

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 2nd

Bible Classes

Song Leader

..... Brian Word

Bible Reading (Psalm 70)

..... Ethan Pressnell

Prayer

..... Mark McIntyre

Morning Worship

Song Leader

..... Brian Word

Prayer

..... Ray Tucker

Lord's Supper/Collection

Presiding Scottie Goode

..... James Albert McConnell

..... Jimmy Glass

..... Daniel Clemmons

Closing Prayer

..... James Word

Evening Worship

Song Leader

..... Daniel Clemmons

Bible Reading (Psalm 71)

..... Rodney McCrary

Prayer

..... Jerry Dickey

Lord's Supper

..... Scottie Goode

Closing Prayer

..... Claus Martel

Volume X

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No. 5

Maintaining Our Hope

David A. Cox

Hope is defined by Webster as "Desire accompanied by expectation of, or belief in fulfillment; to desire with expectation of obtainment; to expect with confidence." There is a story of a man that came up to a little league ballgame one day. He asked a boy what the score was. The boy replied, "It is 18 to nothing, we're behind." The man then said, "I know you're discouraged." Then the little boy said, "Why should I be discouraged? We haven't even come to bat yet." Indeed, we must say that little boy was maintaining his hope; his desire plus his expectation of success.

Hope is essential to our success in any endeavor of life. Without hope the desire to continue to press toward the goal loses its appeal. Without hope, prisoners of war die. Without hope, athletic teams slump and keep losing. Without hope, a student gets discouraged and drops out of school. Without hope, married couples decide to divorce. Without hope, Christians lose sight of the goal of the future.

In Hebrews 6:11-12 we read, "And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." Here the writer of Hebrews exhorts that the Christians have diligence and perseverance in maintaining their "assurance of hope." Why is that? It is not because it is just a nice option, or something that would be good to do. It is because we must do this if we are going to survive spiritually and "inherit the promises." Hope is a vital to our life and faith, as water is to fish, or oxygen to man. Man will not stay on the course of faith toward the eternal goal without hope.

Hope is so important and necessary because life is filled with doom, despair, discouragement, defeat, and disheartenment. If we fail to maintain our hope, in distressing moments our minds will fail to focus on the better things ahead. Instead, we dwell on things the things of life that have brought us down.

As important as hope is and as much as we may believe that there is hope ahead, we must understand that it can be very elusive. The Hebrew writer tells how we can maintain our hope as he says, “be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises” (Hebrews 6:12). Here we see that diligence, faith and patience are needed to maintain our faith. Let us determine that we will not allow fatigue, frustration, failure, fear, distress, discouragement, etc. to lose sight of our hope.

Hope is a wonderful gift of God. It is a great source of strength and courage in the trials we face in life. It has been said that there is no more sustaining and transforming influence on human life, than the influence of hope. Let us see that hope:

1. Points to the light, when in a tunnel of misery.
2. Lifts our spirits, when we are discouraged.
3. Keeps us going, when we are tempted to quit.
4. Helps us to persevere, when struggling with disease and illness.
5. Gives us patience and trust, when we must wait.
6. Reminds us that God is still in control.
7. Gets us through the grief when we must say “good bye” to someone we deeply love.

The Hebrew writer tells us that “hope is the anchor of the soul” (Hebrews 6:19). Indeed, hope is the anchor by which the Christian can withstand, overcome, and endure all the trials and tribulations that will come in life.

Our hope is not only for this life, but because of the resurrection of Christ from the dead, our hope is in that which is beyond (1 Corinthians 15:12-20). Peter reminds the Christians of this

hope as he writes, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (1 Peter 1:3). As we close I am remind of the words of a song by Bill and Gloria Gaither which say:

*“Because He lives, I can face tomorrow;
Because He lives, all fear is gone;
Because I know, He holds the future;
And life is worth the living
Just because He lives.”*



How Hard

Hal Hammons

The phrase “kingdom of God” has somewhat different meanings in different contexts. At its most basic meaning, God’s “kingdom” refers to His rule – whether over the universe, over humanity, over the nation of Israel, over His spiritual people in this life, or over the saints of all ages in eternity. The emphasis in Mark 10:23 is on “eternal life”; in Mark 10:17-19, the “rich young ruler” asks for directions to heaven, and Jesus complies; the reward promised to Peter and the rest of the apostles in Mark 10:28-29 also emphasizes eternal life. Although it is possible that Jesus here is demonstrating the unlikelihood that the rich would seek out Jesus in the first place, it seems more in harmony with the text that He is arguing the probability that such ones would not be able to follow through with their commitments. Remember, the “rich young ruler” does not feel inhibited regarding the general pursuit of the Lord, only regarding a full, lifetime commitment.

The disciples were astonished that the Lord would castigate the elite class as being generally unsuitable for the kingdom. It is likely that the

disciples were suffering the same delusion as the Sadducees, who taught that there was no afterlife or spirit realm, and that therefore any “reward” God had to bestow on His people was given in this life. The natural consequence of this argument was that rich people were righteous – perhaps even remarkably righteous – and that the poor were unworthy of His generosity. They must have been prepared to make exceptions to that generalization; after all, their own Lord was a virtual pauper. However, the broad generalization that rich people were far more unlikely to reach heaven was something they were not ready to hear.

The account’s context makes it relatively apparent what Jesus meant. People with much in this life by definition have much to lose. The article at this site regarding Jesus’ interview with the rich young ruler emphasizes how we can easily allow something to get in the way of our wholehearted pursuit of Jesus. The more we have, the more we have to put aside. The Lord likens the process to trying to thread a needle with, not the hair of a camel, but the camel itself. Some have suggested that “the eye of the needle” refers to a short, narrow gateway that a camel can only go through on its knees, but that doesn’t seem to fit Jesus’ own characterization of it as “impossible” (Mark 10:27). His point is that the rich stack the deck heavily against themselves, and that only by trusting in God (not their wealth) can they hope to make it.

Some think they will get to heaven simply as a result of passing from this life. Others think a generally moral lifestyle will suffice. Others insist that belief in the one true God is required, and others narrow the field further by requiring at least nominal allegiance to Jesus Christ. But as Jesus indicated in Matthew 7:21, even saying, “Lord, Lord,” is not going to be enough; if we are to pursue a home in heaven, we must be prepared to exert ourselves.

That might be puzzling to the reader. “Surely God wants everyone to be saved. Why wouldn’t

He make it easy?” But simplifying the quest for glory diminishes the glory itself. Heaven is set aside as a reward for those who pursued righteousness first and foremost in this life. More importantly, heaven represents fellowship with the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, as well as the faithful of all ages. To use the blood of Jesus to extend grace to those who show little or no interest in that grace is an insult to the gesture Jesus made on our behalf. He didn’t die on the cross so we could live the kind of life we were going to live anyway; He died so that we could be a different, better, holier people. If we refuse to cooperate in this transformation process (Romans 12:2), we show ourselves unworthy of grace.

God made the process hard because He wants it hard. He wants us to demonstrate that we, unlike the rich young ruler, are willing to do whatever it takes to be found within the bounds of His grace. We can grouse about it if we choose, or we can take delight in Jesus’ words recorded in verse 27 – “With men it is impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God.” We can make it to heaven with His help. But we must be prepared to reach for that help.

-via *The Good News*, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma.

News & Notes

THE SICK: *Onzell Tucker* is in the ECM hospital in Florence following her surgery on Monday to remove the cancer in her lung. The surgery was successful and she will not have to take any chemo treatments...*Mary Best* has continued to be sick this past week and have been unable to be services...*Scottie Goode’s father, Hubert Goode*, had the growth in his throat trimmed this past Tuesday and is to return in four weeks...*Janice Glss’ grandmother, Emma Ray*, has not been doing well this past week, but is at home...*Faye Hammond* continues at home

and is going for rehabilitation during the week... **Corey Goode** has been sick this past week and unable to be at services... **Robyn Goode** was sick and unable to be at Bible study Wednesday night... **Zack Rogers** was sick and unable to be back at Bible Study Wednesday night ... **Janice Glass' uncle, Fred Masonia**, continues at ECM in Florence in ICU ... **Eddie Hammond's cousin, Ricky Davis**, has cancer and is being treated... Remember **Mattie Blanche Word** continues at home... **Aldeen Noles** and **Marcia Cooper's and Brian Word's uncle, Paul McCafferty** who are at the SunBridge Nursing Home in Lawrenceburg ... **Mary Best's nephew, Shannon Johnson**, who is 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.

OUT OF YOWN: The Coxes: *Kerry and I* are away this week attending the lectures at Florida College. I know that we will enjoy the lectures, will miss seeing and being with all of you. *Tyler and Hunter* will be at home and Kerry's parents will be keeping them.

PREACHING TODAY: **Dan Bailey** is here today preaching at both services. Dan is a college student at UNA and I am glad that he is able to be here today and I know that you will enjoy hearing him.

COMMUNICATION GROUPS: Tonight will be the time for Communication group one to meet after our evening service. If you are in group one plan to meet this evening.

BUSINESS MEETING: Remember the business meeting the elders have scheduled for all the men next Sunday night after our evening service. Make your plans to be present.

THE RECORD: *Averages for January 2003*

Sunday:

Bible Classes 85
 Morning Worship 104
 Evening Worship 74

Wednesday:

Bible Classes 67

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
 Scottie Goode (931) 565-3391

Deacons

Phil Pressnell (256) 232-8509
 Rocky Rose (256) 247-0011
 Larry White (256) 247-0988

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