

## News & Notes

Sunday, May 8, 2005

**Remember in Prayer:** Enis Autry, client at Briarcrest extended care fell and broke his hip; Sally Etta Crawford; Tommy Dawson has been having heart trouble; Carol Holmes fell and broke her foot; Leon Jackson is in the hospital after an accident; Deliah Mann; Don Mitch, father of one of Ashley Anderson's teachers will be undergoing heart surgery; Howard Moody; Janet Rooker, Tommy Dawson's sister remains in need of prayer; Caleb Smith, nephew of Wendy Roberson had a brain-tumor operated on this past week; Jamie Spence, father of Edna Ray, has been diagnosed with cancer; Ruby Street; Calvin and Ollie Ursery; Alvie Williford.

**Sympathy** is extended to the family of Delma James.

The next **periodic singing** at Briarcrest Extended care is today at 4:30 PM.

The next **elder's meeting** is this afternoon at 5:00 PM. If you have anything you would like to bring to their attention, please do so then.

### Sermon In Preview:

AM: Preaching Christ: His Prediction (Isaiah 53:1-12)

PM: Preaching Through John: The Prologue (John 1:1-18)

### For the Record (May 1, 2005):

Attendance: 83    Contribution: \$1281.00    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:

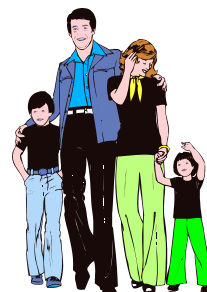
Bible Study 7:00 PM

#### 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).*

GROWING  
in  
FAITH

## Perseverance

Jeremy Northrop

In 2Peter 1:5-11, Peter said, "But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." One of the things a Christian is to add to his or her faith is perseverance.

If one were to look at the word perseverance in the dictionary, he or she would find the word steadfastness used to define it. Steadfastness is defined as determination, adherence, and loyalty. The idea is that a person who perseveres remains committed to a particular goal no matter what happens in trying to achieve that goal. The need for perseverance in the life of a Christian then is rather obvious. John said that the world will

hate the Christian (1John 3:13). Peter encourages Christians to keep up the good life in the midst of suffering (1Peter 4:12-13). Christ prayed on behalf of all Christians knowing that they would not be liked by the world (John 17:14-17). It is not surprise to the Christian to know that life will not be easy in service to God.

The word perseverance is used only a few times in the English New Testament and mainly by the apostle Paul. This makes perfect sense in light of the life that the apostle was called to live. He would have needed a great deal of perseverance to overcome the trials which confronted him. Paul says that tribulations in life will produce perseverance (Romans 5:3). Then, he says that perseverance will produce character (Romans 5:4). He admonishes the first century Christians and all Christians throughout time through inspiration to persevere (Romans 8:25; 2Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 6:18). It is logical that a Christian will have to have perseverance because of the kind of life the Bible says he will have to live. Also, the Bible outright says the Christian needs perseverance.

James 5:11 says, "Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord--that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful." One biblical character whose perseverance is without question is the Old Testament person Job. His life is a legacy to what perseverance is and should be. He was dedicated to God no matter what or who in his life would not be dedicated to God. He loses everything he has and even his own children. His friends falsely accuse him of sin. His own wife tells him to "Curse God and die" (Job 2:9). Yet, in all of this he remained focused on God and dedicated to living righteously. Today when people read this account of Job, they know what is going on. They understand that Satan and God had a conversation about Job. They understand that Satan had God's permission to take Job's possessions away and harm his health. One of the most noteworthy parts of the story is that Job knew none of this. He remained dedicated to God even when he did not completely understand what was going on.

Another Old Testament personality who can be noted for having a great amount of perseverance is Joseph. Israel,

Joseph's father, loved Joseph more than any of his other sons. He expressed this love by buying Joseph a tunic of many colors (Genesis 37:3). Joseph's brothers were very jealous of him and sold him into slavery (Genesis 37:12-36). As a slave in Egypt, Joseph is able to interpret dreams and eventually Pharaoh finds out and Joseph is interpreting his dreams (Genesis 41). This causes Joseph to slowly rise to power. Then, as the story goes, Joseph is able to forgive his brothers and see his family (particularly his father Israel). The story—recorded in the later chapters of Genesis—has great lessons of forgiveness and family importance. However, consider for a moment the resilience found in the young man Joseph. He did not let the situations of life determine his destiny. He did the best he could in any given situation he was in and the Lord blessed him for his perseverance and dedication. Christians today would do well to learn from this great hero in Genesis.

Of course, the conclusions that can be drawn from noticing this kind of perseverance in godly individuals are obvious and difficult. One is that people choose how they are going to react to any given situation. Phrases like "He made me do it" and "I am just short-tempered" are not godly or biblical. Could you imagine Job using such logic when his friends insulted him like they did? Could you imagine the difference in the story if Joseph was seeking revenge instead of renewal with his brothers. These men chose the responses they made in life and were blessed because they understood their own personal accountability. Another lesson is the principle of 'When life throws you a lemon, you just make lemonade.' Far too many people (including Christians) let their own situations run their lives. They become victims to circumstance literally. Job was not going to let his situation stop him from doing what was right. He chose to follow God. Joseph could have been both depressed and suicidal. He chose to make the best of a bad situation.

What about us today? Are we going to persevere no matter what happens in life? Are we going to follow God regardless of the consequences? Are we going to choose our destiny or become a person who is controlled by circumstance?