

News & Notes

Sunday, December 14, 2008

Remember in Prayer: Daryl Alberson; David Anderson; Arland Anderson; Mary Bailey; Mary Childers; Lettie Mae Hunt; Dot Ketchum; John and Deliah Mann; Diane Mize; Wayne Orman; Ann Ray; Brandon Ray; Austin Robinson; Katherine Shaw; Gary Spence; Jamie Spence; Calvin Ursery; Joan Wilkerson; Alvie Williford;

Pantry item for the month of December is trash bags.

Sympathy is extended to the families of Earl Liming and Nell Shelby.

The **mid-week service** the week of Christmas will be on Tuesday, December 23 at 7:00 PM.

If you are planning on going to the **Challenge Youth Conference** February 27-March 1 2009, Jeremy needs the money today.

Ashland Events: Today: Ladies class at 4:00 PM in the dining hall; Elder's meeting at 4:00 PM;

Sermon in Preview:

AM: Speaking the Truth in Love (Ephesians 4:15)

PM: Dealing with False Teachers/Doctrines (2Timothy 1:13)

For the Record (December 7, 2008):

Attendance: 65 Contribution: \$1461.00 Budget: \$1452.00

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
Jeff Roberson
Carrol Street

Romans 11:33

ASHLAND ANNOUNCER

Increasing in the Knowledge of God



“Cut and Dried”

Chuck Northrop

The expression “cut and dried” probably comes from agriculture referring to hay or wheat or some other crop as it is processed from the fields. It has come to mean something that is complete or finished.

Recently while reading an article about this very thing, the writer said, “the more narrow our viewpoints the more ‘cut and dried’ our conclusions and positions.” As we consider this statement, there are some alarming things about it. The narrowness or broadness of a Christian should not depend upon his or her viewpoints but upon the word of God. It is “cut and dried” because the Christian’s life is the narrow way — not because of my viewpoint, but because of what the Lord taught in the great Sermon on the Mount. Jesus said, “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matthew 7:13-14). God’s way is the narrow way, because we are not to add to it nor take from it (Revelation 22:18-19), and we are not to go beyond it (2 John 9).

Another alarming thing that this writer said was, “For a matter to be ‘cut and dried’ tends to relieve us of any obligation to study, listen or struggle with the problems involved.” It is my conviction that this writer does not understand truth. Truth must have the characteristic of being “cut and dried” for it to be truth. Truth cannot be “wishy-washy” with many different and opposing conclusions. Since truth is “cut and dried,” it generates an urgent need to study in order to understand the narrowness of truth. Wouldn’t you imagine Nadab

and Abihu now wishes they had spent a little more time in trying to understand the will of God so they could please Him (Leviticus 10:1-2)? Don't you imagine Uzza now wishes that he had spent the time searching the truth to understand how to move the ark (1 Chronicles 13:7-10)? Certainly after Uzza died, David did. When they went back to bring the ark, David said, "God made a breach upon us, for that we sought Him not after the due order." The Levites then brought the ark "as Moses commanded according to the word of the Lord" (1 Chronicles 15:13-15).

Christians seek to understand truth because of their love for God (John 14:15). They conform their lives to the "cut and dried" truth, because they realize that it is God's will and there are great blessings awaiting those who will obey His will. The writer of the article said, "truth is alive..." He is right. Truth is alive, but not because it changes from culture to culture or generation to generation or person to person, but because it changes lives. Paul stated in 2 Timothy 3:16-17, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Truth is alive because it teaches (doctrine), and we test (reproof) ourselves accordingly; then we make the needed corrections in order to be perfect or mature.

It is foolish for one to think that we cannot know truth absolutely since Jesus said, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). God is not some foolish or vicious God who gives instructions that cannot be understood. We know that we will be judged according to His word (John 12:48), and only a vicious God would judge mankind according to that which cannot be understood by mankind. Since God is a loving God, and we will be judged according to His word, we can know His word, His truth, His will, but it takes study and meditation.

Yes, the word of God is "cut and dried" and, therefore, our beliefs and convictions should also be "cut and dried" because they should be based upon the Word of God. By the way, in the article mentioned, there was not a single scripture cited nor even alluded to. Of course that just means the article was not so "cut and dried"!

Changing Old Habits

Tom Moore

There was a nurse who patients were participants in a medical study. One of the requirements of the study was that her patients had to write down everything that they ate and drank over a course of several weeks. Then she drew their blood and sent it to a laboratory for evaluation. Then every other month her patients had an ultrasound on their carotid arteries.

Once patients saw for themselves the evidence of what their freewheeling eating habits were doing to their blood, internal organs, and the lining of their arteries, lifestyle changes took place immediately. The "before" and "after" clinical charts of patient after patient were amazing.

People instantly walked away from smoking, their use of alcohol, foods that were laced with sugar and fats, and their sedentary lifestyle. When people discovered how quickly they could reverse the decay of their bodies with proper nutrition and exercise, they took charge of habits that had slowly developed over many years. Laziness and procrastination vanished. In fact, the nurse said that her own life had changed from seeing what her patients were accomplishing.

There is nothing so compelling as when we discover something that works. Paul said, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23). A life of sin brings sure spiritual death. Realizing the gospel is God's power unto salvation (Rom. 1:16), and that not obeying the gospel brings eternal separation from God (2 The. 1:7-9) - should we not change from our old habits of sin and obey the gospel? If more in our day realized what sin does to them - they would change old habits!

Think About It!