

WORDS OF TRUTH

A Weekly Bulletin for the Sunrise Acres church of Christ

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Sunrise Acres CHURCH OF CHRIST

Meeting at:
8625 Robert Drive
El Paso, TX 79904

915-525-5794

OUR MEETING TIMES:

Sunday Bible Class: 9:45 AM
Sunday Worship: 10:55 AM

Are You Visiting With Us?

If you are visiting with us, we want to welcome you to the Lord's church (Matthew 16:18 and Colossians 1:18). Our goal is to simply get to Heaven and to help you do the same. We use the Bible as our standard to govern what we do in our work and worship for the Lord (Colossians 3:17, II Timothy 1:13, II Timothy 3:16-17, and I Peter 4:11).

We welcome your questions and would love the opportunity to study further with you. Luke recorded a fascinating statement we all need to consider: "Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able" (Luke 13:23-24). We invite you to join us in being one of the few that are saved!

A Lesson Or Two From A Group Of Ants

By: *Brian A. Yeager*

The Lord instructs us to consider ants and to learn something from our observation of them. Notice: "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man... The ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer" (Proverbs 6:6-11 and Proverbs 30:25).

A couple of months ago a friend emailed me and said the following: "at the moment I'm out the door, going to the store to get some bug spray - lived here for 3 years without seeing even one bug, now I'm being invaded by ants (it's that time of year for them I suppose). They are amazing to watch, I put out some boric acid to discourage their advance, but they just build a bridge using the fallen corpses and continue with their work" (Email; 4/29/2009).

Unlike many people I know, the ant does not make excuses for not carrying out their duties (cf. Proverbs 20:4). They are busy, at work for their own good. People tend to always look for the easy way. With our spiritual lives, we are to be a busy people. The Lord commands us to be: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (I Corinthians 15:58).

Just consider, in the quote above from my friend, the ants didn't stop and have a funeral service for the fallen when there was work to do. Okay, that may seem heartless to many people. However, if that were heartless to you, then you'd have to accuse Jesus of being heartless. He commands us not to cease His work for things like burying the dead, saying goodbye, etc. (Luke 9:57-62). Consider the ant. What more can we learn?

Some Applications From The Ant Story

The ants my friend had trouble with had not been an issue for the previous three years he lived in his home. Well brethren, sometimes we find we've not been a presence in our neighborhoods for years too. What does that mean? Well, when is the last time you attempted to have a spiritual discussion with your neighbors? We are commanded to love our neighbors as ourselves (Romans 13:9-10 and James 2:8). We are commanded to speak truth with our neighbors (Ephesians 4:25). What greater truth do we have to share than the word of God (Psalms 33:4, John 17:17, and Colossians 1:5)? It may be that you have already tried all that you can (Matthew 10:14). However, if you have not "bugged" your neighbors yet, what are you waiting for (Matthew 9:36-38 and James 4:13-14)?

The ants my friend had trouble with were amazing to watch. What about you? Do people notice Christ in you (Matthew 5:14-16)? You should be a rare sight in this ungodly world (Philippians 2:15-16). People should be amazed to see someone of honesty such as you have to show (Job 27:4, Psalms 119:163, Romans 13:13, and I Thessalonians 2:10). People should be amazed to see someone with such great and accurate biblical knowledge (I Peter 3:15). People should be amazed to find someone who does not conform to this world (Romans 12:1-2 and I John 2:15-17). People should stand in amazement as they witness true godly living in you (Titus 2:11-14).

The ants my friend had trouble with were not easily discouraged. We have to remember that we have an adversary who figuratively is compared to a roaring lion seeking to devour us (I Peter 5:8). Evil surrounds us in this world (John 7:7, John 17:15, Acts 2:40, Galatians 1:4, and I John 5:19). As faithful Christians, we will not allow these things to deter us from our good works (Galatians 6:9, Hebrews 3:14, and II John 8). Notice the verse that follows the warning about Satan being a lion seeking to devour us: "*Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world*" (I Peter 5:9). We are a people who need not be discouraged. We have a Savior who will not forsake us (Hebrews 13:5-6). We have a reward that cannot be taken from us (John 10:27-28 and II Timothy 1:12). Therefore, what do we ever have to be discouraged about?

The ants my friend had trouble with did not allow the fallen to hinder them from continuing in their work. While the application has already been made and could be continued about those who die physically, we are going to talk about those who die spiritually. Apostasy is a reality (Luke 8:13, I Corinthians 9:27, I Corinthians 10:1-12, Galatians 5:4, Hebrews 6:4-6, and II Peter 3:16-17). We've all likely had to mourn the spiritual loss of someone we held near and dear to our hearts. We've lost brethren with whom we've shared much and cared for deeply. However, we serve our Lord not for friendship with others. We serve the Lord because of His love for us (Romans 5:6-9 and I John 4:19). We stay faithful for the reward (Colossians 1:23) and to avoid eternal punishment (I Peter 4:17-19). We cannot ever allow someone else's failure to become our own. Remember, you are bought with a price (I Corinthians 6:20; cf. Acts 20:28). Your closest friend and fellow Christian is not the one whom you owe your allegiance.

Conclusion

There are other things we certainly can learn from ants. One thing is for sure; the ant has a lot less to live for. So, the question begs asking, why are we working less for something that is so great? Consider this text in conclusion: "*By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible*" (Hebrews 11:24-27).

What must one do to be saved (Acts 2:37)? Hear and believe the Gospel (Mark 16:15-16 & Romans 10:17), repent of their sins (Acts 3:19), confess Christ (Acts 8:37), and be baptized (immersed) for the remission of sins into the church of Christ (Acts 2:38-41; 47, I Corinthians 12:12-13, and Romans 6:1-6; 16:16). One must then remain faithful (Colossians 1:23).