

News & Notes

Sunday, July 23, 2006

Remember in Prayer: Sandra Alberson; Vikie Cobb; Diane Cox; Sally Etta Crawford; Flora Estes; Marie Hall; Carrol Holmes; Marilyn Hubbard; Carolyn Jordan; Christine Judge; Dot Ketchum; Mark Linning; James Luna; John and Deliah Mann; Diane Mize; Howard Moody; Janet Rooker; Ruth Ross; Freddie Shaw; Lillie Mae Shelby; Floy Simpson; Jayme and Trucilla Spence; Calvin Ursery; James Williams; Alvie Williford;

Pantry item for the month of July is school supplies.

Our hearts rejoice over the **baptisms** of Summer Akin and Dezeray Anderson this past Sunday. Let us do all we can to encourage these two young ladies in their decision to obey their Lord.

Area events: Lectureship at Chapman on July 30-August 2; The annual POWER lectures in Southaven will be on July 30 to August 3rd; Area wide youth devotional at Chapman on August 20 @ 6:00 PM.

Sermon In Preview:

AM: Guest Speaker: Todd Sanderson

PM: Guest Speaker: Todd Sanderson

For the Record (July 16, 2005):

Attendance: 84 Contribution: \$1161.00 Budget: \$1352.00

The Ashland Church of Christ

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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



ASHLAND ANNOUNCER

"I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:14)

Will You Stand?

Russ Earl

In Jeremiah 20:7-8, the discouraged and downhearted prophet prayed to his heavenly Master. The Lord had encouraged him to become a prophet in earlier times. Unsure at first, he later came into the prophetic position with confidence of heart and soul. Yet, it seemed by doing such work, he only brought daily ridicule and continuous scoffing upon himself. He was nothing more than a fool to those he sought to teach. Jeremiah was not lifeless in his message. He delivered it in an energetic, fervent style with the fury of a passionate prophet on fire for the Lord. The great unpopularity of his message caused him to be viewed as a hindrance by others, just as men of God's word are often viewed today.

If you continue to read to verse nine, you'll see that at this point the prophet felt he wanted to return to his private way of life. If he did follow through with such an action, he would no longer speak the words with which the heavenly Father entrusted him! This was something that he would realize was easier said than done. God's word was not an ineffective force in his life. It was the opposite. God's word was as "a burning fire shut up in my bones" (Jeremiah 20:9). He realized he could no longer restrain it. The words he was given had to be spoken! They had to break out from his heart, for the word of God would not allow him to stop the saving message.

We see how the attitude and frame of mind of the prophet changes in the verses to follow. The insulting plans and the vicious strategies of his declared adversaries no longer frightened him. No longer are his enemies just hateful in the verbal sense. Now they

are out to annihilate him. We see in verse 10 how in their cruel circles they encouraged each other to keep an evil eye of study upon him.

His familiar friends were against him and sought to destroy him. "All my familiars watched for my halting" (Jeremiah 20:10)! His friends spoke well of him to his face, but when his back was turned, they thrust daggers into it as they impatiently awaited his stumbling. We too find ourselves of similar situations. We are persecuted, laughed at, spoken against, and betrayed just as Jeremiah was — just as Christ was!

In verse 11, we read of his trust in the rock that is our Lord, "But the LORD is with me as a mighty terrible one" (Jeremiah 20:11). We too should look to the Lord, our rock of salvation and "our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Psalm 46:1).

We see how God has protected the assaulted Prophet. His vengeance brought on Jeremiah's enemies would be a fearful weight for them. So the question here is this: when we are being spoken badly of, laughed at, made into a laughing stock, what will our reaction be? What will your reaction be? Will your reaction be as Jeremiah's? Will it be of fierce dedication that couldn't be shaken, or will we be beaten down like gravel on a pathway? Will you stand strong on God's word, believing and knowing that if you do so, he will deliver you from such enemies, and that they will reap what they have sown. For this writer, when these words are read, they are of great encouragement. We see how God puts His word in us as a burning fire. Words that cannot be held in. Words that must be preached no matter the outcome. Words that must be taught no matter the opinions of others.

We see the protection that God provides to the faithful. Did he say we wouldn't be attacked? No. "As sheep in the midst of wolves" (Matthew 10:16), we are sent to preach the gospel. If we are faithful and do the will of the Father, we will receive our reward of eternal life with Him.

So how will you stand? Will you be able to stand as Jeremiah did, or "will you also go away" (John 6:67)?

A farmer made a sign advertising some puppies he had for sale. As he was nailing the sign to the post in his yard, he felt a tug on his overalls. He looked down and saw a little boy with a big grin and something in his hand.

"Mister," he said, "I want to buy one of your puppies."

The farmer replied, "These puppies come from fine parents and cost a great deal of money."

The boy dropped his head for a moment, looked back up at the farmer, and said, "I've got 39 cents. Is that enough to take a look?"

"Sure," said the farmer. Then he whistled and called out: "Dolly! Come here, Dolly!"

Out from the doghouse and down the ramp ran Dolly, followed by four little balls of fur. The little boy's eyes lit up with glee. Then out from the doghouse came another little furry ball, but this one was much smaller. Down the ramp it slipped in a feeble attempt to catch up with the others. It hobbled because it was born with two badly deformed hind legs.

The little boy looked at the puppy and said, "I want that puppy."

The farmer knelt down and said: "Son, you don't want that puppy. He will never be able to run and play like the other little dogs."

The little boy reached down and slowly pulled up one leg of his pants. He revealed a steel brace attached to a specially made shoe. He looked up at the farmer and said, "Mister, I'll never be able to run with the other boys either, and that little puppy will need somebody who understands."

Beloved, in like manner we have someone who understands how life can very difficult for us at time. We have one who knows the struggles we go through. The Hebrew writer declared, "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:15-16).

-Tom Moore