

Gospel Power



“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation...” (Romans 1:16)

The Gospel Power is published in interest of New Testament Christianity and to enhance the work of the Anderson church.

Anderson church of Christ
5900 Highway 207
Anderson, Alabama

Visit Us On The Web
Anderson-church.org

Men Priviledged To Serve:
Sunday, February 11th:

Bible Classes

Song Leader
..... Brian Word
Bible Reading (Lev. 21:1-9)
..... Steve Parker
Prayer
..... Claus Martel

Morning Worship

Song Leader
..... Brian Word
Prayer
..... Jimmy Glass
Lord's Supper
Presiding Scottie Goode
Assisting Ronnie Phillips
Serving Ethan Pressnell
..... Jacob Rogers
..... Trent Thornton
..... Jim Phillips
Closing Prayer
..... James Word

Evening Worship

Song Leader
..... Kevin Chancellor
Bible Reading (Lev. 21:10-15)
..... Rodney McCrary
Prayer
..... Rocky Rose
Lord's Supper
..... Scottie Goode
..... Ronnie Phillips
Closing Prayer
..... Michael Clemmons

Volume XIV

February 11, 2007

No. 6

The Committed Heart

Paul Earnhart

With Matthew 6:19-24, Jesus outlines His theme of the Christian's absolute love of God, but from a new direction. The first and fundamental threat to that love arises from self—the pride and arrogance which corrupt all our attempts at piety (6:1-18). Following closely upon the problem of ego is the challenge of “the world” — not the universe, or the people in it, but the “world” as a mindset, a system of values, a way of looking at life that treasures the present and the tangible above everything (Luke 12:15).

The section of the Sermon is a call to unreserved commitment in the choice between earth and heaven. Jesus begins by demonstrating why that commitment ought to be made to God and continues with two illustrations calculated to show the wretchedness and impossibility of trying to “ride the fence”.

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth...”

Jesus' warning about earthly treasures must not be trivialized into a prohibition of bank accounts or the mere possession of anything material. This admonition does not address the question of how much of this world's goods the kingdom citizen ought to possess but is concerned with his attitude toward them. The “treasures” of this text are understood to be whatever a man puts his whole heart into. They are not just things we value but things we value above all else. Our treasures and our persons become one.

Jesus' observations about the temporaries and uncertainty of such things as clothing, food and money constituted no news to His hearers. The world of our Lord's day was even more visibly fragile than our own. In their simple living conditions, rot and mildew, insect and worm attacked their storehouses with a vengeance and

their mud-brick walls offered no deterrent to thieves who could wipe out a lifetime overnight. Our modern refrigeration, closely guarded banks and casualty insurance often cause us to feel safely removed from the impermanence of the ancient world — but we should all know better. All “things” are subject to ultimate decay, the genius of man notwithstanding. It is impossible to secure material wealth against the ravages of time and circumstance. It is removed from us or we are separated from it (Ecclesiastes 6:13-15; Luke 12:20), and if we had it forever it would not bring us lasting satisfaction (Ecclesiastes 5:9-10; 6:7). Jesus means to protect us from the horror of seeing our whole lives go up in smoke (2 Peter 3:10).

It doesn't take much intellect to see that to rest one's very soul on such insubstantial vapor is an act of folly, but we must never underestimate the power of covetousness to turn our common sense into quivering jelly. We are living in an age which values men by the wealth they collect. It is madness, of course, but this spirit can breathe itself into us before we know it and suddenly we find ourselves mindlessly grubbing for “things” like all the rest. Materialism is destroying many disciples, some even while they are faithfully “going to church”. The charade continues but their heart is no longer in it. Prosperity has become the trial of those of us who live in what is perhaps the richest society in human history, and it is severe. Thomas Caryle once observed that for every ten men who can stand adversity there is one that can stand prosperity.

“...but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven...” This is not an exhortation to find a way to transfer the things we treasure on earth to a heavenly bank. If so, there is no information given about how to accomplish it. I once heard of a man whose love for his house and land, together with his premillennial speculations, moved him to seek a means of guaranteeing the return of his property when the Lord came to

establish His kingdom on the earth. The treasures of heaven are altogether of a different kind than those we might store up here.

Jesus' message is a simple one: “Learn to cherish the things of heaven, the things that have to do with your Father. Only these will last.” His call is not simply to a better and more lasting treasure but to a total allegiance, an absolute commitment. To have one's treasure in heaven simply means to submit oneself completely to that which is in heaven — God's sovereign rule (“Thy will be done...”). This is the theme that follows in the succeeding verses (Matthew 6:22-24). The key to understanding this whole section is found in Matthew 6:21: “where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also.” The Lord is far more concerned with what a man does with his heart than with what he does with his goods. Things are not our problem, God created them. An appreciation of things is not our problem. They have a God-given purpose. The love of things is our problem (1 Timothy 6:9-10) — the disposition to let some moth-eaten old garbage take the place of the incorruptible God in our hearts.

~via *College View Columns*; Florence, Alabama.



Gospel Meeting

March 25-30, 2007

(Sunday – Friday)

Mark W. White, Speaking

Anderson church of Christ

Highway 207 South
Anderson, Alabama

The Church's Purpose

Bill Hall

What is the purpose of the Lord's church? Is it to eradicate poverty, disease, social injustice, illiteracy from among men? Is it to bring about a cessation of war and conflict? Is it to campaign for a temptation-free society for Christians to live in?

If the church had as one of its great goals the eradication of disease, the Lord could have easily equipped it to accomplish that goal. Could not the same power that enabled one blind man to see have enabled all blind men to see; that enabled one lame man to walk have enabled all lame people to walk; that cured many people of varied diseases have cured all people of all diseases? And could not this same power have been given to the church in all generations?

If the church has as one of its great goals the eradication of poverty, the Lord could have easily equipped it to accomplish this purpose. After all, He fed the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes. He similarly fed four thousand on another occasion. Could not He who did these marvelous works have enabled His church in all generations to feed, clothe, and shelter the impoverished masses of the world through miraculous powers?

If the Lord had wanted His church to become a lobbyist group to apply political pressure toward a temptation and persecution-free society in which to live, He would have given instructions in that direction. He did not even lead His church into a direct effort to destroy slavery, but taught the Christian slave to be a better slave and the Christian master to treat his slaves as he would have his heavenly Master treat him (Colossians 3:22-4:1).

The church's purpose is to save souls and prepare people for eternity—It holds out to the impoverished the hope of some day walking a

street of gold; to the suffering a time when there will be no pain; to the sorrowing a moment when "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." It tells the tempted and persecuted that there is value in these afflictions, that the testing of their faith is "more precious than of gold," and to rejoice -- It tells all to live godly lives in whatever environment they find themselves. It seeks to change people through the power of the gospel, not society through the coercion of legislators -- Its weapons "are not carnal, but are mighty through God." Its motivating theme: "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

When churches become involved in hospital and health clinic work, or when they build schools for the education of their children, or when they see as one of their great missions to provide for the world's poverty, or when they feel obligated to create social upheaval and campaign for human rights, or when they feel called upon to express their views on the government's use of nuclear armaments or whatever, they have a distorted view of the purpose of the church.

-via *Charlottesville Beacon*; Charlottesville, Virginia

News & Notes

THE SICK: *Jonathan Keenon's father, Glen Keenon*, had surgery yesterday to repair some internal bleeding from his recent surgery. He is in the Decatur General Hospital in Decatur ... *Leota Springer's husband, Bob Springer*, spent a few days in the UAB hospital in Birmingham last week, but is now at home ... *Marla Clemmons* was sick this past week and was unable to be at services... *Ella Wallen* has been sick this past week... *Lawinda Keenon* has been sick this past week... *Donna Rose* was sick this past week and was unable to be at services... *Monroe Pressnell* has completed his treatments for his cancer... *Shelia Goode and Lou Ann*

Phillips' brother-in-law, Michael Olive, is continuing his radiation treatments ... *Myrtie Williams* is at home and not able to be out ... *Jack Tucker* is not able to be out ... *Faye Hammond* is at home ... *Judy Williams' mother, Flossie Kazzaire*, continues in a nursing facility in Fayette.

SYMPATHY: We want to extend our deepest sympathies to *James McConnell and all the family*, in the passing of James' father, *Albert McConnell*. He passed away on Wednesday and was buried on Friday.

BILL & CHARLOTTE HALL: Last week *Bill Hall* ended his time teaching classes here at Anderson. The last six months have flown by very quickly. I appreciate the work that Bill did in teaching here. The classes were very good and I have heard many good responses from the students. We wish godspeed to Bill and Charlotte as they leave and look forward to other occasions when they can be back here with us.

COMMUNICATION GROUPS: Tonight will be the night for Communication group two to meet. If you are in group two, remember to meet with your group this evening.

OUT OF TOWN: *The Chancellors: Kevin, Laurie and Abbygail* have been out of town on vacation this week... *The Hammonds: Eddie and Willodean* are in Florida on vacation.

THE LECTURES: It was good to be able to be at the *Florida College* lectures this past week. They were very good; the Book of Acts was the theme. I appreciate *Kevin Chancellor* and *Mark White* for preaching for me while I was away and for *Jimmy Glass* filling in for my Bible class.

THE RECORD: Attendance – Week of Feb. 4th

Sunday:

Bible Classes 88
 Morning Worship 106
 Evening Worship 88

Wednesday:

Bible Classes 73

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Bible Classes 9:45 a.m.
 Morning Worship 10:45 a.m.
 Evening Worship 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday

Bible Classes 7:00 p.m.

Elders

Michael Clemmons (256) 247-0836
 Scottie Goode (931) 565-3391

Deacons

Jimmy Glass (256) 247-0571
 Mark McIntyre (256) 233-1953
 Phil Pressnell (256) 232-8509
 Rocky Rose (256) 247-0011
 Larry White (256) 247-0988
 Brian Word (931) 565-3799

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