

News & Notes

Sunday, January 15, 2006

Remember in Prayer: M. B. Anthony; Al Alberson; Sandra Albertson; Sally Etta Crawford; Lawrence Dawson; Tommy Dawson; Flora Estes; Gloria Fortner; Carrol Holmes; Dot Kethum; Deliah Mann; Howard Moody; Leyland Ray; Janet Rooker; Lillie Mae Shelby; Jayme and Trucilla Spence; Calvin and Ollie Ursery; James Williams; Alvie Williford;

Sympathy is extended to the family of Sherry Childers Evans.

Pantry item for the month of January is peanut butter.

There will be a **teacher's meeting** tonight after services. All teachers, active and inactive, are asked to attend.

There is a **sign-up sheet** to host a youth devotional this year on the bulletin board.

The **teenagers will have a devotional** tonight after services at the home of Jeremy and Shawna Northrop.

Sermon In Preview:

AM: God Does Care! Do You?

PM: Song of Solomon: The Shulamite Woman's Home (8:5-14)

For the Record (January 8, 2006):

Attendance: 82 Contribution: \$1388.00 Budget: \$1205.00

The Ashland Church of Christ

P. O. Box 25
Ashland, MS 38603-0025

www.ashlandcoc.org

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Sunday:

Bible Study 9:30 AM

Worship 10:30 AM

Worship 6:00 PM

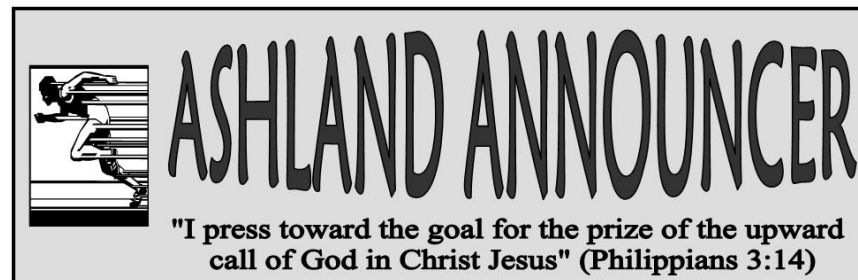
Wednesday:

Bible Study 7:00 PM

Shepherds:

Barney King

Carrol Street



You've Got to be Kidding!

Tyler Young

John had only been a Christian for a few years, but despite his newness in the faith, everyone at the business meeting that night was anxious to hear what he had to say.

The subject of improving the quality of the worship services came up for discussion, and when it was his turn to speak, he addressed the men with such confidence and enthusiasm that none could help but give him careful attention.

"I have a suggestion to present to the congregation which is guaranteed to dramatically improve our worship services," he said, and then added, "but everyone must be willing to get behind it and help put it into effect."

The men all agreed that, if it would really make our worship better, then surely the congregation would gladly support it. "What is it you have in mind, brother John?" asked one of the men. "Do you think we should get a new sound system?" At that point several of the others spoke out, saying that a better amplifier and new speakers would greatly enhance worship.

"No, that's not what I was thinking of," said John. Before he could continue another brother said, "You must be talking about the need for new songbooks." A number of men agreed that the old books were in bad shape. Someone else spoke up, "What really needs to be done is to knock out that back wall, expand the auditorium, and lower the ceiling." This suggestion caused a wave of support to come across the room. Some said the church should take out a loan to make the improvements, others suggested a special collection could be taken, still others said that appeals

could be made to other churches to raise the needed funds and the members could all help in the work.

After a few minutes John stood up and this time he was even more enthusiastic than before. "No, no that's not what I have in mind. What I'm talking about will make our worship better than any of those things, and is it simpler and easier, and it won't cost the church a single penny!"

Now everyone was really excited. Whatever John had in mind they were ready to do it. "This sounds too good to be true, brother. Tell us, what is it you have in mind?"

All eyes were fixed on John. He looked at each one of them and with gleaming eyes and an earnest tone he carefully spoke. "Let's have everyone sit in the center section of the auditorium, close to the front and close together. This will greatly improve our singing and every other aspect of our assembly." Grinning innocently, he leaned back in his chair, and waited for what he thought would be overwhelming support.

The room, however, was as silent as a tomb. The tension was high as the men awkwardly looked around and peered at each other out the corners of their eyes. For a moment it seemed like everyone would simultaneously break out into hysterical laughter.

After what seemed like an eternal silence, broken only once or twice by the sound of clearing throats, one of the older members, embarrassed for poor John for naively making such a ridiculous suggestion, finally spoke up.

"You're a young man, John," he said calmly, patronizing him; "we appreciate your enthusiasm, but as you grow you will learn that you don't ask brethren to do things like that."

The meeting was quickly adjourned with a brief prayer, and long after everyone left the room John just sat there, bewildered.

Of course, just as the older brother said, John will understand one day. Yes, it's true that Christ demands we love each other so much we would give our lives for one another (1John 3:16), and yes, it's true He expects us to make whatever sacrifices are necessary to help His church (Matthew 6:33). And yes, He even expects us to endure torture and death, if need be, to be faithful to Him and bring glory to His name (Revelation 2:10). But move up front? Sit together? You have got to be kidding. That is a sacrifice God would surely never require anyone to make. Oh sure, sitting

up front together would dramatically improve the singing, it would help the preaching, and it would definitely make the worship a more edifying experience.

But John will come to accept that some just do not care about what would be best for our worship, and no force in Heaven above or Hell below will move them up front or to a pew with more than two or three other brethren. Yes, the day is coming with poor, naïve little John will see that moving up from the back of the auditorium is simply too great a sacrifice for some to make.

THE BIBLE IS:

A mirror to show us ourselves (James 1:23)

A hammer to break the will (Jeremiah 23:29)

A fire to melt the heart (Malachi 3:2)

A sword to pierce the conscience (Hebrews 4:12)

A seed to quicken the soul (1Peter 1:23)

A light to show the path (Psalm 119:105)

The word of life, to be held forth (Philippians 2:16)

The word of reconciliation, proclaimed (2Corinthians 5:19)

The word of salvation, to be heard (Acts 28:26)

The word of truth, to be received (Ephesians 1:13)

The word of faith, to be believed (Romans 10:8)

The word of faithfulness, to be held fast (Titus 1:9)

This is why we need to *"Study to show our selves approved unto to God"* (2Timothy 2:15). Why not resolve to be a daily Bible reader this year?

-Tom Moore