

News & Notes

Sunday, April 26, 2009

Remember in Prayer: Arland Anderson; Robbie Alberson; Mary Bailey; Blaire Chapman; Freeman Duncan; Sherry Fewell; Shannon Hastings; Diana Hayes; Billy Hudspoth; Dot Ketchum; John and Deliah Mann; Ryan Miskelly; Diane Mize; Alva Powell; Ann Ray; Brandon Ray; Toni Smith; Calvin Ursery; Alvie Williford;

Pantry item for the month of May is Purex liquid laundry detergent.

If you would like **audio CDs** of the Homecoming 2009 lessons by Eddie Lawson, please see Jeff Roberson.

Ashland Events: Today: Periodic singing at Briarcrest Extended Care at 4:00 PM.

Area Events: Today: Spring bring at the Chapman congregation; May 10: Youth Night at the Chapman congregation; May 16: Ladies day at Southaven;

Sermon in Preview:

AM: Apostle Profile: Peter
PM: Apostle Profile: Andrew

For the Record (April 26, 2008):

Attendance: 73 Contribution: \$1402.00 Budget: \$1459.00

The Ashland Church of Christ

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Sunday:

Bible Study 9:30 AM
Worship 10:30 AM
Worship 5:00 PM

Wednesday:

Bible Study 7:00 PM

Shepherds:

Barney King
Jeff Roberson
Carrol Street

ASHLAND ANNOUNCER

"Note Those Who So Walk"

Philippians 3:17

2Thessalonians 3:14

"Note Those Who So Walk"

Abraham and Sara —

Faith is Trusting God

Hebrews 11:8-12

Jeremy Northrop

Hebrews 11 begins with a description of faith: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (verse 1). Then, in verse 2 and following, the writer gives many examples of men and women who had great faith. These were men and women who applied the principle set forth in verse one. Among those people, Abraham and Sarah are mentioned. Hebrews 11:8-12 describes their faith:

By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised. Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born as many as the stars of the

sky in multitude--innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.

Among other things, this portion of scripture teaches faith is about obedience. There are many misconceptions about obedience in the religious world today; many of which can be cleared up in this section of scripture. The child of God is to obey God regardless of the consequences. Abraham did such and the writer of Hebrews records it as an example of great faith to those who believe today.

First, obedience to God should be done even when the child of God does not know everything about it. Often times, people today want to know why. Some of the common statements ring loudly: "Why does God require baptism?" "Why did God only establish one church?" "Why does God allow the innocent to suffer?" There was a lot that Abraham did not know when God called him to leave Ur (Genesis 12:1-3). The passage under consideration says that Abraham "obey...not knowing where he was going."

Another example of his great obedience was that Abraham and Sarah continued to obey even in less-than-accommodating circumstances. The text says that "he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents...." This is further emphasized by the fact that he did such with his children and grandchildren. So many today want to live in the area in which they grew up. Even if they move away, they like to own land and 'put down roots.' This was not the case for Abraham. He moved to a land that was foreign to him and raised a family in that land. More than that, he dwelt in temporary living quarters. The text describes them as tents.

How did Abraham and Sarah do it? How did they live as 'strangers in a strange land?' How did they rear a family in tents? They did it by faith. They never lost sight of the goal. When God called Abraham to leave his home land, He also made a promise: Genesis 12:2-3 records the promise God made to Abraham:

I will make you a great nation;
I will bless you

And make your name great;
And you shall be a blessing.
I will bless those who bless you,
And I will curse him who curses you;
And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

Abraham and Sarah were able to trust God who always keeps His promises.

In fact, they dwelt in this land in this circumstance for 100 years. Genesis 12:3 says he was 75 years old when God called him to leave Ur. Genesis 25:7 explains that he was 175 year old when he died in Canaan. Thus the faith of Abraham is seen in the longevity of the time he spent in the foreign land. Today, it seems so many want God to answer prayer immediately. Or, it may be they want the promises of God fulfilled sooner than God has decided to do so. The faith of Abraham and Sarah is seen in the fact that they never gave up on God. They dwelled even 100 years in the foreign land.

The writer of Hebrews shows another example of the great faith of Abraham and Sarah. They were able to have a child in their old age. Both of them were past the age of being able to procreate (see Romans 4:19). In fact, Abraham wanted the promise to be fulfilled in Ishmael (Genesis 17:18). The book of Genesis also says that both Abraham and Sarah initially laughed at God when He informed them that Sarah would have a child past the age of childbearing (Genesis 17:17, 18:12). Of course, God kept His promise and Isaac was born to them in their old age (Genesis 21:1-3). The writer of Hebrews says Isaac came to them by faith. How many do not believe God will keep His promises. Some have given up on the Second Coming. Yet, this and all other promises that He has made will come to pass.

Today, Christians can learn from this godly couple about having genuine faith. Christians need to show their faith by obeying God even when they do not know what is going to happen or why things happen the way they do. Further, they need to obey even in the most dire circumstances and throughout their lives. Finally, Christians need to trust in God by living for Him every day.