

## News & Notes

Sunday, June 1, 2008

**Remember in Prayer:** Daryl Alberson; Tommy Alberson; Venetta Alberson; Mary Bailey; Vikie Cobb; Melba Cox; Mary Ann Duke; Lettie Mae Hunt; Charles Johnson; Shirley Judge; Dot Ketchum; Sam Kidd; Wayne Kidd; James Luna; John and Deliah Mann; Diane Mize; Willie Mae Needham; Kaylee Northrop; Larry Price; Ann Ray; Jerry Ray; Bobby Russum; Jonell Rutledge; Katherine Shaw; Chris Spence; Jamie Spence; Calvin Ursery; Alvie Williford;

**Pantry item** for the month of June is sugar.

We are in need of the **cardboard cylinders** from paper towel rolls and **boxes** for Vacation Bible School projects.

**Ashland Events:** Today: Periodic singing at Briarcrest Extended Care at 4:00 PM; June 8-11: Vacation Bible School;

**Area Events:** June 5-7: Lectureship at the Calvary Hill congregation in Oxford; June 8-11: VBS at the Beech Hill congregation.

### Sermon in Preview:

AM: Biblical Foundations for Obtaining Balance

PM: The Danger of Extremism

### For the Record (May 25, 2008):

Attendance: 72      Contribution: \$1312.00      Budget: \$1452.00

### The Ashland Church of Christ

P. O. Box 25  
Ashland, MS 38603-0025  
www.ashlandcoc.org  
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



## Increasing in the Knowledge of God Balance — Why Do We Need It?

Jeremy Northrop

Summer is here! 2008 seems to be quickly becoming a part of history. It is hard to believe that at the end of this month, it will be half over. As is our tradition here at the Ashland church of Christ, we will dedicate the first Sunday of the month to a new sub-theme revolving around our theme for the year. As you probably well remember, our theme for the year is *Increasing in the Knowledge of God* taken from the words of the apostle Paul in Romans 11:33. There, Paul said, "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!" By way of review, here is what we have studied each month thus far:

Advisory – God has spoken!

Children – We are His

Faith – Is It In You?

Grace – What's So Amazing About It?

Works – Do You Do Them?

As you can see, the last three months of the year have been dedicated to three components of Christianity, all of which have been considered in extreme both in religious history and current religious practice.

The buzzword of the day is balance. Many motivational speakers and conferences seem to emphasize the point of a balanced life. Their focus is generally about time-management priorities and they will often include daily scheduling exercises and ways in which one can accomplish their goals. Unfortunately, they will generally emphasize religion as a part of the balance of life. They will say that the practice is one component of all the different parts of life. Other things would include family, work, hobbies, and physical exercise.

The truth is that the Bible speaks to all of these aspects of life. Biblical practice is not one part of life but dictates to every part of life. Christianity is the foundation and when it is right, then all else will fall into place. The Bible speaks of the responsibilities of the different family members (Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:1-2). The Bible speaks of the work that men are to do (Colossians 3:22-23; Ephesians 6:5ff). The Bible speaks of physical exercise showing that it has a place in life but not in the place of spiritual growth (1Timothy 4:8). A biblical life does not make the Bible or religion one part of life but rather the foundation of life with everything falling into place. It is no wonder then that Jesus said, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me" (Matthew 16:24).

As we have seen over the course of the previous three months, there are several extremes that exist in the religious world. Sadly, some of these are finding their way into the church of our Lord. Thinking like *grace only* and *faith only* are not biblical in any way (see Ephesians 2:8-10). Many are victims of hearing a new doctrine that might sound good at first and without ever filtering it through the Bible, they jump on board and promote the doctrine. This immediate following then lead them to defend the doctrine that they

never really considered. It becomes an issue to defend instead of a search for biblical truth (John 8:32).

This is what the Galatians faced and Paul rebuked them for such in Galatians 1:6-10. They were following after doctrines that were not in line with God's truth. The goal for any Christian is to search the word of God and see if the things are so (Acts 17:20). This requires study which should not be a surprise to us (2Timothy 2:15). Another noteworthy passage is found in Ephesians 4:7-16. Paul warned the doctrines of men could take one to and fro and cause them to be carried about in man's trickery. The solution is to focus on the doctrine of Christ. In this sense, Christianity is an extreme life-style (Titus 2:14).

These extremes and others which exist in the religious world have their own inherent dangers. Some have responded to liberalism by anti-ism and vice versa. While God has certainly allowed us to discover parts of His truth through creation and science, some have studied these disciplines to the extreme and thereby tried to dismiss the Bible altogether (see 1Timothy 6:20ff). Still others have allowed certain philosophical presuppositions to influence religious study. This idea is most vividly seen in the assumption that there is no absolute standard of right and wrong.

The practice of biblical Christianity demands that we not become extreme in human reasoning. God's revelation must always give way to man's reasoning (see Matthew 12:1-14). Bible knowledge is useless without practicing faith (James 2:24). A clean conscience means nothing if that conscience has not been trained by the truth of God's word (see Acts 23:1ff).

One brother said it this way: "The Bible only makes Christians only and the only Christians." As children of God, our goal must always be to seek out His will for our lives and then seek to be the person He wants us to be. This month promises to be a good month as we seek God's will — nothing more, nothing less.