

News & Notes

Sunday, September 4, 2005

Remember in Prayer: Al Albertson, Mary Albertson's son; 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, father 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.

The **monthly singing** at Briarcrest Extended Care is today at 4:30 PM. Please make plans to come.

The monthly **prayer meeting** is today at 5:00 PM.

Today is the last day to give anything to the **hurricane relief effort** located at Webster's parking lot.

Sermon In Preview: Focus on the Family:

AM: The Home and Its Priorities

PM: Things Which Destroy the Home: Divorce

For the Record (August 28, 2005):

Attendance: 71 Contribution: \$1272.00 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:

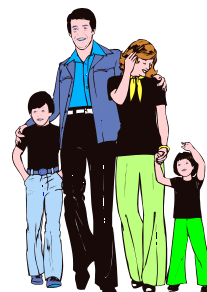
Bible Study 7:00 PM

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).*

Proverbs 22:6

Jeremy Northrop

In Proverbs 22:6 the Bible says, "Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it." This is a verse which is often cited at various occasions and for various reasons. The goal of this article is not simply to cite it or give it a mere passing but rather to dig deeply and learn the meaning of the passage so that it can have practical applications in the lives of Christians today. Often times when a person sees an unruly child or an adult child who is not faithful, they will immediately run to this passage blaming the parents for the behavior of the child. While this may sometimes be the accurate case, it is not unconditionally the case. There are occasions when the parents do everything right and the child still does not grow up to be as he or she should. The proverbs are general rules, not infallible facts. That being the case, one must be careful not to go to the opposite extreme. Very often, it is the case that the faults of a child are simply evidences of the failures of parents.

Another criticism that is usually brought up concerning this verse involves privacy. People do not generally like to be told to change things concerning their family. The idea is an "I'll run my family as I see fit and you run your family as you see fit" adage. People will often have a tolerance type of attitude agreeing to leave others alone in their family if others will leave them alone. The bottom line is this: The Bible speaks extensively of parenting. Thus, the Christian would be in error if he or she did not agree to all the Bible says (Acts 20:27). A preacher who does not preach on

parenting and the family is a preacher who fails in his duties. A Christian who wants to ignore sharing the principles given in the Bible concerning parenting and family is again a Christian who fails in his or her duties. Besides all of this, it is very detrimental to anyone to ignore the Bible or the sound teaching on any subject. It is a sign of ignorance and immaturity. It could very well be a sign of arrogance. In any case, it is not a sign of humility or godliness.

There is not a reasonable person on Earth who would say he or she wants their children to grow up and be failures. People want their children to succeed in life. Generally, people want to give their children more than they had and want their children to have an easier time in life than they had. To see this, one need only look at history. Head start schools have started because people want to give their children a 'jump-start' so they can do better in school. Extra-curricular activities are in an all-time abundance and are designed to help a child socially, physically, and in other ways all of which will help in the person's overall success. Generally, people understand the principles of training a child academically, physically, and even socially. Sadly, the pattern does not seem to have worked its way into religion.

Yet, when the writer of Proverbs said that children need to be trained, he was not speaking of school, sports, or friendship. He was speaking of spiritual matters. How sad it is to see people put a huge amount of focus and time into helping their children in school and not even seeming to care about religion. If a child were in the fifth grade but only reading on a third grade level, then interventions would be put in place to help the child to catch up. The same is not done in the church setting. There is a real problem when teenagers who are Christians cannot explain why the church does not have mechanical instruments of music in her worship or why baptism is essential to salvation. Parents see the problem but do not seem to want to do anything about it.

In 1Samuel 1, the Bible speaks of a young lady by the name of Hannah. Hannah was barren and very disappointed that she was not able to give birth to a son. She prayed and told God that if He would grant her a son, then she would return that son to God by raising him to be a servant of God. God granted her request and Hannah gave Samuel back to the service of God. Hannah could not have kept her promise by simply hoping that her son would grow

up to serve God. She had to make a conscience concerted effort to make sure she would keep her promise to God. She trained the child while he was young so that he would not forget God when he was older. The church today needs parents who will do what Hannah did—raise their children to fear God and live for Him.

Implicitly, one of the conclusions made from Proverbs 22:6 is that there is a right and wrong way to raise children. Many people today want to appeal to relativism and tolerance by saying there is no right and wrong way to do things but simply a matter of opinion with the individual. Such is not the case. When the inspired writer said, "train up a child in the way that he should go..." then one can know for certain there is a way that he should not go. One can know and apply biblical principles which will help his or her children to live righteously from childhood on into adulthood. Lois and Eunice taught Timothy from childhood and Paul noted this method to be good for Timothy (2Timothy 1:5, 3:15).

Finally, from Proverbs 22:6, one can learn there are good consequences when a parent is concerned about the rearing of his or her child. When a child is taught to remember God in his or her youth, then he or she is less likely to forget God in adulthood. "Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, Before the difficult days come, And the years draw near when you say, 'I have no pleasure in them'" (Ecclesiastes 12:1). Some experts say as a general rule, most habits a person will develop in life will be learned within the first 12 years of life. If that is generally true, then it stands to reason if kids are going to be faithful Christians in adulthood, then they need to be taught how by example and action while they are young. Too many parents try to put off the teaching of young children saying they are too young to get anything out of worship. This simply is not the case. The children learn the habits of life. Besides that, these parents are inconsistent with such teaching in that they do not express the same desires or concerns about sporting events, family outings, or a host of other things which go on in the child's life. The plea of the Bible is to steer a person's focus to the more important matters of life—spiritual matters. If a person is not successful in those areas of life, then it will make a terrible difference in eternity. "For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matthew 16:26).