
THE SOWER
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THE FAMILY OF GOD

A favorite word for many of us is the word “family.” It conveys feelings of acceptance and loving relationships. Our most precious memories should be those spent as children with loving parents, and in adult life, with spouse and our children. Many of us cherish memories of family get-togethers with our kinfolk. As God intended it, family should bring memories of security, acceptance and interdependence. When it is otherwise, there are serious problems that need to be resolved.

The church is depicted in many terms in Scripture, but some of the most commonly used speak of family. Jesus taught His followers to pray, “Our Father” (Matthew 6:9), and spoke of those that do the Father’s will as “my brother, sister, and mother” (Matthew 12:50). This close, spiritual relationship is to be sought and nurtured in the church.

Wouldn’t it be great if it could be said of every family, “They are such a loving family”? Sad to say, this is not always the case. Too frequently homes are broken up by abuse, neglect, unfaithfulness, etc.

There is a family, however, that should always be a haven of love, and that is God’s family, the church. The church was born out of love. Ephesians 5:25 reads, “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church, and gave Himself for it.” The church should be as an oasis of love in a desert of hate. Jesus told His disciples, “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another” (John 13:35). We are urged in Scripture to “Let brotherly love continue” (Hebrews 13:1). Without love in God’s family, how would one know it was His family? Truly, love is the cement that holds us together.

Are you part of this family? Paul defined this relationship clearly in Galatians 3:26-27: “Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” --Ron

- “If slighted, slight the slight and love the slighter.”
- “*Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.*” (Oliver Goldsmith)
- “*The falsification of history has done more to impede human development than any one thing known to mankind.*” (Rousseau)

PRO-CHOICE?

After I spoke at a public high school on the pro-life position, the pro-choice instructor took me to the faculty lounge for lunch. He pointed to a table where four teachers were smoking and said, “Fortunately this is the last week smoking will be allowed in here. We’ve finally gotten the district to make the teachers’ lounge non-smoking.” Good naturedly I said, “I see you’re not really pro-choice.” With a surprised look, he explained, “But cigarette smoke hurts other people.” Many who are pro-choice on abortion support laws requiring seatbelts. They are anti-choice” about seatbelts because seatbelts save lives. When lives are at stake, “freedom to choose” can, and is, legitimately restricted by society. *-Barry Sanford, House to House/Heart to Heart*

: Abortion—the taking of the lives of innocent unborn children—is defended on the basis of the right of the mother to choose, with no thought of the child’s right to God-created life. Politicians defend it, attacking pro-life opponents as being against the mother’s right to choose. The child’s life is a human life, made “in the image of God” at the moment of conception. Some now are defending abortion even to the time of birth, and some even after birth. If that child, in the whole process, is not a living human being, what is he/she? The right of choice does not include the right to destroy others. In other situations, as the article above points out, rights are limited by the government. Such is the case with the limitations imposed during the current pandemic—quarantines face masks, distancing from others, etc. The reason presented—needed for the preservation of people’s health and lives. The health and life of the unborn is as important to God as the life of one who is born, for in both cases they are both human: “endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights (including) life,” as our Constitution declares. Then, to add insult to injury, some politicians support depriving citizens of the **right to choose** to not pay for it with their tax dollars. Human life is not to be treated as troublesome waste, but as God’s creation, as the Psalmist prayed: “*For you formed my inward parts: You covered me in my mother’ womb*” (Psa. 139:13) For our nation to deny it, is to invite His judgment.

-Ron)

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS wrote in his journal on March 15, 1493, as he made the journey to our continent: “Of this journey I observe...that it has miraculously been shown as may be understood in this writing, by the many signal miracles that aHe has shown on the voyage, and for me, who for so great a time was in the court of Your Highnesses, with the opposition and against the opinion of so many high personages of your household, who were all against me, challenging this undertaking to be folly, which I hope in Our Lord will be to the greater glory of Christianity, which to some slight extent already has happened.” (*America’s God and Country Encyclopedia of Quotations*)

ROMANS 14:17-19

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit, because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and receives human approval. Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.

“**THE HOW OF FAITH**” will be today’s message, with Romans 10:12-17 as the reading.

IN OUR PRAYERS: Ruby Bradd (Clinton; cancer recovery); Wayne Polk (Shelbyville minister; health problems); the victims of the California forest fires and Gulf Coast hurricane; and for the turning of people’s hearts to God in this time of stress. Thank God for the blessings God has granted us by His grace.