

News & Notes

Sunday, December 4, 2005

Remember in Prayer: Al Alberson; Sandra Albertson; M. B. Anthony; Gather Bennett; Buck Brooks; Sally Etta Crawford; Lawrence Dawson; Tommy Dawson; Flora Estes; Kelly Gamblin; Richard Gore; Carrol Holmes; Carolyn Jordan; Dot Kethum; Michelle Little; Ruth Ann Long; Deliah Mann; Charlie Matheny; Howard Moody; Tate Peeler; Wanda Pestes; Leyland Ray; John Bill Richardson; Janet Rooker; Katherine Shaw; Lillie Mae Shelby; Austin Simpson; Linda Smith; Jayme and Trucilla Spence; Ollie Ursery; Betty Vincent; Lee Walls; Bob Weikel; Alvie Williford; Carolyn Winstead;

Pantry item for the month of November is canned goods.

All are invited to a **Christmas party** for Pinevale Children's Home at the building of the West Corinth Church of Christ.

Always be sure and check the **bulletin board** for additional news and notes.

Sermon In Preview: Focus on the Family:

AM: The Home's Future

PM: Things That Destroy the Home: Modernism

For the Record (November 27, 2005):

Attendance: 85 Contribution: \$1284.00 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

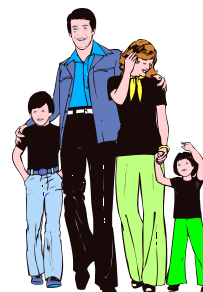
Wednesday:

Bible Study 7:00 PM

Shepherds:

Barney King

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 Family that _____
Together _____ Together
Jeremy Northrop

No one wants their families to fail. Everyone wants the best possible family they can have. Fathers do not generally have sons and then wish to be apart from them. People do not get married hoping it will end in divorce. The bottom line is that people want their families to work and not only to work but to work well. More than that, God wants families to work. It was God who established the home in the creation days. It was God who inspired writers like Moses, Paul, and the writers of the book of Proverbs to give great amounts of information about how to make families work. It is God who desires that there be structure in the home — structure which will make the home work in a good way. If one were to remove all the passages of scripture which provide information on how to have a successful family, there would not be much of a Bible left! Notice three points that do not specifically come from the Bible but are certainly biblically based.

First, the family that **prays** together **stays** together. This is an old cliché that might be seen as an inscription beneath a picture of praying hands or something of that nature. The fact that it is old and that it is a cliché does not make it any less true. The Bible commands that one be a praying person (1Thessalonians 5:17). The example of Jesus Christ shows that His followers need to be praying people. Paul would constantly mention how he was praying for different ones he knew and would likewise ask these

people to pray for him. It is true that in the United States culture the idea of praying as a family has been thrown to the wayside. Things like extra-curricular activities, watching television, and going out to be with other people have all inhibited the praying family. These things have likewise aided in ripping families apart. Children are not enjoying bedtime stories and prayers as much as they once were in this nation and one can easily see the negative results of such actions. Time must be put aside intentionally for families to pray together, not just at mealtimes but regular family meetings for prayers need to be utilized. The instructions God gave to parents in the Old Testament show that He wanted families to spend time together and for children to learn from their parents the ways of serving God well (Deuteronomy 6:4-9). The first century church would spend time fasting and praying (Acts 13:3). Peter was an elder in the church and therefore had believing children. Do you think Peter spent time in prayer with his children? No doubt, he did. If more couples spent time in prayer instead of trying to get out of a relationship, they might have a better chance of succeeding. If more parents prayed with their children, then it would be more likely that their children do not grow up to hate their parents. The family that prays together stays together.

Second, the family that **works** together **grows** together. There is a point that is often overlooked when people discuss functional families. They do not just happen. People make them happen. One person once said that destiny is not a matter of chance but rather a matter of choice. While chance and happenstance to have an affect on a person's future, a large part of a person's future revolves around what they choose and the consequences of their choices. If one wants his or her family to work, then he or she has to make it happen to some degree. Parents need to instill in their children the importance of family and the individual roles in the family (Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:4). Amos asked a rhetorical question in Amos 3:3, "Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?" Two people can be agreed on a lot of things but if one has a mind to go north and the other a mind to go south, they cannot walk together. Likewise a family can be a family just in name only. If they truly want to grow close to one another, then the individuals in the family must have some common goals. They must then work toward those common goals and then together, they will receive

the benefit of accomplishing those goals. The family that works together grows together.

Third, the family that **worships** together **benefits** together. It is sad that around holidays like Christmas some Christians do not attend the worship of the church and then use their families as an excuse. One person said that Christmas is a time when saints become sinners and sinners become saints. Some of the more progressive congregations will cancel services altogether around holiday time in the effort to allow families to spend time together. This logic has not been well thought out. What better way for a family to spend time together then to go and worship God together? What better use of time is there then worshipping God? What would Jesus do in such situations? One might criticize and say that not all families are made up of Christians. This is, no doubt true. However, what better example could Christians show to their family members who non-Christians then to go to worship. God demands first place in the lives of His followers and a holiday or family event does not change that demand. Jesus said, "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me" (Matthew 10:37). The family that worships together benefits together.

As one notices these three points that will help families to work and be successful, he or she notices a commonality among them all — togetherness. Even secular research shows that one of the qualities of a successful family is that they spend time together. This makes logical sense. A father is not going to be close to a son that he does not spend time with. A wife is not going to be close to a husband that she does not spend time with. If people want their own families to work, then they are going to have to spend time with their families. The adage it's not the quantity of time people spend together but the quality of time is simply not true. A person cannot go to another family member right now and say he or she has five minutes and then make them five minutes of quality. Hopefully, when people spend massive amounts of time together, they will end up having some genuine quality time. If the family is going to work and be successful, then the family is going to have to be together.