

News & Notes

Sunday, November 20, 2005

Remember in Prayer: Al Alberson; Sandra Albertson; Gather Bennett; Buck Brooks; Sally Etta Crawford; Lawrence Dawson; Tommy Dawson; Flora Estes; Richard Gore; Mamie Lee Grisham; Carrol Holmes; Carolyn Jordan; Dot Kethum; Ruth Ann Long; Deliah Mann; Charlie Matheny; Howard Moody; Tate Peeler; Wanda Pestes; 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.

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

The newest edition of **House to House/Heart to Heart** was mailed out this past week. If you are not on the mailing list, you may pick up a copy in the foyer.

Sermon In Preview:

AM: Back to the Basics: The Church

PM: Back to the Basics: The Godhead

For the Record (November 13, 2005):

Attendance: 89 Contribution: \$1260.00 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

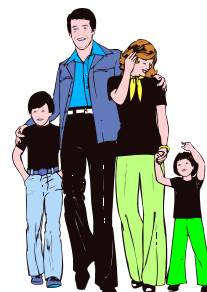
Wednesday:

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).*

GROWING
in
FAITH

Love

Jeremy Northrop

In 2Peter 1:5-8, Peter says, "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." The focus of this article is love.

One of the first things that is noteworthy about love is that this is the driving force behind the eternal salvation of man. God does not want anyone to be lost. Paul said God... "desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." (1Timothy 2:4). The reason that he does not want man to be lost is because of the great love that He has for man. John 3:16 sums this up nicely, "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." The reason that all men everywhere can have eternal salvation with God is due to the great love that God has for man.

Every person that exists is a part of a family. A person cannot live with another person without having some type of conflict at

least sometimes. The Bible speaks much of the relationships that people will have and gives many commands that if they are followed, then those relationships will endure, last, and grow stronger. A key part to every relationship is the love that the people will have for one another. Paul commands husbands to love their wives three different times and in three different ways in the same text: (1) “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her” (Ephesians 5:25). (2) “So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself” (Ephesians 5:28). (3) “Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.” Paul also tells Titus that the older women should teach the younger woman to love their husbands in Titus 2:4 when he said, “...that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children.” Christians everywhere are commanded to walk in love. Ephesians 5:2 says, “And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.”

The command to love extends beyond just those that are family. Jesus said, “Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends” (John 15:13). The Bible teaches that man is to love his friends. “A man who has friends must himself be friendly, But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother” (Proverbs 18:24). The book of Proverbs also says in Proverbs 17:17 that, “A friend loves at all times.” Therefore, the Bible speaks clearly that man is to love his friends.

Another group of people that Christians are commanded to love is those in need. In Matthew 25, Jesus says that when people perform benevolent acts of love to other people, it is the same as performing it to Jesus, Himself. Matthew 25:34-45 says, “Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’ Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a

stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’ Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.’ Then they also will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?’ Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, **inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.**” Throughout the book of Acts, there are constant recordings of acts of love that the first-century church did. James said, “Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world” (James 1:27).

Loving family is relatively easy for most people. Loving those that are in need is not much harder for most people. Jesus, however, raises the standard of love in Matthew 5:43-45 and wants Christians to do something that is unnatural. There He says, “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.” God unconditionally loves every person. Christians, as the children of God are commanded to do no different. They are to love everyone, including their enemies. This could well be one of the most difficult things that God’s children are commanded to do.

In John 13:34-35, the Bible says, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” The Bible teaches that the way Christians are to be known by the world is by the love that they have for the world.