

News & Notes

Sunday, February 13, 2005

Remember in Prayer: Melba Cox; Sally Etta Crawford; Mary Kidd; Deliah Mann; Howard Moody; Ollie Ursery; Alvie Williford; the armed forces.

The periodic **singing** at Briar Crest is this afternoon at 4:30 PM. Please come out and participate if you can.

Kristen Huey was **baptized** into Christ last weekend. Our hearts rejoice with her in her decision to put Christ first in her life.

Thanks to all who helped with the family conference last weekend. The weekend went very well and it was helpful for all who attended.

There is a **sign-up list** posted on the bulletin board for anyone who would like to host a youth devotional in their home this year.

Sermon In Preview:

AM: Worship: The Avenue of Prayer (1Thessalonians 5:17)

PM: The Conditions of Fellowship (1John 1:1-2:15).

For the Record (February 6, 2005):

Attendance: 100 Contribution: \$1459.00 Budget: \$1205.00

The Ashland Church of Christ

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

Sunday:

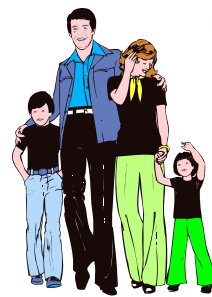
Bible Study 9:30 AM
Worship 10:30 AM
Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday:

Bible Study 7:00 PM

Shepherds:

Barney King
Junior Roberson
Carrol Street



The Ashland Announcer

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

GROWING
in
FAITH

Virtue

Jeremy Northrop

In 2Peter 1:5-8 Peter says, *"But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."* From this text, among other things, one can learn that faith is very much only the beginning of a proper walk with God. It is the act of believing what one has heard and knowing it to be true because of the evidence that exists (Romans 10:17; Hebrews 11:1). Peter wants the Christian to add certain things to his or her faith. The first thing Peter says to add is virtue.

Virtue is defined by Vine as "properly denotes whatever procedures preeminent estimation for a person or thing" or "intrinsic eminence, moral goodness." The idea is that virtue is a quality that shows others the internal goodness that every Christian is supposed to have.

In Proverbs 31 there is recorded a record of some of the qualities needed by a woman who is to be virtuous. Among those things the Bible says she is a woman who has great worth: *"Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies"*

(Proverbs 31:10). She is a woman who will constantly do good and never do evil: “*She does him good and not evil All the days of her life*” (Proverbs 31:12). She is one that will take care of her family and do the duties of a wife without remorse: “*She also rises while it is yet night, And provides food for her household, And a portion for her maidservants*” (Proverbs 31:15). She is one that will help the less fortunate: “*She extends her hand to the poor, Yes, she reaches out her hands to the needy*” (Proverbs 31:20). She will be respected by others, especially her children: “*Her children rise up and call her blessed; Her husband also, and he praises her*” (Proverbs 31:28). The virtuous woman of Proverbs 31 is a person who fulfills her duties and responsibilities in her position without any feeling of remorse. She does so gladly knowing that it blesses her in the end and pleases God all along. Far too many people are constantly wanting to be and do something that they cannot be or is out of their realm to do. Many young Christian females have expressed their desire to lead in worship or teach a class and regret that they are not biblically allowed to do so. When one is virtuous, he or she will accept the place God has given them and do the duties gladly without regret.

From studying this text, one can learn many applications the Christian will need to utilize in order to be virtuous. First, if a child of God is going to be virtuous, then he or she must accept the place in life that God has given him or her. That is not to say that Christians do not need to strive to grow. The whole purpose of the key text in 2Peter 1 is to grow in faithfulness to God. Rather, it is to say that children of God need to grow only in ways God would permit them to grow. There are different roles for men of God verses women of God. There are different roles for the young Christians verses the older Christians. There are different roles for the elders verses the deacons and the members. To each one is given certain gifts or roles to fill (Ephesians 4:11). Each person needs to accept the position God has put them in. Women need to accept the fact that God did not put them in positions of leadership and work in the capacity that God has placed them in. Younger Christians need to look to the older Christians and learn from them and by the example they are providing. The elders need to lead and the flock needs to follow in the local congregation. All need to submit to God and do things only as God has authorized. It is far

better for one to do what he or she can in the capacity in which they are allowed then for that same one to go beyond what the Bible authorizes and thus not be pleasing to God. Women need to do the best they can at teaching younger women to do the will of God and not wish that they could lead as men lead (Titus 2:3-4). Members need to do the best they can in submitting to the eldership rather than wishing they were a part of something they are not qualified to be a part of. More men need to lead in worship rather than being like the women who are to follow in worship (1Timothy 2:8-15).

Next, to be virtuous is to be active in the places God has allotted Christians to be active in. As seen in Proverbs 31, a virtuous woman is a woman who will do the duties in her role as a wife and a mother. Thus, a virtuous man is a man who will perform the duties that he has as a husband or a father. Elders will do what they are supposed to do in leading the congregation they oversee. The simple way to understand this point is found in James 2:26, “*For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*” Genuine faith will put forth works and the works will be virtuous in nature. It is not enough for a lady to accept the fact that she is a lady and simply not lead in worship. She must find the areas of life in which she can work and work in them. The same is true for the men. It is not enough to be a man and simply do nothing about it. Godly men need to stand up to their God-given calls in life and lead when they can.

Finally, if a Christian will be virtuous, then he or she will reap great benefits in the Kingdom of God. The virtuous woman of Proverbs 31 found fulfillment in her life. She did not need to do anything beyond what God expected of her and, in the end, she found her life to be a joyous one. When a godly person will serve God, they will find their own dreams fulfilled. John said, “*And these things we write to you that your joy may be full*” (1John 1:4). When a person does what God would have for him or her to do, the person will find joy in living. One person said “faith is holding on to God’s dreams and finding your own fulfilled.” The virtuous person of faith will do the things that are right and find complete fulfillment in life.

“*But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue...*” (2Peter 1:5a).