

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, October 26th

Bible Classes

Song Leader

..... Jim Phillips

Bible Reading (Psalm 142)

..... Phil Pressnell

Prayer

..... Jerry Dickey

Morning Worship

Song Leader

..... Jim Phillips

Prayer

..... Rocky Rose

Presiding Michael Clemmons

Serving James Albert McConnell

..... Rodney McCrary

..... Mike Rogers

Closing Prayer

..... Ray Tucker

Evening Worship

Song Leader

..... Claus Martel

Bible Reading (Psalm 143)

..... Daniel Clemmons

Prayer

..... Mark McIntyre

Lord's Supper

..... Michael Clemmons

Closing Prayer

..... Jimmy Glass

Volume X

October 26, 2003

No. 43

"Keep Thy Heart With All Diligence"

David A. Cox

Solomon long ago recognized the importance of having the right kind of heart. He wrote, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Proverbs 4:23). The reason Solomon was so concerned about the kind of heart man had was because man will be what his heart is (Proverbs 23:7). Let us consider the heart and why we should keep or guard our hearts.

Why Should We Keep Our Hearts?

First, let us understand that the heart that is under consideration here is not the blood pump, but the Biblical heart. The scriptures describes its function as that which: thinks (Matthew 9:4); reasons (Mark 2:8); understands (John 12:40); loves (Matthew 22:37); and will or purposes (2 Corinthians 9:7). These verses clearly show that the heart determines what kind of person we are. We should guard our heart above all things.

The heart of man is susceptible to change. This change is good if one's heart is not what God is pleased with and changes in order to please God. However, the heart that pleases God must be aware of evil and watch carefully lest it be turned away from God. This is what Solomon exhorts us to be mindful of and to guard our heart; lest it be turned to do evil. Change in our heart can be so gradual that if we are not on guard, it can change without us being aware of it. Many people that we know at one time had good hearts and served the Lord faithfully, but now their hearts have turned away from serving the Lord and doing His will.

How Should We Guard Our Hearts?

Keep Our Heart Fervent. We need to make sure our zeal, intensity, and sincerity of our heart does not wane. Paul reminded

the Romans to be “fervent in spirit” (Romans 12:11). Paul was telling the Romans that this was to be the life of a Christian, not on just special occasions. Christianity is not just something to be played at or a one or twice a week type of thing. Christianity deserves our fervent, earnest, zealous service at all times. In Revelation 3:16-19, the Christians in the church at Laodicea lost their fervor and zeal in serving the Lord. They were rebuked and told to change and serve the Lord faithfully. We must not allow our service to Christ to become old and just common place with no zeal or fervor of the heart being present. Let us guard our hearts from the things that cause our zeal to grow cold and keep our hearts fervent.

Keep Our Heart’s Affections Right. Jesus said, “Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matthew 6:19-21). Jesus is reminding his followers to keep their hearts affections in the right place. Paul exhorted the church at Colosseae to do the same thing when he wrote “Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth” (Colossians 3:2). We must guard our hearts and keep them focused on the things which will enable us to go to heaven. If we focus our attention on heavenly things, we will not have time to focus on the earthly things. In life, it is so easy to lose our focus and forget what our purpose on earth is, that is to “fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man” (Ecclesiastes 12:14). Let us guard our hearts from losing focus of the eternal things.

Keep Our Hearts Reverent and Tender. The heart that is not kept reverent and tender is not a heart that can please God. Reverent attitude of heart means that one will have deep respect, honor and standing in awe before God. The one whose heart is lifted with pride and arrogance cannot please God. The pharisee in Luke 18:9-

14, prayed to God with a heart filled with pride and arrogance, but the publican prayed at the temple as well with a tender and reverent heart. Jesus commended the publican’s attitude of heart, “I tell you this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for everyone that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” The pharisee’s heart was not kept reverent and tender. The publican had a heart that was kept reverent and tender. A heart like that of the Pharisee will become hardened and will not correct the errors in life that need correcting. Let us keep our hearts reverent and tender so that they can be easily shaped, molded by the truth, sensitive to what is right and wrong and submissive to the will of God.

Let us not neglect our hearts, but keep them “diligently” so that they will be hearts that will be pleasing to God. Is your heart one that God approves of?



Serving God Where We Are

Jim Jonas

The city of Rome was the nerve center of the first-century world. All roads led to Rome; all significant decisions were made in Rome; all cities feared Rome. Yet even in the imperial capital amid the political intrigue, the idolatrous temples and the blood sport, Christianity took root and began to grow. It is not recorded how faith first came to Rome, but by the time Paul wrote to the church, ca. AD 55-59, numerous saints were living there (Romans 16:3-16). Some were even among Nero’s palace guard (Philippians 1:13).

Since Paul had a “deep concern for all the churches” (2 Corinthians 11:28), he was inter-

ested in the welfare of the brethren in Rome. He expresses his “great desire these many years to come to you” (Romans 15:23). He confesses to them “that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers, making request if, by some means, now at last I may find a way in the will of God to come to you. For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established ...” (Romans 1:9-11).

So why hadn't Paul gone to Rome earlier? Concerning his work he says “I have made it my aim to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named...” (Romans 15:20), and in view of his diligent pursuit of this objective God had not opened the door of opportunity for Paul to travel to Rome. God had work for him to do elsewhere, so Paul set aside his personal wishes and focused upon the task at hand.

But Paul asserts “that from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ” (Romans 15:19). That is, he had fulfilled his assignment and was now ready to set his sights upon Rome. Little did he know that he would go in chains.

At different times in life we find ourselves in various situations, some desirable and some not. Perhaps a job takes us to a large city in the north when we prefer a small town in the south. Caring for an ailing mate or parent may hinder our ability to serve God in other ways. We may be asked to teach an age group with which we are not comfortable. Whatever the specific case, we're often in a place we'd rather not be, or we wish to be somewhere other than where we are. What should we do in times like these?

Look for the bright side. Instead of lamenting our lack of fortune, we must train ourselves to find the blessings and advantages inherent in our situation. In the midst of his Roman imprisonment, Paul suffers the added insult of men who “preach Christ even from envy and strife... supposing to add affliction to my chains” (Philippians 1:15-16). How does Paul view this?

“What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice” (Philippians 1:18). Life is rarely pitch black. There's usually a ray of light shining somewhere.

Grow where you are planted. Growth of character often comes from dealing with stressful situations. Each of life's episodes can be added to our storehouse of experience. From this storehouse wisdom can be drawn as future complications arise.

Draw closer to God. Surely Paul and Silas would have rather been anywhere but a Philippian prison, bruised and aching from the unjust beating they had received (Acts 16:22-24). So what did they do? “At mid-night Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns” (Acts 16:25). The circumstances of life are often out of our control. All God expects of us in such situations is to do the best we can where we are.

-via *Hueytown Church Bulletin*; Hueytown, Alabama.

News & Notes

THE SICK: *Myrtie Williams* is now at Glenwood rehabilitation in Florence ... *Michael Clemmons* had a arteriogram on Tuesday morning in Florence ... *Scottie Goode* returned to the doctor on Friday and is to see a ruhmatologist... *Wanda Tucker* had a stress test done on Thursday in Florence ... *Onzell Tucker* has not been able to be at services due to arthritis that is pinching a nerve ... *Claus Martel* had a stress test and Ecogram done on Tuesday in Huntsville ... *Ronnie Phillips* was not able to be at services last week due to sickness ... *Tisha Thomas* was not able to be at services last week due to sickness ... *Jerry Dickey's father, David Dickey*, has moved to Glenwood for rehabilitation... *Jean Ray's brother, W.L. Grisham*, suffer a stroke last Sunday evening and spent a couple of days in ECM hospital, but is now at home ... *Jean Ray* continues to be sick and is

not able to be up and out ... **Hubert Goode** continues at home and is not doing well ... **Eddie Hammond's cousin, Ricky Davis**, is continuing his treatments for his cancer ... Remember **Mattie Blanche Word** continues at home ... **Marcia Cooper's and Brian Word's uncle, Paul McCafferty** who is at the SunBridge Nursing Home in Lawrenceburg ... **James McConnell's mother, Della Mae McConnell**, continues at home... **Jerry Best's nephew, Shannon Johnson**, continues at home ... **Faye Hammond** continues at home ... **Tisha Thomas' grandmother, Nellie Hunter**, who is in the Meadow Brook Nursing Home in Pulaski ... **Freda McConnell's father, Alton Wray**, who is at home... **Janice Glass' grandmother, Emma Ray**, who is staying with family.

OUT OF TOWN: *The Words:* **Brian, Lisa, Michael, Corey, and Olivia** are in Orlando, Florida visiting with family... **Signa Skipworth** is in Gulf Shores this weekend.

NEW DIRECTORY: The new directories are on the table in the vestibule. Be sure to pick up your copy today. If any of the information needs to be corrected, please let me know.

SERVICE TIME CHANGE: Beginning this evening our Sunday evening service time will change to 5:00 p.m. This time will continue through winter.

COMMUNICATION GROUPS: Tonight is the night for communication group four to meet following our evening service. If you are in group four plan to meet this evening.

SYMPATHY: We want to extend our deepest sympathy to **Ray Tucker and all the family**, in the passing of Ray's uncle, **Hobson Tucker**, last weekend. His funeral was Monday in Center Star.

THE RECORD: *For the week of October 19th*
Sunday:

Bible Classes 90
 Morning Worship 114
 Evening Worship 72

Wednesday:

Bible Classes 72

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Bible Classes 9:45 a.m.
 Morning Worship 10:45 a.m.
 Evening Worship 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday

Bible Classes 7:00 p.m.

Elders

Michael Clemmons (256) 247-0836
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