

News & Notes

Sunday, December 6, 2009

Remember in Prayer: Arland Anderson; Mary Baily; Kian Boswell; Sue Daniels; Avery Frazer; Ron Gerry; James Grogan; Twyla Hanisco; Dot Ketchum; Dallas King; John and Deliah Mann; Carl Perkins; Lowell Poff; Ann Ray; Curtis Ray; Edna Ray; Katherine Shaw; Calvin Ursery; Joan Wilkerson; Alvie Williford;

Sympathy is extended to the family of Ron Gerry.

Pantry item for the month of December is cooking oil.

If you would like an **audio CD** of the lessons delivered by the young men, order forms are available in the foyer.

If there are any concerns about **changing the meeting time of the Wednesday evening Bible class**, please see the elders.

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

Sermon in Preview:

AM: David's Mighty Men: Adino (2Samuel 23:8)

PM: David's Mighty Men: Eleazar (2Samuel 23:9-10)

For the Record (November 29, 2009):

Attendance: 79 Contribution: \$1298.00 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

Judas — Betraying Christ

Jeremy Northrop

An apostle is one sent with a purpose. Specifically, Jesus chose 14 men to be His apostles in the first century. He started with 12, was betrayed by one, appointed another in his place, and appointed a fourteenth to be an apostle. Most of the apostles are perhaps famous in reference to biblical character but one is infamous. There are people today who have been named after some of the apostles but where is the person named after Judas? Judas is perhaps known by all, even the biblically ignorant, as the one who betrayed Jesus.

In fact, there is history in a name. The name Judas itself carries with it some serious negative baggage. Many use the metaphoric terms Judas goat or Judas kiss. The name itself is historically aligned with deception. The reason for such is because of the deception Judas himself performed with Christ. In the end, Judas is forever known as the one who betrayed Christ.

It might not be the most pleasurable thing to think about but do Christians today have anything in common with Judas? Many might quickly answer in the negative. No one wants to have anything in common with a traitor! However, a closer examination of the life of Judas might reveal some startling truths with some people. The question could be reframed: Have Christians ever professed their Christianity for their own personal gain? What about the businessman who announced his allegiance to Christ so that he would get the deal of another religious

person? What about the teenager who comes to services for the date they may be interested in? What about the preacher who preaches for his own enticement and glory? In truth, these people are just like Judas. They are people who use Christ for their own personal gain. So, do people today have anything in common with Judas? There are several things which can be noticed.

Judas was chosen to be an apostle. Luke 6:16 lists Judas among the other apostles: “Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot who also became a traitor.” In fact, the various lists of apostles in the Bible all have Judas as part of them. While the details of his conversion to Christ are not explained, he was chosen by Christ to be His follower. He was chosen to be a witness to Christ (Matthew 10:5-15; Acts 1:8). He was sent to preach and teach, to heal the sick, and to cast out demons (Luke 10:17-20). John 12:6 says Judas was put in charge of the treasury. If his dishonesty and deception had been clear in the beginning, he would not have been chosen and certainly would not have been put in charge of the money. Initially, he was a good man, a man with promise, a man chosen by Christ to do His will.

Just like Judas, Christians today are called — called by the gospel (2Thessalonians 2:14). Christians today are given responsibilities to teach the lost (Matthew 28:18-20), care for the less fortunate (Galatians 6:10), and encourage one another in the pathway of righteousness (Hebrews 3:13). Just like Judas, Christians are called and given responsibilities.

Just like Judas, Christians today are human and thus tempted with sin. While the Bible does not directly state that Judas was at one time good, it does indicate implicitly that he was. Jesus would not have called him if he were bad or evil. Yet, the life of Judas does teach us that sin itself can be very, very addictive in nature. The attitude of Judas displayed in John 12:6 shows such: “This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it.” He probably did care for the poor at one time but as sin took its toll, he ended up caring about no one but himself. Sin always starts out ‘small.’ David’s sin with Bathsheba started out as looking and lusting after her. Peter denied Christ initially and ended up denying him even with swearing. The greed of Judas

started out as petty theft but ended with the betrayal of Christ for 30 pieces of silver. Sin starts small but slowly hardens the heart of an individual to the point they have no heart at all!

Just like Judas, many Christians today might feel remorse for the sins they commit. Matthew 27:3-10 says the saddest news of all about Judas. He felt remorse, even tried to give back the 30 pieces of silver he was given, and finally went out and hanged himself because of the remorse that he felt. The saddest part of the life of Judas is knowing that it did not have to be like that. He could have repented and made things right. The forgiveness of God is such that Judas could have been forgiven but because he killed himself, he is assigned to a Devil’s Hell.

In the previous chapter (Matthew 26), the account is given of Peter’s betrayal. Interestingly, Peter was ready to die for Christ because he pulled out his sword ready to defend Jesus (verse 51). Verse 47 says that a great multitude came with swords and clubs. What is a great multitude compared to Jesus and His 11 men? Indeed, Peter was ready to die. Yet, when he learned that Jesus was not going to fight this battle, something interesting changed in Peter. He denied even knowing Christ (verses 69-75). He even denied with swearing (verse 74). It seems Peter was ready to die for Christ but was not ready to live for Christ.

That is not the end for Peter, though. It was Peter who preached the gospel sermon in Acts 2 converting 3000 souls. It was Peter who went on to be an elder in the church. It was Peter who wrote the two books of the New Testament which bear his name. In actuality, the denial of Peter and betrayal of Judas are very similar sins. They both turned on Jesus when He needed them. Yet, Peter was able to repent and move on while Judas just could not live with himself. He could not forgive himself. Are there people (even Christians) today who will not convert or be faithful because of their past sins? One can almost hear the rhetorical “I could not be a Christian because God could never forgive me for what I have done.”

Do Christians today have anything in common with Judas? Both are called by Christ. Both are given responsibilities. Both are human and susceptible to sin. Of course, the one great difference is that not all Christians have denied Christ.