

News & Notes

Sunday, September 25, 2005

Remember in Prayer: Al Albertson, Mary Albertson's son; Kevin Bennett was in a motorcycle accident; Margaret Bennett; Melba Cox; Karen Craton; Sally Etta Crawford; Lawrence Dawson; Tommy Dawson; Flora Estes; Brenda Hodges; Carolyn Jordan; Mary Sue Kidd fell and broke her hip; Ruth Ann Long; Deliah Mann; Howard Moody; Junior Roberson; Janet Rooker; Caleb Smith; Jayme and Trucilla Spence, parents of Edna Ray; Jon Street; Austin Simpson; Ruby Street; Arthur Swanson; Calvin and Ollie Ursery; Lee Walls; James Willbanks; Alvie and Louise Williford; William Wilson, Mary William's father;

Pantry item for the month of September is paper towels.

There will be a **ladies day** at the Chapman congregation on Saturday, October 1, 2005. Registration begins at 9:00 AM.

The Tiplersville congregation is celebrating their **100th anniversary** with special events on Sunday, October 16, 2005.

Sermon In Preview:

AM: Some Moral Directions (Hebrews 13:1-6)

PM: Preaching Through 3John

For the Record (September 18, 2005):

Attendance: 66 Contribution: \$941.00 Budget: \$1205.00

The Ashland Church of Christ

P. O. Box 25
Ashland, MS 38603-0025
ashlandcoc@juno.com

Sunday:

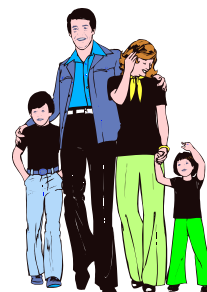
Bible Study 9:30 AM
Worship 10:30 AM
Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday:

Bible Study 7:00 PM

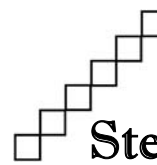
Shepherds:

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).*



Steps to Salvation: REPENT

Jeremy Northrop

The writer of the book of Hebrews chastised the first readers in their spiritual growth. He said, "For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Hebrews 5:12-14). The challenge for the Hebrews was to leave the first principles and grow on to maturity. In fact, the writer encourages such in the first part of chapter six. Some of the elementary principles as given by the inspired writer included things like repentance, baptism, and the resurrection of the dead. While it is true that the salvation of mankind is one of the first-principles, it is also good to examine the subject from time to time in order to be reminded of the biblical truths in regard to the matter.

The Bible clearly teaches a plan by which man can be saved. One must hear the word of God (Romans 10:17). Next, one must believe what he or she has heard (Hebrews 11:6). Then, the person must repent of their sins (Acts 2:38). Fourth, he or she must confess that same belief in Christ (Romans 10:9). Next, the person

must be baptized for the remission of his or her sins (Galatians 3:27). Finally, one must remain faithful to the word of God and the cause of Christ (Acts 14:21-22). The third step of salvation — repentance — will serve as the focus of this article.

In Ezekiel 14:6, the prophet encouraged the citizens of Israel to repent of the sin that existed in their lives. He said, “Therefore say to the house of Israel, ‘Thus says the Lord God: ‘Repent, turn away from your idols, and turn your faces away from all your abominations.’” In this case, repentance meant a turning or the stopping of an action. Ezekiel was encouraging them to quit worshipping their idols and practicing things which are contrary to the will of God. In 2Corinthians 7, Paul writes of repentance. It seems in a previous letter of Paul’s to the Corinthians he spoke of some concerns he had for the way in which they were living. This led them to feel sorry for the way they were acting but Paul said they were not sorry enough. He said they were only sorry for a while (vs. 8). He then explains how to repent in a biblical way: “For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death” (vs. 10). John the baptizer further speaks of repentance and proclaims that repentance must be seen in action (Matthew 3:7-10). It is not enough for one to simply say that he or she is sorry or that he or she feels bad for a given sinful action. The fruits of that kind of thought must be seen in action. “Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance” (Matthew 3:8). The baptism John was performing for various ones was one of the signs of their repentance.

There are several biblical examples of repentance and what it entailed in certain situations. The first example is about the apostle Paul in Acts 22-23. Paul was standing before the commander and the centurion and they were about to scourge Paul because of his dedication to Christ. They learn in the incident Paul was a Roman citizen by birth and no longer willing to scourge him. The next day Paul was brought to the Sanhedrin and he makes a claim of sincerity by saying, “Then Paul, looking earnestly at the council, said, ‘Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.’” Paul lived like he lived in sincerity of heart. He did not realize he was doing wrong. Repentance is seen in the life of Paul when he changed his actions. He went from being the

persecutor to being the persecuted. When he learned the right way to live, he changed his actions accordingly.

In Acts 16, there is recorded the conversion of the jailor in Philippi. Paul and Silas were imprisoned for casting out the spirit of divination in a slave girl. They were singing songs of praise to God while in prison. While they were singing, an earthquake occurred making it possible for Paul and Silas to escape. When the jailor heard of this, he was willing to take his own life. Paul and Silas stopped him and taught him about the spiritual salvation which comes from God. Actions showing the jailor’s repentance is seen in Acts 16:33, “And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized.” He felt bad for what he had done to them and helped them to heal by washing their wounds.

In 1Corinthians 6:9-10, Paul writes of such sins as adultery, homosexuality, and extortion. In verse 11 he says, “And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.” The Corinthians were these things but are these things no longer. Again, one can see fruits worthy of repentance. They changed their sinful actions into righteous actions. Repentance, from the standpoint of salvation, is to stop doing something sinful and to make right what is wrong.

There are several New Testament passages exhorting people today to repent of their sinful actions. God used to tolerate certain sinful things but now wants all men to repent (Acts 17:11). Christ commanded that repentance and the remission of sins are to be preached to all people. He wanted this work to begin at Jerusalem and continue throughout the entire world (Luke 24:44-48). The book of Acts outlines certain events which took place in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the entire world. Today, preaching of repentance continues so that people will know God’s desire for their lives. God promises great rewards to those who will repent of their actions and live their lives to the will of God. “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance” (2Peter 3:9).

“Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand” (Matthew 4:17a).