

News & Notes

Sunday, August 16, 2009

Remember in Prayer: Mary Baily; Robert Bennett; John L. Clemmer; Clifton Holmes; Dot Ketchum; Dallas King; Billy Liming; John and Deliah Mann; Maria Mayes; Ann Ray; Travis Ray; Gallen Runsick; Katherine Shaw; Ruby Tapp; Calvin Ursery; Joan Wilkerson; Alvie Williford;

Sympathy is extended to the family of Effie May Orman Bell.

Pantry item for the month of August is trash bags.

If you would like **audio CD's** (or mp3 files) of the Wednesdays in August series, order forms are in the foyer.

Ashland Events: Today: Prayer meeting at 4:00 PM; Youth devotional after evening service; August 19: Wednesdays in August;

Area Events: August 22: Senior adult rally at Booneville; September 12: Family lectureship/workshop at the North Green Street congregation in Tupelo;

Sermon in Preview:

AM: The Galatians – Learning Freedom in Christ

PM: The Ephesians – Learning to Live in Christ

For the Record (August 9, 2009):

Attendance: 75 Contribution: \$1461.00 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

“Give Me a New Religion!”

Jeremy Northrop

Not too long ago, a brother and I were studying the Bible with someone. We shared with him things about salvation, worship, righteous living, and other biblical topics. Toward the end of the study, the gentlemen expressed concerns about some conclusions we had shared with him from certain Bible passages. He made statements like, “We don’t live in the same culture as when the Bible was written” and “I don’t think we need to interpret the Bible so literally.” While it would be nice if this man were alone in his thoughts, these kinds of statements about the Bible are growing in popularity every day. The fact is, interpreting and understanding the Bible is not left to the subjective nature of man (Jeremiah 10:23). Many today are attempting to change things in the name of new times and progress. Yet, when considering what the Bible says, it is still right to seek the “old paths” (Jeremiah 6:16).

Some today are advocating a change in the way the church worships or assembles. In 1Corinthians 12-14, Paul discusses the use of spiritual gifts. Specifically, he discusses how to use them in the assembly or when the church was meeting together. The Corinthian congregation was not using the spiritual gifts for the mutual edification of all (1Corinthians 14:26). The Corinthians were exalting one spiritual gift above another (1Corinthians 12:12-31). Some were elevating themselves above others and looking at what looked good to themselves and not what God desired. To correct this problem, Paul showed them how a body must work

together, each member doing its part, for the benefit of all. The way in which this is to be accomplished is to acknowledge that the assembly is not about what man wants but rather about what God wants. 1Corinthians 14:37 says it clearly: “If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord.”

The original attitude of the Corinthians regarding the assembly has been taken to an extreme in current culture. Many today are asking, “What can I get out of worship?” They are advocating changes in the way worship is conducted. They are ignoring what the Bible says regarding worship (John 4:24) and trying to find self pleasing worship styles.

A casual look at 2Corinthians shows a congregation which could handle rebuke (2Corinthians 7:2-12). Paul gave them some instructions regarding this and other problems in 1Corinthians. He then acknowledged their repentance in 2Corinthians. Unfortunately, some today want to change things with little or no regard for what the Bible says. They will not accept rebuke. This is evidenced by some other statements they might make: “I know what the Bible says but...” or “I am not sure this is scriptural but I want to do it anyway.”

Another area where people want to change religion is the area of salvation. The book of conversions, Acts, is clear about what a person needs to do in order to be saved. Acts 8:26-40 either directly states or implies all the steps of the gospel plan of salvation. The eunuch heard the word of God as Philip declared it to him. He believed as shown in his readiness to obey it. He repented of his sins is seen in how he was ready to abandon Judaism and follow after Christ. It is directly stated that he confessed Jesus and was baptized. It is even implied that he lived faithfully because “he went on his way rejoicing.” Some in the Bible did not follow after Christ the way Christ instructed them to do so and condemnation awaited them (Matthew 25:31-46).

Just as there were people in the time of Jesus who thought they were saved and were not, there are people today who are thinking the same thing. Many want to focus on believing God without obeying God. Some want to deemphasize baptism and emphasize feelings of the heart. They are focused on what they want and how they feel and not on what God said. James 1:22 says, “But be

doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” Christians are to be doers. Christians are to be doers *of the word*, not of what they want to do.

A final area where people want a new religion is the matter of God’s instructions. 2Samuel 6:1-5 shows how David had some disregard for the instructions of God. He helped to build a new cart which would help to transport the ark of God. God, through Moses had already revealed how the ark was to be transported (Exodus 25:12-14). David did not obey God and Uzzah lost his life for it (2Samuel 6:7). It is interesting that God had given the command as to how the ark was to be moved many years before David moved it. The passing of time did not change the way in which the commands were to be followed. David disobeyed and God was not pleased with it.

Likewise, there are many today who are showing little or no regard for the instructions God has given. He has revealed to man how to worship. He has revealed to man how to live righteously. He has revealed to man what the work of the church needs to be. Indeed, He has given mankind “all things that pertain to life and godliness” (2Peter 1:3). Yet, some today want to worship with the mechanical instrument of music when God authorized only vocal singing. Some are advocating a new morality in which it is acceptable to lie, cheat, and commit other immoral acts which God has not authorized. Some choose to use the church as an entertainment venue and are doing such with no scriptural authority. In essence, what these people are doing is spiritually building “a new cart” for which they have no authority to build.

The newness of anything has an appeal for the simple fact that it is new. Sometimes, people disregard old clothes, dishes, or other items that which may work perfectly well. The items are thrown out simply because they are old. The newness of something has the appeal. When it comes to spiritual matters, however, the goal does not need to be to focus on what is new but rather on what is right. God’s methods for worship, salvation, and other instructions may be old, but they are still right.

“Stand in the ways and see,
And ask for the old paths, where the good way is,
And walk in it” (Jeremiah 6:16).