

News & Notes

Sunday, January 22, 2006

Remember in Prayer: M. B. Anthony; Al Alberson; Sandra Albertson; Dorris Billingsly; Carrol Cherry; Harold Counce; Sally Etta Crawford; Lawrence Dawson; Tommy Dawson; Flora Estes; Gloria Fortner; Matt Frentz; Carrol Holmes; Dot Kethum; Deliah Mann; Diane Mize; Howard Moody; Shirley Ortiz; Janet Rooker; Lillie Mae Shelby; Jayme and Trucilla Spence; Austin Simpson; Calvin and Ollie Ursery; James Williams; Alvie Williford;

Pantry item for the month of January is peanut butter.

The **elders would like to meet with the ladies** of the congregation today at 5:00 PM.

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

There will be a **men's breakfast** here in the dinning hall on February 4, 2006 at 9:00 AM.

Sermon In Preview:

AM: God's Heroes Verses Man's Heroes

PM: The Cross Words: "Father, Into Your Hands I Commit My Spirit"

For the Record (January 15, 2006):

Attendance: 91 Contribution: \$1313.00 Budget: \$1205.00

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:

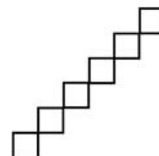
Barney King

Carrol Street



ASHLAND ANNOUNCER

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



Steps to Salvation: FAITHFUL LIVING

Jeremy Northrop

When one studies the gospel plan of salvation, the study will often end at baptism. However, baptism will get one into Christ; faithful living will keep him or her there. Galatians 5:4 is a good text to illustrate the point: "You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace." Among other things, this passages shows that it is possible to fall from grace. In the books of Romans and Galatians, Paul is stressing the point that one must remain faithful to Christ in order to remain saved.

First, faithful living requires application. James 1:22 says, "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves." Knowing what the word of God says and making application of it are two entirely different things. In Acts 14:22, the Bible tells of Paul and Barnabas were found encouraging the disciples whom they had converted to remain focused and continue in the faith. Salvation does not end at baptism but rather it begins at baptism. Further, Luke 6:46 Jesus said, "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say?" Jesus comands His disciples to do, not merely believe. Obedience requiries action and action is more than believe. It is not enough to believe that Jesus is real or even to believe that He is the Savior. The belief one has must move him or her to action — to doing what He says. "If you love Me, keep My commandments" (John 14:15).

In fact, if belief were enough, then the demons would have salvation (James 2:19). Belief or faith alone is not enough. First, there are very few (if any) men who believe in the concept of 'faith only.' Those who advocate such will continue to talk of what actions need to be done or they may define belief by various actions that must be done. Further, God certainly does not believe in faith only. The Bible uses the phrase only one time and then it is used in negative sense: "You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only" (James 2:24). Faithful living requires action or application of the word of God.

Also, faithful living requires aspiration — the idea of being better tomorrow than today. God demands growth and not just any growth but spiritual growth. Peter commanded his readers saying "...as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby..." (1Peter 2:2). They were to desire milk for a reason — to grow. Paul made a great statement in Ephesians 3:20-21:

Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Everyone has a dream. Everyone hopes to accomplish good things in their individual lives. God can accomplish great and wonderful things through His people. Here, Paul says God can accomplish things that are beyond the human imagination. One person said, "Faith is holding on to God's dreams...and finding your own fulfilled." Faithful living will take one further than he or she ever dreamed or imagined going. It will help one to aspire to greater things and do things he or she never thought possible. Through Christians, God can accomplish things "exceedingly abundantly above all we ask or think."

Another passage that concerns biblical growth is Hebrews 5:12: "For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food." The writer chastized them for not growing like they should. If a person does not grow in Christ, then he or she is not following the demands of God. Often times, the song is lead "Just as I Am."

Certainly, God will accept a person just as he is but He will not leave him that way. He wants a person to grow in the grace and knowledge of God (2Peter 3:18).

Finally, there are many benefits to faithful living. The one which will be considered in this article is assurance. 1John 5:13 says,

These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.

If one will biblically believe on the name of the Son of God, then that person can know that he or she has eternal life in Heaven. Paul spoke of the suffering he had experienced in this life and made a clear statement of the assurance he had when he said, "For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day" (2Timothy 1:12). There will be suffering for anyone who desire to follow the commands of God (John 15:18-19; 1Peter 4:16; 1John 3:13). Yet, Paul understood that the suffering he experienced in this life had purpose. Likewise, the suffering of any Christian has purpose. The acting Faith of Paul gave him such great assurance that he was able to say, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" (2Timothy 4:7). Paul knew he was saved and likewise Christians today can know they are saved. The only way they will know is by faithful obedience to the cross of Christ.

In fact, Paul made a candid and powerful statement in Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek." The gospel of Christ is something in which there should be no shame. It is also the power of God that brings salvation to all men. It is hope for the salvation of mankind and it is the only hope there is available.

The gospel plan of salvation is simple and straightforward: One must hear the word and believe it to be true (Romans 10:17; Hebrews 11:6). One must repent of their sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38). One must confess Christ (Romans 10:9). One must be baptized for the remission of their sins (Galatians 3:27). Finally, one must live faithful to God (Acts 14:21-22).