

## News & Notes

**Sunday, May 14, 2006**

**Remember in Prayer:** Sandra Albertson; Michelle Bennett; Carrol Cherry; Vivkie Cobb; Diane Cox; Sally Etta Crawford; Lawrence Dawson; Tommy Dawson; Flora Estes; Marie Hall; Marilyn Hubbard; Carolyn Jordan; Christine Judge; Dot 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 and Ollie Ursery; Alvie Williford;

**Sympathy** is extended to the family of Mike Price.

**Pantry item** for the month of May is paper goods.

Anyone interested in helping with **Vacation Bible School**, please see Sam Ford. The dates are June 4-7, 2006.

The next **elder's meeting** is today at 5:00 PM. If you have anything you would like to bring to their attention, please do so then.

### Sermon In Preview:

AM: Love

PM: A Report on the Work in Riga, Latvia

### For the Record (May 7, 2005):

Attendance: 85    Contribution: \$1350.00    Budget: \$1352.00

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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)

## A Church With No Problems

Darwin Hunter

Wouldn't it be great to have a church with no problems? I have heard people express that sentiment, and we probably have all at least thought it if not said it. But is it a realistic desire? Can we expect the church never to have difficulties or be faced with knotty problems?

The Christian is not promised, nor should he expect, a life unbothered by troublesome trials. Not even our Lord, the Son of God, could enjoy a trouble-free existence. No sooner had he come up from the Jordan River (where His public ministry was inaugurated by immersion) than the devil began to hound Him through repeated temptations (Matthew 3:13-4:11). Jesus informed His disciples that "in the world ye shall have tribulations" (John 16:33). Christ further informed them that they should expect martyrdom (John 16:1-3)!

The early church did not enjoy a trouble-free existence. It began gloriously with 3,000 converts added to the church (Acts 2:38-47). However, problems soon erupted bringing challenges and tears. Great poverty among some of the brethren caused great need (Acts 4:32-37). Satan tempted two members (Ananias and Sapphira) to lie and deceive, and God imposed the

death penalty upon them (Acts 5). Some in the church had suffered the deaths of their husbands and were in need of benevolence, and a dispute arose among the brethren about this matter (some were murmuring, Acts 6:1-7). Then came the persecution. At first, it was just against the Apostles (Acts 4,5). Later, it became widespread after the murder of Stephen, and brethren began to flee from Jerusalem for safety (Acts 8:1-4). What problems they endured! However, rather than whine and resign, they decided to shine! They "went everywhere preaching the word."

No, we should not expect a carefree church. It will have challenges, problems, discouragements, and even sin that must be rooted out (1 Corinthians 5). But, we like the church of the Lord in first century Jerusalem must decide not to cave in to them, but to overcome them in a Scriptural manner with the Lord's help.

The only way one can have a trouble-free church is to:

1. Preach nothing. The Apostles and other members of Christ's body in those early days preached the WORD. They knew that doing so would upset the Jews, the Romans, and the pagan world in which they lived. The Apostles preached a distinctive Gospel, one Savior, one church, one way. Of course, if you don't preach these salient points of the Gospel, you can avoid a lot of trouble with the opponents of Truth. However, eternal trouble will be facing you at the Judgment (Galatians 1:6-9; Ephesians 4:3-6).
2. Stand for nothing. The early church opposed "evil works" practiced in their society (Ephesians 5:11) and in their preaching "meddled" in such areas as sexual sin, drunkenness, lasciviousness, unlawful divorce and remarriage, and covetousness (Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Corinthians

6:9-11; Romans 7:1-4). Of course, avoiding making judgments in these areas will reduce conflict with our wayward world, but again it will bring us greater eternal woes.

3. Do nothing. The surest way to avoid criticism is to avoid doing anything. Many modern believers seem to have perfected this life-style. When the church is active, is converting others, and develops a high profile for righteousness in its community, it is bound to make waves (Acts 19:20-41). So to avoid problems, just be the little church down on the corner that no one knows anything about, or ever hears from.
4. Reach no one. Problems are usually caused by people because people have problems. Therefore, an unpeopled church is a trouble-free church (or course, it also resembles a cemetery, and thwarts the purpose for the existence of the church, Mark 16:15-16; Ephesians 5:23).
5. Challenge no one. Elders and preachers have found that less problems arise when they do not challenge the membership to deny themselves, give up worldly practices, contribute generously, and work fervently. So, some cowardly follow this ungodly course to avoid friction.

Yes, all these things will guarantee an untroubled existence for the present. However, since all these suggestions are not in accordance with Christ's plan for His church, they will also guarantee an eternally troubled future! While trials and problems necessarily attend a faithful life in the Lord and in His body (the church), nevertheless we must faithfully endure so that Heaven will be ours (Matthew 10:22). We dare not cowardly adopt the way of ease (Amos 6:1ff; Revelation 3:14ff).