may not be right or wrong to me”,, or if you express a judgment on a moral issue, you hear the reply, “That is your opinion, but I have a right to my opinion”? This is moral relativism—the belief that there are no absolutes. It is more and more commonly held that morals are to be determined by evolving societal standards, with no absolute standard of right and wrong, moral and immoral. Such is the growing sentiment that is displacing the Bible as having validity in public life. As a consequence, human life is viewed as less sacred, and sexual purity, by biblical standards, is outdated. What it comes down to is that many now believe we have no clear word from God, such as in the Bible. What was once regarded as a God-fearing nation, a “city set on a hill”, is now being submerged in a cesspool of godless philosophies. Polls indicate that well over 60% of Americans do not believe in moral absolutes.

As we, as a nation, have abandoned God, is it any wonder that we are confronted with so much terrorism and lawlessness? A new generation is indoctrinated with secular humanism in our government-schools, where the Ten Commandments are anathema. Can divine judgment be far behind? 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 that walketh to direct his steps” (Jer. 10:23). We need to hear again the prayer of Jesus for His followers, “Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth” (John 17:17).

-Ron

DID JESUS CARE?

On one occasion in Jesus' life the disciples actually wondered whether or not Jesus cared if they perished (Mark 4:38). Jesus was asleep when a storm arose and the disciples wondered why Jesus had not awakened and tended to what they knew He could. "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" Of course Jesus cared! He was not, however, anxiety-filled with the outside circumstances. This illustrates a good point for you and me. When we measure the joy of life by the outside external circumstances that are around us, it is easy to invite anxiety to reside within. Choose a different course. Those things that you can address, address them. Those things that you cannot address, let them go. The storms of life can be powerful, and there is really only One who can calm the storm. Trust Him. -Ron Thomas

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.)

CLEANSING

I remember as a child playing outside in the hot Arkansas summers. I played in the woods behind my house. I rolled down the hill next to the driveway, and dug in the dirt more than I can count. I think it goes without saying that all that playing in the summer heat caused me to sweat profusely, though I do not remember minding it too much. And the sweat mixed with the dirt was not a pleasant combination.

The more unpleasant reality, of which I was keenly aware, was that I would have to clean up when I finished playing. Scrubbing...with soap...would be required. This is not something a little boy enjoys. I remember on more than one occasion my grandmother asking if I washed behind my ears. Being clean was the objective...even cleaned behind my ears. But I just wasn't sure it was worth all that effort.

To be clean in the sight of God is worth every possible effort. God calls us to be holy because He is holy. The thing we need to realize is that all efforts of our own will certainly fail. All efforts made in our own way to be clean in the sight of God will fail. Job recognized this when he said, "If I wash myself with snow and cleanse my hands with lye, yet you will plunge me into a pit, and my own clothes abhor me" (Job 9:30-31).

Christ alone can provide the cleansing we need. And we must allow Jesus to cleanse us completely. Jesus said to Peter, “If I do not wash you, you have no share with me” (John 13:8). We must be willing to allow Jesus to cleanse us. The filthiness of sin is only removed by the blood of the Lamb. Have you been to Jesus for His cleansing power? Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

--Keith Harris, Little Rock, Ark.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE—

(Following are some quotes from church bulletins. Some evidently don't have efficient proof-readers to check things out before going to press.)

- The sermon this morning: “Jesus Walks On the Water.” The sermon tonight: “Searching for Jesus.”
- Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.
- The Fasting and Prayer Conference includes meals.
- Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on Oct. 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.
- Potluck Supper at 5:00 p.m. Prayer and medication will follow.
- This evening at 7 p.m. there will be a hymn singing in the park across from the church. Come prepared to sin.
- Low Self-Esteem group will meet Thursday at 7 p.m. Please use the back entrance.
- The church will host an evening of fine dining, super entertainment and gracious hostility.
- Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered.

“NO TURNING BACK (Part 2)” will be this morning's message, with Luke 9:57-62 as the reading.

PRAY FOR: I was on a heart monitor for only a short time before I was told I need a pace-maker, with my heart skipping beats—as high as 6 seconds apart. It will be Tuesday. *** Continue in prayer for: Ruby Bradd (Clinton; recovering after cancer treatment); Wayne Polk (Shelbyville minister; health problems); n end to the chaos and rioting in our cities, and wisdom as our nation faces racial tension, political turmoil and increased divisiveness.