

## News & Notes

Sunday, October 22, 2006

**Remember in Prayer:** Sandra Alberson; Michelle Allen; Sherry Brasfield, Vikie Cobb; Diane Cox; Sally Etta Crawford; Tommy Dawson; Marylyn Hubbard; Carolyn Jordan; Dot Ketchum; Ruth Long; John and Deliah Mann; Helen Miller; Diane Mize; Lillie Mae Shelby; Chris Spence; Calvin Ursery; Alvie Williford;

**Sympathy** is extended to the families of Rebecca Welch, L. J. Kidd, and Dorris McClain

**Pantry item** for the month of October is juices.

**Ashland events:** October 29: Evening worship will be at 5:00 PM with a trunk or treat following.

**Area events:** October 27-28: Marriage retreat at the East Main church of Christ in Tupelo; October 27-29: 'Truth about Origins' Seminar at the Southaven church of Christ; October 29-November 3: Gospel meeting at the Chapman church of Christ in Ripley; November 3: FHU Associates annual spaghetti supper;

### Sermon In Preview: Results of Unity:

AM: Abuses in Worship, Part 1

PM: Marriage (1Corinthians 6)

### For the Record (October 15, 2006):

Attendance: 65    Contribution: \$1100.00    Budget: \$1352.00

### *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)

## AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY GOD

Jim O'Connor

In the year 1802, Richard McNemar was taken before a tribunal of the Washington Presbytery, found guilty as charged, and excluded from fellowship in that body. One of the crimes which he was charged with was: "He has expressly declared, at several times, that Christ has purchased salvation for all the human race, without distinction". Mr. McNemar wasn't preaching universal salvation, nor was he charged with that. He was preaching UNIVERSAL OPPORTUNITY! This contradicted the pet belief of that denomination that the destiny of all men has been fixed; some being predestined to be saved, others being predestined to be lost, with no alterations possible.

This hideous doctrine of predestination is still being preached today. People are still being taught that there is a class of people for whom the death of Jesus can have no benefit. What an insult to the God of Heaven! What a slap at the gracious Son of God. The doctrine is both noxious and obnoxious! How thankful we are that this message of hopelessness does not have the endorsement of heaven behind it! It leaves mothers in the dark as to the destiny of their dead babies, it cheapens the purpose for the cross, it weakens the power of the gospel, and puts question marks on a multitude of passages in the New Testament. When will men learn not to put a question mark where God has put a period?

There are a number of reasons for rejecting the doctrine of predestination as described above. Permit me to list a few of them.

- *The great commission.* The gospel was designed for, and to be preached to, "every creature" (Mark 16:15), in "all

nations” (Matthew 28:19). When Jesus said, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:16) he meant everyone.

- *God is no respecter of persons.* Peter declared in Acts 10:34-35, “Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him”. In Romans 2:11 (in a context of discussion concerning blessings and punishment depending upon obedience or rebellion, not on race or any other form of selection) Paul wrote clearly, “For there is no respect of persons with God”. Respect of persons is something Christians are warned against (James 2:1,9). Why? Because it is ungodly! God doesn't practice such! He is an equal opportunity God!
- *Jesus died for all men.* He “tasted death for every man” (Hebrews 2:9). God loved so much that he gave his only begotten Son that WHOSOEVER believes might have opportunity for salvation. How can one, anyone, look at John 3:16 and see the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination? None are so blind as they who refuse to see. Jesus “died for all” (2 Corinthians 5:15).
- *God desires the salvation of ALL men.* Paul clearly wrote that God wishes for “all men to be saved, and to come to a knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4). He is “not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9). The fact that God desires the salvation of all men does not imply universal salvation, it does imply universal opportunity.

Certainly it is true that some will be lost. It is even true that most will be lost. However, the responsibility for such cannot be placed upon God. Men and women are lost because of personal choice to persist in sin. It doesn't have to happen. “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men. Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” (Titus 2:11-12). If you're willing to be taught you can be saved. Your destiny is not fixed. You have a say in the matter. Jesus died that you might have life. He went to the cross so that you could go to heaven. Don't let his death be in vain for you. Our God is an equal opportunity God. Seize the opportunity!

## Belonging

Tom Moore

Some of you may remember an episode from the old Andy Griffith Television show in which the Women's Historical Society discovered that a living descendant of a Revolutionary War hero was living right there in Mayberry. The news generated excitement and curiosity throughout the town as people made plans for recognizing the hero's relative. Barney Fife, of course, twisted his own family tree to the point that he put himself in line for the honor. The rest of the townspeople felt special just because someone among them was related to a hero.

However, everyone was shocked when the person was finally revealed. A careful analysis of the genealogical records determined that the hero's descendent was none other than, Otis Campbell, the town drunk. Despite suggestions to find a “substitute Otis” for the presentation, the real Otis showed up for the ceremony true to form. When the ladies finally give him the plaque, Otis holds it in his hands for a moment, and then decides instead to give the plaque to the town. He tells them, “Just because you're the descendent of a hero doesn't make you one too. So I would like to present this plaque to the town of Mayberry, to which I am just proud to belong.”

Well, aren't we all? Aren't we all just happy to belong, to be included! This is especially true with regard to the spiritual family of God. When one has believed on the Lord (Jn. 3:16), repented of his sin (Lk. 13:3), confessed the name of Jesus (Rom. 10:9-10), and been baptized for the remission of sin (Acts 2:38) he is added to the Lord's church – His family. I feel privileged to belong to this family. How about you? As such, should we not live our lives in such a way to be honor to the family?