

News & Notes

Sunday, February, 2010

Remember in Prayer: Mary Baily; Johnny Carr; Sherri Fewels; Marie Hall; Calprettina Judge; David Judge; Dot Ketchum; John and Deliah Mann; Amy May; Lowell Poff; Ann Ray; Curtis Ray; Vera Roberson; Willa Shaw; Joan Wilkerson; Alvie Williford;

Sympathy is extended to the family of Gertrude Russell.

Pantry item for the month of January is vinegar.

The newest edition of **House to House/Heart to Heart** is available in the foyer for those not on the mailing route.

Ashland Events: Today: Periodic singing at Briarcrest Extended Care at 4:00 PM;

Area Events: Today: Youth activities at the Foote Street church of Christ in Corinth, Mississippi; February 18: Freed-Hardeman University Associates Tippah-Benton County Chapter benefit dinner at the Beech Hill dining hall;

Sermon in Preview:

AM: The Establishment of the Church

PM: The Singularity of the Church

For the Record (January 31, 2010):

Attendance: 66 Contribution: \$1029.00 Budget: \$1459.00

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 6:30 PM

Shepherds:

Barney King
Jeff Roberson
Carrol Street

ASHLAND ANNOUNCER

A YEAR OF REMEMBRANCE

"Remind them of these things..." (2Timothy 2:14)

John 3:16

Jeremy Northrop

John 3:16 is perhaps the most quoted verse in the entire Bible. It seems that everyone — those who regularly attend worship services and those who do not — knows John 3:16. In fact, the reader can probably quote it from memory. John said, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." Some in the religious world try to use this verse solely for man's salvation. This goes against the idea that all scripture is inspired of God (2Timothy 3:16-17). Still, it would be just as wrong to never allude to or study John 3:16. There is a lot of good information found in this verse which needs to be examined and understood.

The account of John 3:1-21 centers around a person named Nicodemus. He was a religious man described as a Pharisee and a ruler of the Jews in verse one. He is often criticized as one who came to Jesus by night. These critics go on to say that he may have been too ashamed to approach Jesus during the day. It is debatable that such a conclusion can be drawn with any certainty. What is certain is that Nicodemus was concerned enough to come to Jesus and consult Him about spiritual things. It is interesting the most quoted verse in all the Bible was said to one man in the middle of the night. In the context of John 3:16, Jesus explains to Nicodemus the difference between what is spiritual rebirth and physical birth. He explains that in order for one to inherit eternal life, they must be born again. This passage teaches several things about the nature of man, the attributes of God, the humility of the Savior, and the certainty of salvation.

“For God so loved the world...” — Sinning World

It is no secret that all have sinned. That is exactly what Paul said in Romans 3:23, “...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...” Paul explains the consequence of sin in Romans 6:23, “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” John 3:16 teaches that even when the world is in sin, God still choose to love the world. This idea is confirmed in Romans 5:8, “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Because of sin, the world needs redemption. God offers the world redemption through His Son Jesus Christ. Luke 19:10 says, “...for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.” It is amazing that while God cannot look upon sin (Habakkuk 1:13), He loves those who have sinned.

“...that He gave...” — Loving Father

One of the more interesting concepts the Bible teaches is the nature of love. It is easy to say “I love you” but a much more commendable and difficult thing to show a person they are loved (1John 3:18). The Bible teaches love is a choice. Hence God commands husbands to love their wives (Ephesians 5:25). The way love is demonstrated is by giving. In fact, Paul implies husbands ought to be willing to give their lives for their wives in Ephesians 5:25. Generally speaking, when the concept of love is discussed throughout scripture, the idea of giving is discussed in the same context. God loved the world and gave to the world. He gave His only begotten Son.

“...His only begotten Son...” — Willing Savior

Five times throughout the writing of John in the New Testament, Jesus is described as the “only begotten Son” of God. This description describes a very interesting quality of Jesus. It expresses the relationship Jesus has with God. God is the Father and Jesus is the Son. The birth of Christ was miraculous in that He had an earthly mother but no earthly father. God the Father served in this capacity. In this sense, Jesus is unique in comparison to the children of God. Christians are God’s children

by adoption (see Romans 8:23, Galatians 5:4 and Ephesians 1:5). Jesus is the Son of God by being begotten of God or being directly related to God. God gave Him for the salvation of man. More than that, Christ was willing to submit to the plan of God (Matthew 26:39).

“...that whoever believe in Him...” — Workable Plan

This is the phrase of John 3:16 which might be the most abused of the verse. Some try to use the verse to show that all a person must do in order to be saved is believe. While belief is certainly essential to man’s salvation (see Hebrews 11:6), it is not all the Bible says about the matter. The emphasis here is man must believe the plan (all of the plan) and work the plan in order to be saved. The Bible teaches that one must hear (Romans 10:17), believe (Hebrews 11:6, John 3:16), repent (Acts 2:38), confess (Acts 8:37), be baptized (Mark 16:15-16), and live faithfully (Acts 14:22). When these things are done, man can have genuine assurance he is saved (2Peter 2:10).

“...should not perish but have everlasting life.” — Certain Salvation

Paul proclaimed the assurance of salvation when he said, “Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing” (2Timothy 4:8). John assures Christians they can have certain salvation if they will “walk in the light” (1John 1:7). John 3:16 explains that if people will believe the plan (and implicitly obey the plan which they are believing), then they can have assurance they will be in Heaven one day. The converse is also true — if people do not believe and do not obey, then there can be no genuine assurance.

John 3:16 is a powerful verse. It teaches so many things which can give comfort and assurance to the reader. It is sad so many want to make the verse say something it does not say or teach something which would be inconsistent with the entirety of the Bible. It also provides assurance as already seen in the apostle Paul, and it provides great spiritual comfort.