

## News & Notes

Sunday, March 16, 2008

**Remember in Prayer:** Daryl Alberson; Tommy Alberson; Mary Bailey; Vikie Cobb; Melba Cox; Hazel Huddleson; Lettie Mae Hunt; Charles Johnson; Shirley Judge; Don Kelly; Dot Ketchum; Sam Kidd; Wayne Kidd; James Luna; John and Deliah Mann; Diane Mize; Michelle Nelson; Ann Ray; Jerry Ray; Katherine Shaw; Chris Spence; Jamie Spence; Ron Tega; Calvin Ursery; Alvie Williford;

**Pantry item** for the month of March is baking soda.

As always please check the **bulletin boards** for additional information.

**Ashland Events:** Today: March 16: Devotional for teenager after evening service;

**Area Events:** Beginning today: Gospel meeting at the Chapman church of Christ with Robert Taylor; March 30-April 3: Lectureship at the Memphis School of Preaching;

### Sermon in Preview:

AM: Noah (Hebrews 11:7)

PM: Abraham (Hebrews 11:8-10)

### For the Record (March 9, 2008):

Attendance: 64      Contribution: \$1511.00      Budget: \$1326.00

### *The Ashland Church of Christ*

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acoc@ashlandcoc.org

#### 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

Romans 11:33

# ASHLAND ANNOUNCER

Increasing in the Knowledge of God



## WHEN MY BIBLE STAYS AT HOME

Roger D. Campbell

Anyone that has lived long enough has gone through the experience of leaving home without an important item that he/she intended to take along. We forget things. We do not do it on purpose. It just happens. Keys get left behind and locked inside the house. We go to the store to exchange an item, only to find out that when we get to the store we left the item at home. Knowing my own forgetful nature, for at least the last twenty years I have had the following practice: if there is an item that I intend to take with me when I leave home or my office, then I place it on the floor right in front of the door. As my wife can testify, this is no guarantee that I'll not go off and forget it, but this habit does increase considerably the odds that I will remember the item(s) that I wanted to take along.

Have you ever had the experience of rushing off to the services of the church and in the process forgot your Bible at home? Me, too. There you have it – the confession of a preacher. Yes, I, too have gone off without my sword. Frustrating? Yes. Embarrassing? Yes. But, it can happen to any of us. Forgetting things is a part of life.

In this writing, though, we are not speaking of those Christians that always intend to bring their Bible to class or worship, but on a rare occasion forget it and leave it at home. We also are not speaking of those who had plans to return home and take care of some matters, and would undoubtedly have picked up their Bibles for services, but time got away from them and they went directly to the church building without going home. In such a rare case, they came to services without a Bible.

If you are a member of God's family that faithfully brings his/her Bible to the church's public meetings, then good for you. You have developed a wonderful habit – keep it up as long as you are alive and physically able to do so. On the other hand, if you are a child of God

that rarely, if ever, brings your Bible to the group studies or assemblies of God's people, then there are some matters which you really need to consider seriously.

When my Bible stays at home, it usually becomes a dusty Bible. Bibles that do not get transported to services often remain unopened at home. They collect dust due to lack of use. Is that not a tragic commentary on a child of God that is supposed to desire the word just like a newborn babe desires milk? (1 Peter 2:2).

When my Bible stays at home, if we have truth-seeking visitors at our services, I make an impression on them when they see me there without my Bible. What kind of impression? For sure, not a good one. I grew up in a denominational group of about sixty people. On an average Sunday, maybe three or four people brought their Bibles to services. It really got my attention when I visited the services of the church of the Christ for the first time and noticed that so many brought their Bibles to services. I have learned through the years, however, that it is common for members of the church not to carry their Bibles with them to Bible classes or worship services. I have taught many Wednesday night Bible classes in the last decade when the number of people that failed to bring their Bibles to class just about matched those that did. Parents, are you listening?

When my Bible stays at home, I am not setting the kind of example that I need to set for others. Many things that we do or say in life can be contagious. I believe that leaving our Bibles at home is one of those actions that can have a snowball effect. In the same way, our bringing our Bibles to services may just be the example or encouragement that someone else needed. We know this: the Lord wants us to be a pattern of good works (1 Peter 2:12), letting our light shine before others (Matthew 5:16). Making no effort to bring my Bible to services (which, in effect, is the same as purposely leaving it at home) will set a model for others. Who wants to be known as the brother or sister that set the trend for the entire membership of the congregation to stop bringing its Bible along?!

When my Bible stays at home, then any effort on my part to encourage others to bring their Bibles to class or worship assemblies is nothing more than a bunch of vain words. How dare I step into a Bible class to teach it one day of the week, but never tote my Bible to services at any other time. Do you reckon that kids, even small ones, pick up on such hypocrisy? Of course they do. Parents, how can we convince our

kids that they need to bring their Bibles to services when we do not do it ourselves? It is good for one to say, "Yes, bringing our Bibles to services is the right thing to do," but such an admission has no punch to it until the talker actually does what he/she claims is a beneficial act. Let's bring our Bibles!

When my Bible stays at home, Satan is happy. He knows the power of God's word to save souls (Romans 1:16). That is why he tries to take it out of the heart of those that hear its message, lest they believe and be saved (Luke 8:12). In Bible classes, those who are present without their Bibles often have wandering minds and wandering eyes. When they do not have their Bibles, while others are reading along, they have free time on their hands. That sometimes leads to talking or other disruptive behavior. We understand that having a Bible sitting on a person's lap is no guarantee that he/she will be an attentive participant in the lesson, but it sure is helpful in that regard.

When my Bible stays at home, I cannot get the fullest benefit out of a Bible lesson. Sure, there are pew Bibles that one can use while in the auditorium, and there are Bibles in our classrooms, but using them is not the same as using one's own personal Bible. Any serious student of the Bible knows this. And, yes, it is true that I can learn a lot without opening any Bible, but one gets the maximum benefit out of a lesson by studying along, not simply in a Bible, but in his/her own Bible. Getting the maximum benefit out of any Bible lesson – that is our objective, right?

When the local church of which I am a member is meeting, and that meeting involves a study of the Scriptures, then my Bible ought to stay at home. Say what? That is right – my Bible ought to stay at home on such occasions, but only if I, too, am forced to stay home due to circumstances beyond my control. That should be the outlook of every child of God. Moms that are hand-tied taking care of little ones during services may not always find it convenient to bring and use their own Bibles. Who has time for that, right moms? This would be a clear exception to what we are convinced is the best policy.

In the days of Ezra, the Jews came together in Jerusalem and told that faithful scribe of God to "bring the book" of God's law (Nehemiah 8:1). Sounds like a great idea, would you not agree? Honestly, it does not take much effort, and a Bible is not that heavy to carry. If you have not been doing so, why not resolve to put forth that little effort and bring the Book?