

News & Notes

Sunday, December 4, 2005

Remember in Prayer: Al Alberson; Sandra Albertson; Sally Etta Crawford; Lawrence Dawson; Tommy Dawson; Flora Estes; Kelly Gamblin; Carrol Holmes; Carolyn Jordan; Dot Kethum; Brenda Leopard; Deliah Mann; Howard Moody; Wanda Pierce; Tate Peeler; Janet Rooker; Lillie Mae Shelby; Jayme and Trucilla Spence; Ollie Ursery; Alvie Williford;

Pantry item for the month of November is canned goods.

The **elders will be meeting** today at 5:00 PM. If you would like to bring anything to their attention, please do so then.

The **ladies night** will be Tuesday, December 13th at 6:30 PM in the dining hall. It is pot-luck.

Please plan to stay late on Wednesday (December 14th) after services to help put together the **fruit baskets**.

There will be a **Christmas party** hosted by the Streets at the home of Mary Curd on Friday, December 16th at 6:30 PM. All are invited.

Sermon In Preview:

AM: Does God Care Which Church I Attend?

PM: Song of Solomon: The Country Seat of the King (1:1-2:7)

For the Record (December 4, 2005):

Attendance: 85 Contribution: \$1233.00 Budget: \$1205.00

The Ashland Church of Christ

P. O. Box 25
Ashland, MS 38603-0025
ashlandcoc@juno.com

Sunday:

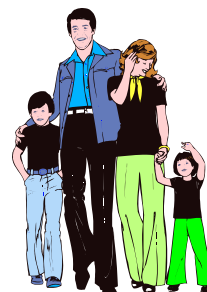
Bible Study 9:30 AM
Worship 10:30 AM
Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday:

Bible Study 7:00 PM

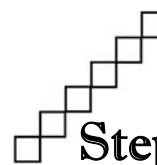
Shepherds:

Barney King
Carrol Street



The Ashland Announcer

*"Give to the Lord, O families of the peoples,
Give to the Lord glory and strength" (Psalm 96:7).*



Steps to Salvation: BAPTISM

Jeremy Northrop

When one is seeking Biblical salvation, first he or she must hear the word of God (Romans 10:17). Then, the person must believe what they have heard (Hebrews 11:6, Mark 16:15-16). Next he or she must repent of their sins (Luke 13:3, 5; Acts 2:38). Then, the person must confess Christ (Romans 10:9). One must be baptized for the remission of sins (Galatians 3:27, Acts 2:38). Finally, he or she must live faithfully to death (Acts 14:21-22, Revelation 2:10b). The step of salvation of baptism is the thrust and focus of this article. The Bible speaks of at least five different kinds of baptism. The Bible teaches that baptism is an immersion for the remission of sins. Finally, the Bible teaches baptism to be essential for one salvation.

The Bible speaks of many different kinds of Baptism. In Luke 12:49-53, there is the baptism of suffering. Luke pointed out that Christians could suffer for what they believe. This could refer to Christians today. However, it is possible for a person to become a Christian and then die so soon after that he or she never experiences suffering. So the baptism of suffering might or might not apply to Christians today. In Mark 1:4, one can read of the baptism of John the baptizer. In Acts 19:1-10, one can read of people who were baptized with John's baptism but were then baptized again according to the law of Christ. Therefore, the

baptism of John does not apply to New Testament Christians today. Then, in Matthew 3:11-12, one can read of the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the Baptism of fire. The baptism of the Holy Spirit occurred in Acts 2 and Acts 10 to give miracles to the first century disciples. Therefore, this does not apply to people today. The baptism of fire probably refers to judgment day and the punishment in store for all non-believers. This seems to make sense in the context of the verse 12. Therefore, the baptism of fire is not used to save the soul of man today.

In Matthew 28:18-20, the Bible says, “And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’ Amen.” This verse refers to the baptism of salvation and it absolutely applies to man today. This is the one baptism spoken of in Ephesians 4:4-6.

One of the objections given to baptism today concerns its technique or mode. There are many advocating that immersion is not necessary but rather if one’s heart is in the right place, then a ritualistic sprinkling, pouring, or an anointing would suffice. The first problem with this idea is that there is a contradiction within it. If one’s heart is in the right place and that person really wants to be pleasing to God, then that person is not going to object to being immersed because that is what God said to do. The Bible teaches clearly that God intended for baptism to be a complete immersion into the water. In Acts 8:26-40, the Bible tells of the conversion of the eunuch of Ethiopia. When Philip had taught him the word of God, he saw water and wanted to be baptized in it. If sprinkling, pouring, or immersion were enough, then why did they stop and both of them go down into the water? Surely, he would have had some drinking water with him. The journey from Jerusalem to Ethiopia is no small journey. They could have used that to sprinkle or pour in the name of baptism. They did not because baptism is an immersion.

Consider what Paul says in Romans 6:4: “Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also

should walk in newness of life.” Then in Galatians 3:27, the Bible through Paul says, “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” Paul is showing by illustration the point that baptism is an immersion. It is symbolic act of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. A person is symbolically buried with Christ in baptism. Just as Christ rose from death so the new man or Christian is raised from the water of baptism. The biblical technique of baptism is that baptism is an immersion.

Another issue concerning baptism today involves its essentiality. Some say that it is not necessary to be baptized so long as one’s heart is in the right place. Again, there is a contradiction in such thinking. If one’s heart is in the right place and the person truly desires to please God in life, then that person will want to be baptized for the remission of their sins like the Bible says to do. Interestingly, it seems like there is more debate over this step in the gospel plan of salvation than any other and yet the Bible is so clear on the matter. In every New Testament account of conversion that applies to people today, baptism is a part of it. In Acts 2, the converts of Pentecost heard the word, repented, and were baptized. In Acts 8, the Eunuch of Ethiopia heard the word, confessed and was baptized. In Acts 9, Saul of Tarsus was baptized. In Acts 10, the Gentiles of the house of Cornelius heard the word and were baptized. In Acts 16, both Lydia and the jailor were baptized. If people today will do what they did, then they will receive the salvation that they got. The Bible is so very plain on the subject of baptism yet people today want to twist it and make it say something it does not say.

In Acts 10:34, Peter begins his sermon to the Gentiles by saying: “In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality.” If God were to require something different for the salvation of different individuals, then that would make Him a partial God. He will not require anything different today from what He required in the first century. Otherwise, He would be a God who shows partiality. If one wants to be saved, he or she need only to follow the gospel plan of salvation which includes being baptized for the remission of their sins. If one is going to use the Bible as their standard for salvation then he or she cannot deny that baptism is essential.

Reader, have you followed the biblical plan of salvation? Have you been baptized for the remission of your sins?