

News & Notes

Sunday, August 5, 2007

Remember in Prayer: Daryl Alberson; Steve Alberson; Vikie Cobb; Diane Cox; Melba Cox; Sally Etta Crawford; Gwynn Curtis; Lettie Mae Hunt; Dot Ketchum; Tate King; James Luna; John and Deliah Mann; Diane Mize; Rob Norman; Shirley Ortiz; Forrest Phelps; Ann Ray; Judy Robbins; Katherine Shaw; Chris Spence; Jamie Spence; Ron Tega; Calvin Ursery; Nancy Griffin Wamack; Alvie Williford;

Pantry item for the month of July is foil.

Ashland events: Today: Singing at Briarcrest Extended Care at 4:15 PM; August 11: Men's breakfast at 9:00 AM, come at 7:30 to help cook;

Area events: August 5-8: Gospel meeting at the Potts Camp church of Christ. August 18: Youth rally at the Gloster Street church of Christ in Tupelo;

Several things have been posted on the **bulletin board**. Please take the time to look at it.

Sermon in Preview: Spreading the Good News:

AM: 'Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled' (John 14:1)

PM: Faith that can Move Mountains

For the Record (July 29, 2007):

Attendance: 81 Contribution: \$1310.00 Budget: \$1326.00

The Ashland Church of Christ

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Sunday:

Bible Study 9:30 AM

Worship 10:30 AM

Worship 5:00 PM

Wednesday:

Bible Study 7:00 PM

Shepherds:

Barney King

Carrol Street

spreading the Good News Ashland Announcer

"GO THEREFORE AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS..." (MATTHEW 28:19)

Spreading the Good News
I Am With You — Courage
Jeremy Northrop

My, how quick time seems to be flying by these days! July was a great month in reference to our theme for the year. It was an extremely busy month as far as church activities are concerned. It seemed like every congregation in the area had something going on to which we were invited to be a part. We kicked off the month, as is our custom, with a day devoted to our theme for the year — spreading the good news. Then, the first Sunday in July, right after morning service, I took a group of kids to Horizons. The very next Sunday, Tyler Roberson took another group of kids to the junior session. (Tyler, thank you for preaching in my absence last month and taking care of the kids for the junior session. You are genuinely appreciated!)

And that was just the beginning! Right after that, we had our evangelism seminar with Don Underwood. It was a good week and I have not had any negative comments about it. In fact, both elders commented to me that they have received a lot of good comments about it. We had two restorations (Curtis Ray and Carrol Bryant) and set up 12 Bible correspondence courses as well as two Bible studies. Any way you want to look at it, that adds up to a good week. Of course, the two restorations were just that week. Ann Ray and Mike Westmoreland were restored the week before. And, last but not least, the Joyners decided to place membership here at Ashland. Folks, the ball is rolling in a good way, so let's resolve to keep up these good things. A lot of follow-up work to the efforts started in our meeting continues to need to be done and we need to put into practice the good things we learned from brother

Underwood. Many have asked for additional copies of the material and it is available to any who would like it.

Today, we continue with this theme for the year. The topic of study today is courage. As we have noticed before, one must prepare to practice evangelism and then one must put that preparation to work. Part of practicing evangelism is a matter of courage. The fact is many people are scared to practice evangelism. Now, they may not say it in that way. They might say something like "I do not know what to say" or "I just do not know how to talk about God." These statements, more likely than not, are statements of timidity and, sometimes, outright fear.

Yet, Jesus told us we do not need to be afraid and that we do not have anything to fear. Remember, the last verse of the great commission? He said, "...teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.' Amen" (Matthew 28:20). We have sung that wonderful hymn, "If Jesus goes with me, I'll go...anywhere." Some have illustrated this in various ways. One story that comes to my mind is of the patient on the verge of death and asked the doctor what death would be like. The doctor said he did not know but that Christians have nothing to fear because God is waiting on the other side. Then (as the story goes), they heard something scratching at the door. The doctor opened the door and his dog was waiting to come in. The doctor then proceeded to tell his patient that the dog had never been in that particular room but was not afraid because he knew his owner was on the other side.

Well, I know that's one cheesy illustration so let's look at a few from scripture. In Exodus 3-4, there is a dialogue between Moses and the Lord. Really, what is taking place is Moses is trying to get out of the plan God had in store for him. Moses gives God one excuse right after another as to why he is not the right man for the job. He says he is a nobody and that he does not have the ability to do the job. God did not accept his excuses and assured Moses that He would be with him so he really has nothing to fear.

Another good passage is the story of Gideon found in Judges 6-8. God called Gideon through an angel to do something which was against all odds. He was to save Israel from the Midianites. Gideon questions the angel and even tested God multiple times making sure that it was God. In Judges 7:9-11, God calls Gideon out on the

carpet, so the speak, and essentially tells him that he has nothing to fear. God works his plan through Gideon. Perhaps one of the biggest lessons you and I can learn from this story is that when God is for us, who can be against us? (See Romans 8:31).

God had a plan for Moses. God had a plan for Gideon. In fact, God has always had a plan or purpose for His people. Today, His people are the church which Christ purchased with His own blood (Acts 20:28). Part of God's will for the church is evangelism. It is the work of the church to make sure that those who do not know God get to know God.

Now then, as we think about this, let's tie it all together. What made Moses great and successful? Why, it was not Moses at all but rather God and the fact that God was with Moses (Exodus 4:12). What made Gideon great and successful? Same thing. Nothing Gideon did or could have done would have been enough. The fact that God was with him is what made the difference. When God is on your side, the battle belongs to Him. These men were nothing great according to any man's standards. In fact, Moses had a speech problem (Exodus 4:10) and Gideon was afraid (Judges 7:10-11). You and I might not be anything exceptional in the eyes of men. Thankfully, no man has called us to do God's work. God has called us and He said He would be with us. What does this mean? It means we have nothing to fear. The words of Joshua 1:9 ring out: "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

Real quick, let me give you a summary of our events planned for the day. In our class this morning, we will discuss the topic of building stronger faith. The stronger our faith, the more courageous we will be. Then, in our first sermon, we will study John 14. Jesus tells us that we have nothing to fear. Finally, tonight in our lesson we will discuss the faith that can move mountains. When our faith is right, our actions will show such. After all, James said, "faith without works is dead" (James 2:20, 26). It promises to be a great day!

"If Jesus goes with me I'll go anywhere! 'Tis Heaven to me where-e're I may be, If He is there! I count a privilege here, His cross to bear; If Jesus goes with me, I'll go anywhere!" (C. Austin Miles).