

## News & Notes

Sunday, July 2, 2006

**Remember in Prayer:** Jonathan Alberson; Sandra Alberson; Vikie Cobb; Diane Cox; Sally Etta Crawford; Flora Estes; Marie Hall; Carrol Holmes; Marilyn Hubbard; Carolyn Jordan; Christine Judge; Dot Ketchum; Tracy Ketchum; James Luna; John and Deliah Mann; Diane Mize; Howard Moody; Janet Rooker; Ruth Ross; Freddie Shaw; Lillie Mae Shelby; Jayme and Trucilla Spence; Ruby Street; Calvin Ursery; James Williams; Alvie Williford;

**Pantry item** for the month of July is school supplies.

There will be a **baby shower** tonight after services for Kaden Faith Boneé who arrived Thursday, June 22, 2006.

Our **gospel meeting** with Steven Guy will be July 16-19. There is advertisement material in the foyer.

**Area events:** Gospel meeting at Tiplersville on July 9-30; Vacation Bible School at Theo on July 16-20; Lectureship at Chapman on July 30-August 2.

### Sermon In Preview: Pressing Toward the Upward Call of God:

AM: God's Rules are Bridges, Not Walls

PM: Guest Speaker

### For the Record (June 25, 2005):

Attendance: 71    Contribution: \$1147.00    Budget: \$1352.00

### The Ashland Church of Christ

P. O. Box 25

Ashland, MS 38603-0025

www.ashlandcoc.org

acoc@ashlandcoc.org

#### 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)

Pressing Toward the Upward Call of God

Lord, I Surrender — Obedience

Jeremy Northrop

As June has now passed and July is upon us, we once again turn to our theme for the year — pressing toward the upward call of God — taken from Philippians 3:14. As always, it is good to review what we have studied and refresh our memories on this matter. The first Sunday in January was spent as an introductory day when we discussed what pressing toward the upward call of God is, why we should do and then we put a plan in place as to how we will press toward the upward call of God in 2006. In February, we began the process by **reaching in**. We discussed such things as *humility*, *acceptance*, and *spirituality*. In April, we moved our study from reaching in to **reaching up** focusing on worship and pleasing God in daily living. We studied such things as *dedication* to the word of God and *allegiance* to God and not the world. Today, we are brought to the topic of *obedience*. Simply put, obedience is dedication and allegiance seen in action. The person who is dedicated to a standard (in this case, the Bible) and has pledged an allegiance (through baptism) to God will obey God in their day-to-day lives.

The book of Romans is a good place to start when one wants to learn more about obedience. In Romans 16, Paul is noting several different members of the church in Rome and calling special attention to some of the things they were doing. In Romans 16:17, he begins to encourage the church to remain faithful to God and His cause. There are some who will want to convince faithful Christians of things that are not true and they are doing this to serve themselves. With this context, notice what Paul says in

Romans 16:19, “For your obedience has become known to all. Therefore I am glad on your behalf; but I want you to be wise in what is good, and simple concerning evil.” It is noteworthy that Paul calls attention to the obedience of the Romans. Earlier in the book, Paul said that obedience brings about grace (Romans 1:5). It is through the obedience of Christ to the will of God that all Christians can obtain the grace of God (Romans 5:19). In fact, all obey a master whether be the master of sin or the Master of Righteousness (Romans 6:16).

Further, obedience is seen in the example of Jesus Christ. In Luke 22:39-46, we can learn about the obedience Christ had to the will of the Father. He was on the Mount of Olives and commissioned His disciples to pray that they might not give into temptation. In verse 42, He utters a prayer: “Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.” We know from other passages that Christ was man (Philippians 2:5-11). Christ, being a man, experienced pain, suffering, and heartache. As is natural for man, He did not want to have to go through the trials of the cross. Probably even more focused to the point, He did not want to go through the spiritual trials necessary to offer redemption to mankind. Thus, He prayed to let the cup pass. The even more noteworthy point seen in this verse is the allegiance Christ had to the will of the Father. He wanted to do His will regardless of the consequences. More important to Christ than His own suffering and heartache was accomplishing the will of God. Friends, today many can be and perhaps are very selfish in their prayers to the Father wanting things to be better for them and may not be the will of God. No wonder James penned the words:

Come now, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit’; whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. Instead you ought to say, ‘If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.’

Let us all decide now to follow this great example of Christ and choose to do God’s will regardless of the consequences.

Many people seem to have a negative attitude toward the rules God sets forth. Hot topics today in religious circles include adultery, authority, and the role of women in the church. Many are opting for an expanse in what should be allowed in these areas and thus wanting to leave the principles God has set forth. Such changes are indicative of a negative attitude toward God and His rules. Sadly, some are taking this to the ultimate extreme and leaving God altogether saying that His way is outdated and no longer necessary. The problem with such reasoning is it makes God out to be much smaller and much more incapable than He really is. It is ludicrous to think that God does not know what is best for His people or for the whole earth for that matter. God demands preachers to preach His word (2Timothy 4:2). He does not want His word tampered with in any way (Proverbs 30:5-6; Revelation 22:18-19). The reason that He demands such to be this way is because the entirety of His word will meet the needs of man. He knows what is best for men and will meet those needs when people obey His rules or laws.

Many times the heart of the challenge is that man wants to understand why God demands certain things to be certain ways when God has not revealed why He wants things done in a certain way. Preachers are commanded to preach the word, not tell why God wants it that way. Often times, a parent will instruct his or her child to do something and when the child asks why, the answer he or she will get is ‘because I said so, that’s why!’ Friends, it is time — past time — for us to listen to God and do what He says because He said to do it! If He tells us why, great. If He does not, we need to accept it. We need only understand that He has our best interests at heart.

Of course, we are only just over half way through this year so there will be many great lessons to come. Next month, the focus of our studies will be *growth*. One who obeys God will grow in God. Then, in September, we will move on to the topic of reaching out through *fellowship*, *servitude*, and *evangelism*. Finally, the first Sunday in December will be a focus on some application and summary lessons as we bring the year and its theme to a close. But before, we get into all of that, let’s sit back and enjoy today as we learn God’s plan for our lives and the benefit of following and obeying Him.