

News & Notes

Sunday, November 4, 2007

Remember in Prayer: Daryl Alberson; Steve Alberson; Tommy Alberson; Mike Carter; Vikie Cobb; Melba Cox; Charles Johnson; Aubrey Huey; Lettie Mae Hunt; Dot Ketchum; Sherry Lawrence; James Luna; John and Deliah Mann; Sue Moody; Diane Mize; Ann Ray; Katherine Shaw; Chris Spence; Jamie Spence; Ruby Tapp; Rural Tapp; Ron Tega; Calvin Ursery; Luther Williams; Alvie Williford;

Sympathy is extended to the family of Forrest Phelps.

Pantry item for the month of November is drink boxes.

Ashland Events: Today: Singing at Briarcrest Extended Care at 4:00 PM;

Area Events: November 10: Benefit fund-raiser for James and Sue Moody at the Ables Store Fire Department; December 1: Benefit fund-raiser for Cindy Phelps at the Ables Store Fire Department;

Sermon in Preview: Spreading the Good News:

AM: Fueling the Fire

PM: New Thinking... New Living

For the Record (October 28, 2007):

Attendance: 96 Contribution: \$1270.00 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
Living Outside the Comfort Zone — Habit
Jeremy Northrop

Yet once again, the first Sunday of the month is upon us and we will again devote our time today to our theme for the year — spreading the good news. It is hard to believe that we have just a little less than two months of 2007 left! Time has certainly flown by and we have had a good year. Lord willing, it will continue to be good and through the providence of our great God and the hard work of each one of us, 2008 will be even better. But before we get too far ahead of ourselves, let's finish 2007.

Over the course of 2007, we began with introductory lessons in January. Then, we studied such things as evidences, authority, salvation, commitment, and purpose in the months to follow. This was all in an effort to prepare ourselves for evangelism. Beginning in July, we switched the focus of our studies to practicing evangelism and have thus far studied such things as knowledge, courage, audience, and work. Today, we will study the last concept for this phase of our study — habit. As you probably have figured out, next month we will dedicate our time to some concluding and summarizing lessons for this theme.

As you can probably tell, the concept for study last month and this month are very much intertwined. Last month we discussed getting out of the comfort zone and this month we are going to discuss how to stay outside the comfort zone. A casual glance through the book of Acts (and we have made that glance in the past) will quickly reveal that the first-century church focused extensively on evangelism. They never seemed to let up. They con-

stantly (even under the persecution of the Roman Empire) were telling others of the saving power of Jesus Christ.

Often times, we see people today getting on fire and sometimes, the fire quickly turns to ashes. Remember the words of Jeremiah on this point?

O Lord, You induced me, and I was persuaded; You are stronger than I, and have prevailed. I am in derision daily; Everyone mocks me. For when I spoke, I cried out; I shouted, 'Violence and plunder!' Because the word of the Lord was made to me A reproach and a derision daily. Then I said, 'I will not make mention of Him, Nor speak anymore in His name.' But His word was in my heart like a burning fire Shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back, And I could not. For I heard many mocking: 'Fear on every side!' 'Report," they say, "and we will report it!' All my acquaintances watched for my stumbling, saying, 'Perhaps he can be induced; Then we will prevail against him, And we will take our revenge on him.' But the Lord is with me as a mighty, awesome One. Therefore my persecutors will stumble, and will not prevail. They will be greatly ashamed, for they will not prosper. Their everlasting confusion will never be forgotten. But, O Lord of hosts, You who test the righteous, And see the mind and heart, Let me see Your vengeance on them; For I have pleaded my cause before You (Jeremiah 19:7-12).

Today, how do we develop this kind of passion for proclaiming the good news? What do we need to do in order to be more like Jeremiah? Here are some ideas.

First, we need to change the way that we think. What this really means is that we need to get down to what is really important in life. Paul encouraged those in the church in Rome to think spiritually (Romans 8:6). We need to think about our own spiritual condition. We need to see where we once were and how we got to where we are now (See Romans 3:23 and 6:23). We must remember that every single one of us were once lost and had need of a Savior. We need to think like Christ thought and this will

bring about Christ-like actions (Philippians 2:5). Now, here is the question: What did Christ think about? He thought about the lost. People like Nicodemus in John 3, the Samaritan woman in John 4 and the woman in adultery in John 8. He encouraged people to think spiritually like Martha in Luke 10:38-42. He saw people as souls that were lost and not as people who could get him things he wanted. Today, we need to follow this example of Christ and change the way that we think.

Second, we need to change the way that we see. So many people today look at the world in terms of themselves. They wonder what certain people can do for them and what the world has to offer them. This is not how Christians need to see the world. Christians are sent by Christ on a mission to offer the world the message of Christ. This is the purpose of the great commission. We need to try to see the world through the eyes of Jesus. He helped many people to see physically in His day (Matthew 21:4). He can help all to see spiritually if they will open their eyes. The church (His church) is His tool whereby He gives spiritual sight but this will only happen if people will look at the world through His eyes.

Finally, third, we need to change the way that we live. This point is the obvious conclusion to the previous two points. If we will change the way that we think and see, then we will indeed change the way that we live. The first two are foundational and the last one is the result. We need to live in such a way that we are living according to the likeness of Christ. This is why Paul admonished the Romans to transform themselves to God (Romans 12:1-2). We need to live in such a way that people will see Christ living in us and be drawn to Him because of the life that we live. Jesus encouraged people to focus on things that will lead them to Heaven (Matthew 6:19-21).

Let us all strive to get out of the comfort zone. And then, once we are out, we need to strive to live out of the zone or stay out of the zone. Then and only then can we be tools worthy for the Master's use in the world. We need to develop a mind-set that is Bible-based, an outlook that is people-pointed and then we will have a life-style that is Christ-crowned. May our holy God help us in our endeavors to serve Him.