

## News & Notes

Sunday, April 30, 2006

**Remember in Prayer:** Sandra Albertson; Michelle Bennett; Carrol Cherry; Vivkie Cobb; Diane Cox; Sally Etta Crawford; Lawrence Dawson; Tommy Dawson; Flora Estes; Marilyn Hubbard; Carolyn Jordan; Christine Judge; Dot Ketchum; James Luna; Deliah Mann; Linda Matheny; Diane Mize; Howard Moody; Janet Rooker; Freddie Shaw; Lillie Mae Shelby; Jayme and Trucilla Spence; Wayne Tapp; Calvin and Ollie Ursery; Alvie Williford;

**Sympathy** is extended to the family of Perry Bankley.

**Pantry item** for the month of April is cleaning supplies.

Anyone interested in helping with **Vacation Bible School**, please see Sam Ford.

There will be a **trip to the zoo** on May 13<sup>th</sup> for anyone interested.

There will also be a **men's breakfast** on May 13<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 AM in the dining hall.

### Sermon In Preview:

AM: Hope (Psalm 71:14)

PM: 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday evening Singing

### For the Record (April 23, 2005):

Attendance: 87    Contribution: \$1386.00    Budget: \$1352.00

### *The Ashland Church of Christ*

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#### 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



# ASHLAND ANNOUNCER

"I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:14)

## Worship in Prayer

Jeremy Northrop

In Acts 2:42, the Bible says, "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers." Detailed study of this passage shows the worship taking place in Acts 2 involving five avenues of worship. The 'apostles' doctrine' would be teaching which is done through singing and preaching. One of the ways the church has 'fellowship' is through giving. 'Breaking of bread' refers to the communion service and, of course, the first century church prayed. Thus, one of the acts or avenues of the worship of the church is prayer. Paul exhorted the church in Thessalonica to "pray without ceasing" (1Thessalonians 5:17). The Bible teaches much about prayer including what it is, how to pray, and why to pray.

First prayer is communication to God which is demanded of God's people. Paul talked of his communication with God in Colossians 1:9, "For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." He later commanded Timothy and other Christians by inspiration to pray using four different words or phrases for prayer both for emphasis and clarification. He said, "Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men..." (1Timothy 2:1).

Second, from Acts 2:42, one can learn that prayer is an avenue of worship. Since the life of the Christian is a life of prayer (1Thessalonians 5:17), then it makes sense that when Christians gather together to worship God some of the worship will be in the

form of prayer. Jesus commended the tax collector who was in the temple praying and chastised the Pharisee. The lesson there was the attitude they were presenting in their worship to God. Christians today never want to offer their worship to God in order to be seen of men.

Third, James 5:16 says, “Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.” From this passage one can learn that prayer is a privilege. Further, it is only a privilege for ‘righteous’ people or Christians. In fact, one of the terms used to describe prayer in 1Timothy 2:1 is ‘intercessions.’ This is the idea of prayer on the behalf of someone else. Paul admonishes Christians to pray for others because the world cannot pray for itself. Prayer is communication, worship and a privilege for Christians.

Next, the Bible teaches how one is to pray. In Matthew 6:9-13, the Bible says,

In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

From this passage, one learns that the biblical way to pray is to pray to God. Many today are advocating the ideas of praying to Mary, the mother of Christ or even to Christ Himself. Yet, this is not what Jesus taught in Matthew 6.

Further, while it is not right to pray to Jesus, He is involved in the prayers of the saints. John 14:13-14 says, “And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.” Thus, Christians are to pray in the name of Jesus. This should come as no surprise as all that a Christian does should be done in the name of Christ or by His authority (Colossians 3:17). Christians are to pray to God the Father through Jesus the Son.

Then, the Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit is involved in the prayers of the saints as well. In Romans 8:26 the Bible says,

“Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.” All Christians are faced with situations in life when they do not know for what to pray. The good news of Romans 8:26 is that the Holy Spirit takes care of the shortcomings of Christians in their prayer-life. More than anything else, this passage should be one of great comfort to the child of God.

Finally, the Bible tells us why Christians should pray. Among other things, one of the reasons Christians pray to is acknowledge the existence of God. Many do not believe in God and the Bible calls such people fools (Psalm 14:1). Christians not only believe God to be real but pray to God knowing that He is involved in their lives in a providential way (Romans 8:28). This is one of the ways Christians show that they believe God to be real.

Acts 2:42 teaches another reason to pray — to worship God. Again, prayer is one of the five avenues of worship. Christians come together and pray collectively as Paul instructed Timothy that men need to be leaders of prayer in the church assembly (1Timothy 2:9). The church in Antioch was involved in praying and fasting before they sent Paul and Barnabas away on their first missionary journey. The church should actively be involved in prayer both publicly and privately.

Finally, many will quote Matthew 6:8 saying that prayer is unnecessary as God is all-knowing and has no need of humans telling Him what they need. Of course, this is an example of lifting a verse without noticing its context. In the verses that follow Matthew 6:8, Jesus tells how one ought to pray thus showing that it is expected that Christians will be a prayerful people. Yet, many have questioned why it is necessary to pray to an all-knowing God. The reason lies in the idea that men and women need to constantly be reminded that without God, they are nothing. The conclusion of the book of Ecclesiastes is to fear God for this is man’s all (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14). Prayer always comes back to bless the person praying. This is the thrust of 1Timothy 2:1-4 — Christians pray that they may “lead and quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.” The obedient child of God will be blessed when he or she obeys all of God’s commands including having an active prayer life.