

## News & Notes

Sunday, October 23, 2005

**Remember in Prayer:** Al Alberson; Sandra Albertson; Robert Bennett; Buck Brooks; Sally Etta Crawford; Lawrence Dawson; Tommy Dawson; Flora Estes; Ricky Gore; Carolyn Jordan; Mary Sue Kidd; Ruth Ann Long; Deliah Mann; Charlie Matheny; Howard Moody; Janet Rooker; Lillie Mae Shelby; Austin Simpson; Linda Smith; Jayme and Trucilla Spence; Ollie Ursery; Betty Vincent; Lee Walls; Bob Weikel; Alvie Williford;

**Sympathy** is extended to the family of Junior Roberson and Jenna Allen.

**Pantry item** for the month of October is dish soap.

There will be a **youth devotional** tonight at the home of Babbs and Allen Graddy. The van will be leaving directly after services.

Teenagers, plan for the **youth rally** at the Ethridge Church of Christ in Ethridge, Tennessee this coming weekend (October 28-29, 2005).

### Sermon In Preview: Back to the Basics:

AM: Salvation

PM: Baptism

### For the Record (October 16, 2005):

Attendance: 143    Contribution: \$1605.00    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

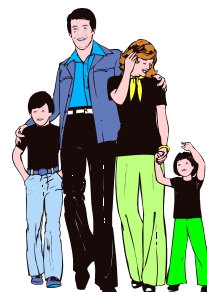
#### Wednesday:

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).*

## Where's The Piano?

Jeremy Northrop

It is how we are known. It is the reputation which precedes us. Everyone stereotypes us by saying we do not believe in music. What do you know about the Methodists? Anything? What do you know about the Baptists? Even less? What do you know about the Pentecostals? Not much? What do you know about the church of Christ? Why, they don't even have a piano! They don't believe in music. Don't they know David had a harp? The accusation that we do not believe in music is not entirely valid. However, what most people mean when they say that is that we do not use mechanical instruments of music in our worship to God. We believe in only a cappella music. We believe in singing from the heart through the voice (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16).

Many might say that the church of Christ is the only religious group that does not have mechanical instruments of music. Again, this is not entirely true. Many today in the Primitive Baptist church do not use mechanical instruments of music. However, they are a lot smaller in size and perhaps not as well known as the church of Christ — at least not here in the United States. There is another group with some 150 million members world wide who do not use mechanical instruments of music in worship and they are the Orthodox. The fact is we are a part of a small group of people. The vast majority of those practicing religion today do so with mechanical instruments of music. And the fact that most within the church of Christ today still have very strong convictions about it

(of which I would be included) demonstrates at least in part why it is the reputation which goes before us.

Briefly, let me appeal to members of the church of Christ. Do you know why we do not use mechanical instruments of music in our worship to God? If someone were to ask you about it, would you feel comfortable giving them an answer? Do you have strong convictions about it or is it simply a tradition that we should let go? Remember the words of the apostle Paul: “Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one” (Colossians 4:6). Make sure you are prepared for the question when it comes your way. I know there are many in the church today who would tolerate the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship. There are even some who would outright endorse it. It is also correct that God must be true and man can not argue with God (Romans 3:4).

First and foremost, there must be authority for everything that is done in matters of religion. Consider a few passages if you will. In all matters of life, there must be an authority. Paul said, “And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him” (Colossians 3:17). In matters of worship, Jesus said, “God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth” (John 4:24). In matters of singing praises to God, the writer of the book of Hebrews said, “Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name” (13:15). The point seems unmistakably clear and undeniable. We must have authority to do anything that we do. This point is seen in all matters of life, not just religion. The referees and officials at sporting events must have an authority for what they do. There is an authoritative structure in all places of business. The cry of various prominent figures in religion is still valid: ‘Let us speak where the Bible speaks, and be silent where the Bible is silent.’

Here is another interesting point. The use of mechanical instruments of music in worship is a relatively new thing, historically speaking. Adam Clarke, a noted Methodist preacher from the late 1700s and early 1800s did not think the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship was a practice which had New Testament authority. John Wesley, another Methodist

thought that instruments would only be beneficial if they were not seen or heard. John Calvin and John Girardeau of the Presbyterian church were opposed to instrumental music and declared such in their writings. Charles Spurgeon of the Baptist church was opposed to the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship. In fact, he said, “We might as well pray by machinery as praise by it” (The Treasury of David, page 301). It is interesting that the church of Christ is known for this practice. Most, if not all, Protestant denominations that have a history of 100 years or more used to share the same view regarding the use of mechanical instruments of music in the worship of God. In fact, the phrase ‘a cappella’ has an interesting history. It means literally to sing ‘in chapel style’ or to sing as the church sings. The church sings without the use of mechanical instruments of music in her worship to God.

The silence of the Bible speaks a clear message. It forbids any alternative actions. Paul commented on the music of the New Testament in two key passages: First, Ephesians 5:19 says, “...speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.” Then, Colossians 3:16 says, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” Neither passage mentions the use of mechanical instruments of music in our worship. Thus, the silence of the Bible condemns its usage. After all, if silence were to provide authority, then why not use pizza and coke for communion? Because Jesus used unleavened bread and grape juice. Therefore, anything else is wrong. The Bible does not have to mention everything that would be wrong. It simply has to tell us what is right. The Bible tells us to sing—offer the fruit of our lips. Thus, anything else would be and is wrong.

I know this article will not go published without some kind of rebuttal. Someone might say that the Bible does not say we cannot use mechanical instruments of music in worship. This is true but it does not have to be expressly forbidden to be wrong. Some might even say it was acceptable in the Old Testament. Again, this is true but it is equally true that we do not live under the Old Testament. There is no biblical authority for it. Therefore, we do not need to practice it.