

News & Notes

Sunday, June 24, 2007

Remember in Prayer: Daryl Alberson; Mary Alberson; Steve Alberson Vikie Cobb; Diane Cox; Melba Cox; Sally Etta Crawford; Gwynn Curtis; Lettie Mae Hunt; Janie Hurt Dot Ketchum; Tate King; Raymond Limming; James Luna; John and Deliah Mann; Diane Mize; Rob Norman; Shirley Ortiz; Forest and Cindy Phelps; Chris Spence; Jamie Spence; Ruby Tapp; Ron Tega; Calvin Ursery; Nancy Griffin Wamack; Mike Westmoreland; Alvie Williford;

Sympathy is extended to the families of Pauline Britt and Raymond Limming.

Pantry item for the month of June is frosting.

Ashland events: Today: Pot-luck after evening service; July 15-19: Evangelism Seminar with Don Underwood;

Area events: June 24-28: Gospel meeting at the North Green Street church of Christ in Tupelo, Mississippi with Steven Thompson;

Sermon in Preview:

AM: Getting Too Close to the Edge (2Corinthians 6:17)

PM: Last-Sunday-of-the-month singing

For the Record (June 17, 2007):

Attendance: 80 Contribution: \$1240.00 Budget: \$1326.00

The Ashland Church of Christ

P. O. Box 25
Ashland, MS 38603-0025

www.ashlandcoc.org

acoc@ashlandcoc.org

Sunday:

Bible Study 9:30 AM

Worship 10:30 AM

Worship 5:00 PM

Wednesday:

Bible Study 7:00 PM

Shepherds:

Barney King
Carrol Street

spreading the Good News
Ashland Announcer

"GO THEREFORE AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS..." (MATTHEW 28:19)

Upon What "Rock" Did Jesus Build His Church? Did Peter Lead Heaven, Or Heaven Lead Peter?

Troy M. Cummings

Matthew 16:18,19 is a tremendously important passage of Scripture, for several reasons. In this passage, Matthew records,

"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Most religious people know that the Roman Catholic Church believes that Jesus here said that He would build His church upon the apostle Peter as the "rock" foundation.

In the text Peter is called "Petros," (Πέτρος - Greek) a masculine gender Greek noun with a literal meaning of "rock" or "stone" that is, a detached piece of rock, either small or up to a good size chunk of rock. But in the passage Jesus did not say that He would build His church upon this

masculine stone or chunk of rock, Peter; instead, in the original language there is a sharp contrast between Peter (“stone”) and the large layer, bedrock, or foundation rock, or even mountain of rock, the feminine gender Greek noun *petra* (πέτρα - Greek). Liddell and Scott Greek Lexicon states (p. 1176): “There is no example in good authors of *petra*, in the signification of *petros*, for a single stone...” *Petra* is defined by L.&S.: “a ledge or shelf of rock.”

The apostle Matthew wrote his Gospel in Greek, and when his Greek readers read it here is the impression they received (as best we can express it in English): “You are *Petros* a masculine stone or piece of rock, and upon this large feminine bedrock or layer or shelf or foundation rock, (*Petra*), I will build my church.” Greek readers of Matthew would instantly see the sharp contrast that Jesus was making, and would never think that Jesus was saying that He would build His church upon Peter.

A learned effort has been made to destroy the force of this clear Greek truth by saying that Jesus was speaking the Aramaic language, and that Aramaic makes no distinction between the two kinds of rock, using the one Aramaic word *kepha*. In the first place, it is agreed worldwide that the original manuscripts of our New Testament are in the Greek language, not Aramaic. The Holy Spirit inspired the New Testament writers to write in the Greek, and in Matthew 16:18 the Greek makes a sharp distinction and contrast in the use of words. Did the Holy Spirit make a mistake in the Greek in Matthew 16:18? Certainly not. Even if Jesus was speaking Aramaic, we can depend upon the Holy Spirit not to make a mistake when he moved Matthew to record it in Greek.

The general teaching of the New Testament, properly understood, prohibits the idea that Jesus built His church upon a mere human being, who sinned conspicuously at least twice. The great bedrock foundation upon which Jesus built His church was the monumental truth or fact which Peter had just confessed, as recorded in Matthew 16:13-19. And that foundation truth is the divine Son-ship of Jesus Christ. Nothing less can be the foundation for God’s indestructible spiritual kingdom.

As for verse 19, most English translations do not bring out the full and exact force of the original Greek. The English “whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven’ and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven,” does not show the sharp contrast in the Greek of these statements. Very literally the Greek reads: “whatever you may bind upon the earth shall be having been bound in the heavens, and whatever you may loose upon the earth shall be having been loosed in the heavens.” To bring out more smoothly in modern English the thought in the Greek, the translation would be: “whatever you may bind upon the earth will be what has already been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose upon the earth will be what has already been loosed in heaven.” There is much difference in meaning between the aorist active subjunctive (“may bind” and “may loose”) and the future perfect passive periphrastic participles (“shall be having been bound,” etc.). Clearly Jesus is saying: Peter you may bind only what heaven has previously bound, and you may loose only what heaven has previously loosed. Heaven leads, and you, Peter, follow. You will be our inspired spokesman to bind or loose as we have determined beforehand.

The entire teaching of the New Testament confirms this understanding of these vital truths in Matthew 16:18, 19.