

News & Notes

Sunday, July 30, 2006

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

Pantry item for the month of July is school supplies.

Area events: Lectureship at Chapman on July 30-August 2; The annual POWER lectures in Southaven will be on July 30 to August 3rd; Gospel Meeting at Coffeerville July 30-August 3; Area wide youth devotional at Chapman on August 20 @ 6:00 PM.

Please check the **bulletin boards** in the foyer for other area events that might be taking place in the near future.

Sermon In Preview:

AM: Guest Speaker: Kerry Reed

PM: Guest Speaker: Kerry Reed

For the Record (July 23, 2005):

Attendance: 64 Contribution: \$1026.00 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)

Worship in Contribution

Jeremy Northrop

According to the New Testament, there are five avenues through which one can acceptably worship God. There is the avenue of prayer (Acts 2:42), song (Ephesians 5:19), communion (Acts 20:6-7), instruction (Acts 20:7), and contribution (1Corinthians 16:2). The focus of this article will be on the avenue of contribution.

There are many things which are popular today in regards to funding the work of the church. One need not look too far to see such things as bake sales and other fundraisers or even performances of various kinds all utilized in order to raise funds for a church or religious group. The goal of any Christian in this matter (or in any matter) is to look to the Bible and make sure there is biblical authority for all that is done. What is biblical? And then, if it is not biblical, the Christian has the responsibility to abandon the practice.

Another consideration of church funding needs to be exactly what the money is used for once it is obtained. In the New Testament, there are examples of benevolence (Acts 2:45). It was used to care for widows in their need (Acts 6:1). Paul gives instructions to use the church treasury to help the widows in need in 1Timothy 5:3-15. Paul often thanked congregations for the fellowship they were able to have together through the use of the Lord's money (1Corinthians 16:13-18, Philippians 4:15). The Bible teaches it would be appropriate for an elder over the congregation to receive support from the congregation (1Timothy 5:17). Of course, there is scriptural authority to financially help

those who are preaching the gospel (Ephesians 6:6). Unfortunately, there are many using the church treasury today for things which there is simply no scriptural authority. Again, the goal for any Christian needs to be to look to the word of God for authority and quit doing anything which lacks biblical authority.

This article will be divided into three parts: First, the nature of money. Then, what giving in the New Testament church should be. Finally, what giving in the New Testament church should not be.

When dealing with money in any situation, one must be very, very careful in what he or she does. Perhaps Paul said it best in 1Timothy 6:10, "For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." This point is seen vividly in Mark 10:17-27 where is recorded Jesus' encounter with the rich young ruler. Here is a man who is blessed by God. The man wants to be pleasing to God and wants to go to Heaven. He makes a good decision when he comes to Jesus with his concerns. Many today are seeking answers in all the wrong places in terms of religion. They are going to other people, books, and even places when all they really have to do is open their Bibles. One need not criticize this rich young ruler for coming to Jesus. He went to the source of his concern. However, he did not like what Jesus had to say to him. It is recorded in verse 21:

Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, 'One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.'

Unfortunately, this rich young ruler loved his money more than he loved eternity. Paul's statement to Timothy rings true in this story.

Another good lesson concerning the nature of money is found in Acts 8:14-25. Money cannot buy everything. In this passage, recorded by the Holy Spirit, is the story of Simon the Sorcerer. The church in Samaria did not yet have the spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit so Peter and John went to Samaria in order to pass these gifts on to them. Simon, one of the converts, offered Peter money in order to be able to pass on the gift of miracles as they were doing. Peter rebuked him for thinking that such a thing could be bought with money and encouraged him to repent.

Next, there are certain things giving should not be. One of them is giving should not be done in order to be seen of men or receive the praise of men. Jesus said, Matthew 6:1, "Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven." Next, giving should not be dishonest in any way. In Acts 5:1-11, The Bible speaks of a couple named Ananias and Sapphira who sold their house and then lied saying that they gave all the money they made from the house to God. Both of them were struck dead. Finally, church funding should not be a profit-making scheme. In John 2:13-16, Jesus overturns tables and expresses genuine anger because there were people attempting to make the temple a profit center.

All of that is what giving should not be. Now, attention will be turned to what giving should be. The Old Testament offers much for one to learn about the nature of giving and the utilization of the Lord's money. One thing that it tells is that giving should be the first-fruits: "The first of the firstfruits of your land you shall bring into the house of the Lord your God" (Exodus 23:19a). One should not wait until the bills are paid and then give God what is left over. One should be giving to the Lord first as all things come from Him. Next, giving should be periodic. It should be done on the first day of the week: 1Corinthians 16:2, "On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come." Finally, giving should be sacrificial. Mark 12:41-44 says,

Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money into the treasury. And many who were rich put in much. Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites, which make a quadrans. So He called His disciples to Himself and said to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood.'

This widow was praised because she gave and her giving was sacrificial. Today, people need to be giving as the Bible commands so that the work of the church can continue to prosper.