

News & Notes

Sunday, August 2, 2009

Remember in Prayer: Robbie Alberson; Arland Anderson; Hermon Aury; Mary Baily; Shirley Graves; Don and Norma Hobson; Clifton Holmes; Dot Ketchum; Billy Liming; John and Deliah Mann; Maria Mayes; Ann Ray; Pete Samples; Katherine Shaw; Ruby Tapp; Calvin Ursery; Marie Whitehead; Alvie Williford;

Pantry item for the month of August is trash bags.

Please check the **bulletin boards** in the foyer for other information.

If you placed **orders for CDs** of the gospel meeting, see Jeff Roberson.

Ashland Events: Today: Periodic singing at Briarcrest Extended Care at 4:00 PM; Beginning August 5: Wednesdays in August;

Area Events: Beginning today: Lectureship at the Chapman congregation; gospel meeting at the Batesville congregation; August 15: Youth rally the Gloster Street congregation in Tupelo;

Sermon in Preview:

AM: Tichicus – Delivering Messages

PM: Joshua – Standing when it Seems Impossible to Stand

For the Record (July 26, 2009):

Attendance: 71 Contribution: \$988.00 Budget: \$1459.00

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

ASHLAND ANNOUNCER

“Note Those Who So Walk”

Philippians 3:17

2Thessalonians 3:14

“Note Those Who So Walk”

*Isaiah — Preaching God
Said Would Not be Heard*

Isaiah 6:8-10

Jeremy Northrop

It is easy to preach and teach when the preaching and teaching has noticeable consequences. It is easy (perhaps even enjoyable) to preach and teach when many are being baptized into Christ. It is even enjoyable to read books of the Bible such as the book of Acts where it is obvious the preaching which took place had tremendous noticeable results.

In contrasts, it may not be as easy and certainly not as enjoyable to preach and teach when it seems the message is falling on deaf ears. We all know people who can benefit from the simple plain teaching of the gospel. We might even know of situations in which these people have heard a message they needed to hear, but it seems to have dispensed upon ears that do not hear.

How does the Christian respond to such situations? There certainly comes a time when we must “shake off the dust” as Jesus declared in Matthew 10:14, Mark 6:11, and Luke 9:5. There will come a time when the Christian needs to move on and try to teach someone else because the gospel will have seemed to have not been heard. When does this time come? This is a matter of judgment left to the Christian. However, there are some biblical things which we might be wise to consider when trying to decide if it is time to “shake off the dust” from our feet.

One thing to consider is that *shaking off the dust does not mean giving up!* In Isaiah 6, there is recorded the calling of Isaiah to be a prophet of God. Isaiah sees the Lord and the seraphim worshipping Him in the first three verses. Isaiah acknowledges his own sin and is cleansed of his sin in verses 4-7. God calls him to preach His message in verse eight: “Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: ‘Whom shall I send, And who will go for Us?’ Then I said, ‘Here am I! Send me.’” Verses nine and ten give the message Isaiah is to preach. Notice, the message comes from God, not Isaiah. Isaiah then asks in verse 11 how long he is to preach and prophesy. God says to the very end. Punishment was impending upon Israel. Repentance was demanded. God exhorted Isaiah to preach and teach until the punishment comes.

Implicit in the verses is the idea that Isaiah is to preach to people who will not hear him. This point is confirmed in Matthew 13:10-17 and John 12:37-41. In essence, God urged Isaiah to go and preach and then said Isaiah’s preaching would not be heard! In other words, his preaching would not be visually successful. Another person who preached to the very end is Noah. For about 100 years, Noah preached and is even described as a “preacher of righteousness” (2Peter 2:5). Noah did not give up when He was not apparently successful. *Shaking off the dust does not mean giving up!*

Next, *shaking off the dust does not mean quitting!* Notice the response of Isaiah when God asked, “Whom shall I send, And who will go for us?” Isaiah said, “Here am I! Send me.” It is interesting that Isaiah did not change his mind when God told him how hard the work was going to be. In fact, in Isaiah seven, he goes to the king and immediately begins the work which God called him to do in chapter six. It seems many people today express sentiments of having tried Christianity or tried teaching others in the past, but when their efforts were apparently unsuccessful (at least in their own eyes), they quit. They did not try to teach someone else. They did not even try to continue to remain faithful to God. This seems to have been the case for the congregation of the Lord’s people in Ephesus. Jesus rebuked them for it (Revelation 2:1-7). The Lord essentially said to Isaiah that he his work would be unsuccessful. This did not stop Isaiah from teach-

ing God’s truth! Brethren, today, we do not need to be stopped, we must, keep on keeping on!

One final idea: When God’s word is proclaimed, it is never, ever wrong or unsuccessful. As Isaiah prophesied to Israel, seven times, he spoke of a remnant (see Isaiah 1:9, 10:20-22; 11:11, 16; 16:14, and others). His teaching served as a good reminder to those who were trying to live right in circumstances in which it would have been difficult. His preaching made a difference to them! It is so incredibly easy to focus on the more visible results of preaching and teaching. Perhaps we are guilty of doing this even to the point that when there are not visible results, we call it unsuccessful. God, through Isaiah, said it this way: “So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it” (Isaiah 55:11). It is never wrong to present truth (John 8:31-32).

Many today might say that we live in a time which is similar to Isaiah day. Whether or not that is true, our responsibility regarding the teaching of God’s truth is the same. Brethren, we need not lose heart (Galatians 6:9). When the world will hear us, we teach God’s truth. When the world will not hear us, we teach God’s truth. Let us follow the example of Isaiah and continue to preach even when God said it will not be heard. Further, let us follow the command of God:

I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry (2Timothy 2:1-5).