

## News & Notes

Sunday, April 4, 2010

**Remember in Prayer:** Robbie Alberson; Tommy Alberson; Mary Baily; James Brewer; Teddy Bryant; Sherri Fewels; Marie Hall; Calprettina Judge; David Judge; Doretha Judge; Dot Ketchum; John and Deliah Mann; Wilma May; Lowell Poff; Ann Ray; Curtis Ray; Wendy Rickman; Vera Roberson; Joan Wilkerson; Edsell and Martha Williford;

**Pantry item** for the month of April is light bulbs.

**Shirley Judge** responded to the Lord's invitation asking for forgiveness and prayers.

**Ashland Events:** Today: Periodic singing at Briarcrest Extended Care at 4:00 PM; April 25: Ashland homecoming 2010;

**Area Events:** April 10: Area-wide singing at the East Shelby congregation in Collierville at 3:00 PM; April 24: Teacher's workshop at the Northport church of Christ in Northport, Alabama beginning at 9:00 AM;

### Sermon in Preview:

AM: Guest speaker

PM: Guest speaker

### For the Record (March 28, 2010):

Attendance: 76      Contribution: \$1451.00      Budget: \$1388.00

### 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 6:30 PM

#### Shepherds:

Barney King

Jeff Roberson

Carrol Street

# ASHLAND ANNOUNCER

## A YEAR OF REMEMBRANCE

*"Remind them of these things..." (2Timothy 2:14)*

## Easter and the Christian

Jeremy Northrop

Easter is a day which is nationally recognized in the United States. More than that, it is a globally acknowledged holiday. Many families spend time together on Easter. Many children are given new clothes and candy as gifts. Traditions such as egg hunting, photographs with bunnies, and holiday meals are observed by many families on this holiday.

More than these secular observances, many people observe Easter religiously as a day to celebrate the resurrection of Christ. Religious attendance on a national scale will be heightened Easter Sunday more than most Sundays of the year. While many take this religious holiday for granted simply observing it out of tradition, some question the observance of this holiday religiously. What does the Bible say about Easter? Should New Testament Christians celebrate it religiously? Should congregations of the Lord's church have special services in observance of the Lord's resurrection? What should the Christian's attitude be toward this and other cultural religious holidays? There are several concerns which ought to be noted.

Certainly the resurrection of Christ is a biblical theme. Acts 1:3 provides three proofs of the resurrection of Christ: "...to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." First, he presented Himself by many infallible proofs. Then, He was seen for 40 days. Finally, He spoke of the church. This and other passages concerning the resurrection need to be preached and taught by Christians today. Though the resurrection of Christ is a

biblical topic, there are still some concerns about Easter.

One of the adages of the New Testament church today is to “speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent.” This principle is biblical in light of 1Peter 4:11,

If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

2Timothy 4:2 says to “Preach the word!” Yet, the Bible says nothing about Easter Sunday. Thus, to bind a religious observance of any holiday would be a violation of these biblical exhortations. God knows what is best for His children (Jeremiah 10:23) and has put certain observances in place for them (Matthew 26:26-30; Mark 14:12-21; Luke 22:14-23; 1Corinthians 11:23-26).

Some have argued that Christians are to remember the resurrection of Christ weekly in the taking of communion. However, the taking of communion is to remember the death of Christ, not His resurrection. The bread represents the body of Christ. The grape juice represents the blood which was shed for all. According to Acts 20:7 this is done on the first day of the week. When Jesus instituted this supper in the passages previously cited, He said to eat the bread and drink the cup “in remembrance” of Him. He focused on His death in the institution of the supper. Paul said when Christians take the Lord’s Supper, they “proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes” (1Corinthians 11:26). While thinking on the death of Christ might conjure thoughts of His resurrection, the primary purpose of Lord’s Supper is to remember His death.

Another concern which needs to be considered in light of religious holidays such as Easter is the biblical topic of hypocrisy. Jesus spoke about the sin of hypocrisy in His Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 7:2-5). Hypocrisy is seen more in the religious observance of holidays than in many other aspects of physical

life. As previously mentioned, the attendance of many religious groups — sadly even among the churches of Christ — increases on Easter Sunday. Many people will not attend regularly throughout the year but attend on such days as Easter. It is deplorable to attend in religious observance of a holiday which is not authorized while not attending assemblies which are authorized. God demands more assemblies than just the one and demands His children attend all the worship services of the church (Hebrews 10:25). The truth is that those who attend only around holidays show their own spiritual weakness and lack of biblical knowledge. This hypocrisy may also be seen in the final concern discussed in this article.

While many attend Easter Sunday, often the people are dressed in new spring clothes. Mothers may have corsages pinned to their dresses. Often people talk extensively about their new clothes and even the candy they received because of the holiday. Sadly, these new items become the focus of the day when these same people would have others believe the day is about the resurrection of Christ. Many who do not regularly attend worship services will attend Easter Sunday. Sadly, these same people often explain they came because it would please their family. In explaining such, they reveal more than they ever thought they were explaining. They reveal they are in attendance for the wrong reasons. They are there for family and not for God. These actions take the emphasis off of God and His worship.

Some might argue some of the forgoing information saying that choosing to preach and teach on the resurrection of Christ on Easter Sunday is simply a choice of convenience. They say it is a good time to discuss the biblical topic as the culture is focused on it. There is a sincere concern here, however. The church should not be influenced by culture; rather the church is to influence culture. The church is the special people of God (Titus 2:14). The church is not to be like the world (Romans 12:2). It makes no sense to be influenced by the denominational world or western culture when Christ commissioned His people to go into the world and teach them. Christ called His people out of the world (John 15:19). A religious observance of Easter defies biblical principles held dear by Christians.