

News & Notes

Sunday, October 2, 2005

Remember in Prayer: Sandra Alberson; Al Albertson; Margaret Bennett; Buck Brooks; Sally Etta Crawford; Lawrence Dawson; Tommy Dawson; Flora Estes; Becky Holbrooks; Carolyn Jordan; Mary Sue Kidd; Ruth Ann Long; Deliah Mann; Ronnie McBride; Howard Moody; Mitchel Newby; Junior Roberson; Janet Rooker; Jayme and Trucilla Spence; Ollie Ursery; Alvie Williford;

Sympathy is extended to the family of Jamie Alsup

Pantry item for the month of October is dish soap.

Ashland events: Today: Singing at Briar Crest at 4:30 PM; Prayer meeting at 5:00 PM; October 9: Baby shower for Melissa Bennett; October 16-19: Joint gospel meeting; October 22: Harvest festival;

Area events: October 2-6: Gospel meeting at Theo; October 7-8: North Mississippi Ladies Retreat at Tishomingo State Park; October 16: 100th anniversary at Tipplersville; October 21-23: Youth rally at Starkville;

Sermon In Preview: Focus on the Family:

AM: The Home and Entertainment

PM: Things That Destroy the Home: Drugs

For the Record (September 25, 2005):

Attendance: 77 Contribution: \$1057.00 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:

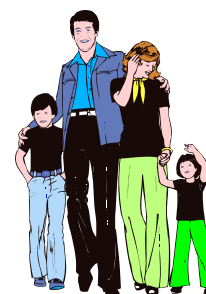
Bible Study 7:00 PM

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).*

A Christian's Responsibility to Aging Parents

Jeremy Northrop

The increasing need for geriatric care is without dispute. Assisted-living homes and extended-care facilities are overflowing in this country. New ones are being built every day. People are generally living longer and thus, growing older. Therefore, the need for such complexes to be built is somewhat obvious. Perhaps one thing increasing faster than the need for nursing homes is the vast amount of opinions toward them. There are some who will say that an extended-care facility is necessary and there are others who would argue they are only a ploy to get 'old, useless people' out of the way. Christians need to look to God's Word — the Bible — and learn what God would have them to do in this area of life as well as any other.

Children do have a biblical responsibility to their parents. One of the Ten Commandments is to "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you" (Exodus 20:12). Paul tells children to "...obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right" (Ephesians 6:1). Jesus set a good example before men making sure His mother would be cared for after His death. John 19:26-27 says, "When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and

the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, ‘Woman, behold your son!’ Then He said to the disciple, ‘Behold your mother!’ And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.”

In 1Timothy 5, Paul is telling Timothy of the responsibility of the church toward the aging widows. He begins the chapter by making it very clear that there is a place in the church for them and they should not simply be ignored. He says, “Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger as sisters, with all purity” (1Timothy 5:1-2). The setting of 1Timothy 5 concerns whether the church can use money out of the church funds to help the older widows who are too old to work and — because they are widows — obviously do not have a husband to provide for them.

Further, the text which needs to be examined in light of Christians dealing with their aging parents is verse 4: “But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God.” The primary responsibility of caring for the aging members of the church falls on their physical family members. There are those widows who do not have children who can take care of them. Perhaps they never had children or their children have already passed on. Further, there are those widows in the church who do not have faithful or believing children. Thus, their children do not see any type of responsibility on their part to care for their parents. In such a case, the church has the obligation to help the widows. But primarily, this responsibility falls on the children and grandchildren of the widows.

Verse 8 continues to shed light on the matter: “But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.” It is unfortunate this verse is often quoted in reference to a man with regard to his wife and children. The context of the passage is dealing with a Christian’s

responsibility to his aging parents and specifically, in this case, widows. Certainly, it is true a man has a responsibility as the head of the home to make sure provisions are properly made for his wife and children. No doubt the man who does not take this responsibility seriously will be held accountable for it on the Day of Judgment (Ecclesiastes 12:14). Still, the context of 1Timothy 5 is older widows. The first people to care for them should be their children and grandchildren. The Christian who does not provide for them is “...worse than an unbeliever.”

Then, the reason the children and grandchildren are to provide for their parents is found in verse 16: “If any believing man or woman has widows, let them relieve them, and do not let the church be burdened, that it may relieve those who are really widows.” While it is certainly biblical for the church to provide and care for her members, it is not the ideal situation. Thus, it is only biblical after certain qualifications have been met. She must be a widow who is left alone (no children or grandchildren to care for her) and faithful to the cause of Christ (verse 5). In verses 9-10, Paul gets very specific in regards to who the church can help and to whom the church is to refuse help. “Do not let a widow under sixty years old be taken into the number, and not unless she has been the wife of one man, well reported for good works: if she has brought up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work.” Implicitly, this teaches age to be no excuse for forfeiting one’s responsibility in church work. Older people will be held accountable for the work they do or do not do. Paul further emphasizes this standard by saying the church is to refuse to help younger widows (rather, they are to marry) or widows who are not faithful to the work. If the church were to help the younger widows, they might become evil (verses 11-13). Thus, the church should have no part in helping them. Paul knew of situations where it was not beneficial (verse 15).