

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 Privileged To Serve:

Sunday, April 13th:

Bible Classes

Song Leader Jim Phillips
Bible Reading (Deut. 1:26-33)
..... Steve Parker
Prayer Aric Butler

Morning Worship

Song Leader Jim Phillips
Prayer Rocky Rose
Lord's Supper
Presiding Ronnie Phillips
Assisting Eddie J. Hammond
Serving Rodney McCrary
..... Hunter Cox
..... Brad Hammond
..... Michael Word
Closing Prayer
..... Jimmy Glass

Evening Worship

Song Leader Brian Word
Bible Reading (Deut. 1:34-40)
..... Jimmy Glass
Prayer Phil Pressnell
Lord's Supper
..... Ronnie Phillips
..... Eddie J. Hammond
Closing Prayer
..... Andrew Gatlin

Volume XV

April 13, 2008

No. 15

The Risks of Growth

Steve Dewhirst

In Jesus' parable of the talents, the one-talent man hid his treasure in a hole in the ground. When called to account he said to his master, "Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours" (Matt. 25:24-25). The master furiously denounced the servant as "wicked and lazy" and said, "You ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest" (vs. 26-27).

It's important to consider that probably the least effective way to grow money is by earning interest with bankers, but it's better than doing nothing at all! Whether the servant's fear was generated by his sloth, or vice versa, he proved to be totally worthless to his master.

All growth is pursued with risk. Farmers understand this principle better than anyone. Crops are planted, a yield is anticipated, but the entire process is subject to the vagaries of weather and nature. There is a certain risk in spiritual growth, too.

Scripture charges, "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 3:18). That's an apostolic directive, not a polite suggestion. It demands action on our part. It means we have to study God's word without fear or favor. It means we must learn to think for ourselves. It requires us to have a faith of our own, and the courage of personal conviction. And yet to do these things involves risk. Frankly, it's easier to bury our faith in a hole in the ground, just digging it up for occasional examination. But such is antithetical to the spirit of Christianity.

So what are the risks of spiritual growth? First is the likelihood of personal frustration. Who has not wrangled with himself over a thorny question, struggling to understand Bible principles more clearly? Not only is there the understanding of the principle, itself, but then there's the impact of that concept upon other concepts. To a disciplined student of God's word, the wheels will never stop turning. Sometimes our thoughts can be disconcerting as we rethink old presuppositions. Very often we will reach the same conclusions we reached before, but from a better-informed perspective. But whatever our conclusions, then comes the "pain" of making personal applications. Faith is much easier when buried in the ground.

Second is the risk of opposition from our brethren. Sometimes brethren object to the notion of "change" in any form, even if it's only an alteration in how a principle is explained. How often have we seen brethren differ, not over a Bible concept, but over the fact that one brother explains it in words different from the other! And there will always be brethren who equate the notion of independent thinking with apostasy. The fear seems to be that if anyone thinks "outside the box," he will depart the faith. Such fear is irrational. It either fails to recognize the objective nature of God's revelation, or it is rooted in a creedal view of "truth" which must be defended against all attempts at close examination. Truth never fears examination. It can only become clearer in people's minds with deeper examination. And that is precisely what God wants.

Third, there is the risk of intellectual arrogance. As one restudies and rethinks old questions he must fight the temptation of thinking he has discovered something "new." If he has discovered something truly new, it isn't in God's word. His understanding of the question may be new, but the truth has been there all along. He is not the first to see it or articulate it. And he must remember that if he has changed his thinking in one particular, how many other things does he need to understand more perfectly? It suits none of us to be arrogant when we are, in fact, finite

creatures made from dirt.

Bible study is neither dull nor boring, except to the one with no desire to grow. To the risk-taker, no thrill is any greater than that of contemplating and comprehending God's truth. The desire for a greater understanding of truth should never become a pretext for arrogance or unbiblical innovations; but neither should calls for safety and soundness be a pretext for willful ignorance and laziness. Let's take the risks necessary to grow spiritually, that we might find favor with our Master at last.

-via *Stonegate Standard*; Port Arthur, Texas.



A Richly Blessed Family

Bill Hall

"Pity the Smith family. Poor things, they have to keep the preacher every time the church plans a meeting. And Christians are always stopping in at their place. And they are about the only people in the church that ever invite people in after services. I just wouldn't put up with it myself..."

Spare your pity! The Smiths are a richly blessed family. Oh, occasionally they entertain some ungrateful scoundrel, but the blessings of hospitality far outweigh the problems.

The Bible speaks of some wonderfully blessed people along these lines. For instance, we do not pity Mary and Martha for "having" to have Jesus in their home; we pity those who, not wanting Jesus, were deprived of this blessing. We do not pity Mary the mother of John Mark, in whose home "many were gathered together praying", we pity those homes where Christians never assemble for Bible study and prayer. We do not pity Philemon who was to prepare Paul a lodging; we would love to have Paul as a guest in our home. Christians need to learn the joy and blessings which come to those who are hospitable.

News & Notes

“We are hospitable,” someone says, “we often have friends from church in our home for get-togethers and parties.” That’s fine! We encourage this! But Bible hospitality goes beyond having friends in for an evening which is at least partially for our own selfish enjoyment, “I was a stranger and you took Me in,” Jesus will say in the judgment (Matthew 25:35). Gaius was commended for helping “brethren” and “strangers” who were traveling for the Lord’s name sake, and was told by John, “If you send them forward on their journey in a manner worthy of God, you will do well” (3 John 5-7). Further, the Bible teaches that we become partakers in evil deeds of false teachers when we receive them into our houses (2 John 9-11). But does this not imply that we become partakers in the good deeds of faithful teachers when we show them hospitality?

A Christian will want to make friends with other Christians, and consequently will plan enjoyable evenings with close friends in his home. But the hospitable Christian will also use his home for conducting Bible classes, entertaining visiting preachers and other workers for the Lord, getting acquainted with newcomers in the church, comforting the bereaved and troubled, and for every good work.

Our homes are blessings from the Lord. We must not use them selfishly, but rather to His glory. The result will be an occasional scratch on a chair, or a stain on the carpet, or a chipped glass--really a small price to pay, though, for the warmth that comes to the home from new friends, good influences, rich Bible discussions, participation in the Lord’s work, and the satisfaction of knowing that one is pleasing God and preparing himself for eternity. No, it is not the Smiths whom we pity; it’s those who do not know the joy of hospitality.

~via *Topics For Study*; Millersville, Tennessee.

Remember Our Bible Class Periods

Sunday at 9:45 a.m.
Wednesday at 7:00 p.m.

THE SICK: *Marcia Cooper* is in NHC rehabilitation in Lawrenceburg, Tennessee. She is in room 111... *Molly Kate Phillips* had her adenoids removed on Friday in Huntsville ... *Lydia Clemmons* was able to be back at Bible study Wednesday night after being sick with the flu ... *Lisa Word’s father, Austin Dillinger*, is at home now and is dealing with his congestive heart failure ... *Jack and Onzell Tucker* continue to be confined at home ... *Billy Wallern’s grandmother, Alvis Hooie*, is undergoing cancer treatments each week ... *Eric White’s father, Jim White*, continues his cancer treatments... *Brooke Phillips’ grandfather, Bill Maner*, is at home and not doing well... *Buffy Wallen’s grandmother and James McConnell’s aunt, Nadine Thompson*, is in the Lauderdale Christian Nursing Home in Killen ... *Steven Crunk’s niece, Abby Vandiver*, is in Children’s Hospital in Birmingham and is seriously sick with a blood disorder ... *Judy Williams’ mother, Flossie Kazzaire*, continues in a nursing facility in Fayette.

GWANDA, ZIMBABWE: Remember the work we are involved in helping our brethren in the church at Gwanda, Zimbabwe. We are making shipments of non-persihable food items to them. Let us remember this effort.

CONFESSION: We rejoiced last Sunday morning as we saw the courage demonstrated as *Reba Archer* came forward and confessed that she had not served the Lord faithfully and requested prayers on her behalf. May the Lord bless Reba as she lives her life as a Christian. May we be an encouragement to her as she is an encouragement to us.

COMMUNICATION GROUPS: This evening will be the time for Communication Group C to meet. If you are in group C, remember to meet with your group this evening.

OUT OF TOWN: We want to extend our deepest sympathy to *Eddie Hammond* and *all the family*, in the passing of his aunt, *Gertie*

Williams, this past Friday. The funeral will be this afternoon in Greenhill.

OUT OF TOWN: *The Clemmons:* *Michael and Sissy* are out of town this week on vacation in Florida... ***The McIntyres:*** *Mark, Suzette, Sadie, Luke and John* are on vacation in Florida... ***Lou Ann Phillips, Donna Rose, Shelia Goode and Wanda Tucker*** spent a few days together in Florida this past week and are now at home.

GOSPEL MEETINGS: The ***Eastside church*** in Russellville is beginning a meeting today and will continue through Friday with services at 7:00 p.m. *Randall Hammock* will be the speaker in this meeting...The ***Cartwright church*** in Limestone county is beginning a meeting today and it will continue through Wednesday evening with services at 7:00. They will have different speakers ...The ***Needmore church*** in Haleyville is beginning a meeting today and it will continue through Friday with services at 7:30 p.m. *Lonnie Oldag* will be the speaker in this meeting.

THE RECORD: *Attendance Week of April 6th*
Sunday:

Bible Classes 106
Morning Worship 123
Evening Worship 80

Wednesday:

Bible Classes 91



Vacation Bible School

July 13-18, 2008

Frank Richey, Speaking

Anderson church of Christ

Highway 207 South
Anderson, Alabama

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
Eddie J. Hammond (256) 247-3038
Mark McIntyre (256) 729-8316
Steve Parker (256) 247-7843
Phil Pressnell (256) 232-8509
Rocky Rose (256) 247-0011
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