

News & Notes

Sunday, April 24, 2005

Remember in Prayer: Sally Etta Crawford; Tommy Dawson has been having heart trouble; Hazel Hopkins has been sick; Leon Jackson is in the hospital after an accident; Mary Kidd had her last treatment; Deliah Mann; Howard Moody; Jamie Spence, father of Edna Ray, has been diagnosed with cancer; Ruby Street; Calvin and Ollie Ursery; Alvie Williford.

The annual **homecoming** is today with brother Don Roberson. There will be a pot-luck meal and an afternoon service at 1:30 PM. There will be no 6:00 PM service. Also, due to homecoming, there will be no singing at Briar Crest Extended Care today.

There is a **ladies day** at the Beech Hill Church of Christ on Saturday (the 30th). There is a sign-up list on the bulletin board.

The next **ladies night out** is Tuesday, May 3rd at 6:00 PM at the home of Shawna Northrop.

Be sure to check the **bulletin board** for additional news.

Sermon In Preview:

AM: Guest Speaker: Donald Roberson

PM: Guest Speaker: Donald Roberson

For the Record (April 10, 2005):

Attendance: 79 Contribution: \$1235.00 Budget: \$1205.00

The Ashland Church of Christ

P. O. Box 25

Ashland, MS 38603-0025

ashlandcoc@juno.com

Sunday:

Bible Study 9:30 AM

Worship 10:30 AM

Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday:

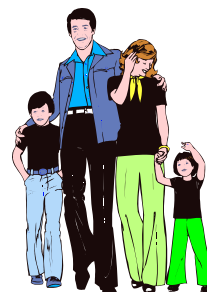
Bible Study 7:00 PM

Shepherds:

Barney King

Junior Roberson

Carrol Street



The Ashland Announcer

*"Give to the Lord, O families of the peoples,
Give to the Lord glory and strength" (Psalm 96:7).*

The Great Homecoming

Jeremy Northrop

Plans have been made and the time is ready for our homecoming 2005. Of course, we have asked Donald Roberson to come and present the lessons today because of this event. Donald is no stranger to us having grown up at this congregation and served as one of the deacons for many years. He has recently left desiring to serve the Coffeeville congregation as their pulpit minister. This homecoming serves as a time of memory, reunion, and fellowship for past and present members of the congregation here. While this is a physical homecoming of the Ashland church of Christ, it serves a suitable reminder to the spiritual homecoming all faithful men and women of God will be a part of one day.

In Luke 15:11-32, there is recorded the story commonly called the prodigal son. In this story a young man asks his father for his inheritance so that he can leave home and live wildly. The father grants his request and the son goes with the money to a far country and there the text says he wastes his substance with prodigal living or living without planning for tomorrow. While he is away, he ends up having to feed pigs and eventually has to eat what the pigs eat because of his wasteful living. So, he develops a plan. He decides he will go

back to his father and ask him to be one of his servants so that he will have an income and a life. Of course, the story ends well as the father sees him coming home and welcomes him with open arms and has a party in his honor because of the repentant heart he had. The first lesson that we can learn is that if we are going to be a part of the great homecoming of God one day, then we must make plans now. Before this lost son could get his life in order, he had to make plans and show fruits worthy of repentance. “For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it” (Luke 14:28). It is very interesting and noteworthy that so many people make plans for their lives and even their own deaths but they do not make plans for eternity.

It is a fact of life that all people will die. In Genesis 5, there is recorded some of the genealogies of the Old Testament. Some of them lived a longer time than anyone today could ever think of living. Yet, the fact keeps coming back to haunt the reader that every single one of them died. The fact is that everyone will have to face death’s door. “And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment” (Hebrews 9:27). The goal therefore, needs to be to prepare for death because it cannot be avoided. Submission to God’s will in life will prepare one for death. Keeping the commands of Christ will prepare one for death (John 14:15). Life, in a very significant way, is about preparation for death. The great homecoming will only be a positive experience if people make plans for it now, while they are still alive.

Another lesson to learn about the great homecoming is that it is only for those who know God and are known by God. While anyone is invited to this homecoming day, it is a special day for members and past-members of the congregation here. A homecoming is for people to come home or to what once was home. Therefore, it is really not

designed to be a day for people who do not know about the Ashland congregation or have never been a part of the congregation. The great homecoming is like that as well. Jesus said, “I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own” (John 10:14). Judgment day will only be a positive experience for those who know Jesus and who are known by Jesus. It will not be a good day for the non-Christian. The Bible speaks of one after-life as a place of gold streets, no tears, no sorrow, no pain (Revelation 21:4). Then the Bible speaks of another after life as a place where “The worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched” (Mark 9:44, 46, 48). Where one will spend eternity depends upon what one will do with their life. Jesus will only save those whom He knows.

Finally, Christians should look to the great homecoming as something to be treasured. While it is true that death is real, it is also true that the Christian does not have to be afraid of death. Since Christ knows the Christian, then the great homecoming can be a time of joy, peace, and eternal union with God the Father and Creator. Today is a time of happiness, shared memories, and reunion for many people who are or once were members of the Ashland church of Christ. The great homecoming is the same for faithful men and women of God. Paul looked forward to death though he had a real understanding of his earthly purpose when he said, “For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Philippians 1:21). And also as Paul said, so all faithful Christians will be able to say “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith” (2Timothy 4:7).

Today, as we celebrate homecoming, it is the hope and plan of this event that everyone has a good time and shares good memories. On a much more serious thought, it is my hope that you, dear reader, will consider the great homecoming and make sure you are prepared for that day.