

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 9th

Bible Classes

Song Leader

..... Phil Pressnell

Bible Reading (Psalm 73)

..... Claus Martel

Prayer

..... Jerry Dickey

Morning Worship

Song Leader

..... Phil Pressnell

Prayer

..... Brian Word

Lord's Supper/Collection

Presiding Rocky Rose

..... Aric Butler

..... Ethan Pressnell

..... Rodney McCrary

Closing Prayer

..... Mark McIntyre

Evening Worship

Song Leader

..... Jerry Dickey

Bible Reading (Psalm 74)

..... Phil Pressnell

Prayer

..... Larry White

Lord's Supper

..... Rocky Rose

Closing Prayer

..... Jerry Best

Volume X

February 9, 2003

No. 6

Of Gnats and Other Annoyances

Gary Henry

During the summer of 1970, I worked for a road construction company that was rebuilding U.S. Highway 90 along the Mississippi Gulf Coast following the devastation of Hurricane Camille the previous summer. Our long work days began about daybreak. Without even the hint of a breeze at that hour, the waters of the Gulf of Mexico were as still as a sheet of glass. I would have enjoyed the freshness of those mornings if it had not been for another phenomenon familiar to Gulf Coast dwellers: gnats. Down there, anyone foolish enough to come near the sandy beach that early on certain summer mornings is going to be attacked. So small you can hardly see them, these gnats bite with an torment that is out of all proportion to their size. By mid-morning they've disappeared, but for the first few hours of the day they are enough to make a grown man cry.

I remember working one morning with Joe Bridges, a grizzled old black man who watched out for me on the job and had become a dear friend. From Tylertown, Mississippi, he had been a common laborer for many long years and had followed construction jobs all over the South. I often marveled at the patient, rhythmic way he worked in difficult conditions, and this morning was no exception. As I furiously fought the gnats and said unappreciative things about the day I was born, Joe seemed to take only slight notice of the devilish little insects.

"Man, how in the world can you stand this?" I finally screamed. "Don't these gnats bother you?"

"Well," Joe said, looking at me sideways as he adjusted his hard hat a little, "I guess they would — if I let 'em."

It was some years later that I understood: folks who have known what real hardship is don't pay much attention to gnats.

One measure of a man is the size of what it takes to annoy him. Unfortunately, most of us are far too easily irritated. Since we have so little character, it doesn't take much to get the best of us. And consequently, our lives are dominated by relatively minor vexations, things that wisdom says we shouldn't take the time to be troubled about. We're the victim of every little unpleasantness that comes along. But rather than grow in character and rise above these petty annoyances, we spend our lives swatting "gnats." The real work we were sent here to do ends up being neglected because we spend most of our time and energy being annoyed.

The tendency to be easily annoyed is far more than a quirky little "personality" trait. I would suggest that many of the quite serious problems in life – especially in our dealings with other people – boil down to a failure of self-discipline with regard to the basic issue of irritability. If not repented of and removed from our character, annoyance is likely to cause more deadly destruction than we expect. As bad "habits" go, being grouchy is far from harmless.

When we find ourselves frequently upset over "gnats" and other annoyances, our hearts are wide open to all manner of evil things. The Bible warns about this. "Whoever has no rule over his own spirit is like a city broken down, without walls" (Proverbs 25:28). "He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city" (Proverbs 16:32). "The discretion of a man makes him slow to anger, and his glory is to overlook a transgression" (Proverbs 19:11). "Have fervent love for one another, for love will cover a multitude of sins" (1 Peter 4:8). Love is not "easily provoked" (1 Corinthians 13:5 KJV).

Paul wrote, "Let your gentleness be known to all men" (Philippians 4:5). The word translated here as "gentleness" (moderation, meekness) has

been defined as "strength under control." To avoid the destructive effects of annoyance in our lives, our strength must be under control. To do this, we must be not only self-disciplined, but wise with a wisdom that comes from God. Listen well to the words of James: "Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy" (James 3:13-17).

Most of us would like to have more "peace of mind." But we tend to see "worry" as the main hindrance to that peace. What we fail to recognize is that annoyance is just as much the enemy of peace of mind as anxiety. The peace of God hardly reigns in our hearts if we're in a constant state of vexation over the little irritations of life.

So what is it that really gets your goat? Whether it's a big thing or a little one, do yourself a favor and give this a try: "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:21).

-via *Focus Magazine*; Vol. 5 No. 8



Remember next Sunday evening, February 16th, will be the time for our regular scheduled song service. Claus Martel will be directing the service. I hope all of us will make our plans to attend as we sing songs of praise to God.

I Have Decided To Follow Jesus

Mark W. White

Have you ever followed someone in your car to a destination with which you were unfamiliar? It's not always easy. Your "leader" get behind the wheel of his automobile, takes off, runs through a yellow light and leaves you stranded at the red light while he forgets you are "following." Or someone slides in between you and your leader in bumper-to-bumper traffic and you lose sight of him for a few moments, only to see him make a turn when you are totally unprepared to follow his lead. In some respects, following is more difficult than leading.

If you decide to follow Jesus as His disciples, you will find Him a considerate leader who will place upon you no more than you can bear (1 Corinthians 10:13). He will watch out for you, and will never leave you stranded while He speeds away from your sight. To His earliest disciples Jesus said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5). He also said, "I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20).

Following Jesus may not always be the easiest thing to do. Satan will make the broad way that leads to destruction more appealing, tantalizing, and tempting. The narrow way of Jesus leads to eternal life but few people, by comparison, follow along that path (Matthew 7:13-14). Even though the way to eternal life along which our Saviour leads us has its difficulties, we must not choose the "way of the unfaithful" for it is hard (Proverbs 13:15). It is hard because the road travelled by the wicked leads to eternal death and separation from all that is good, just, and right. But following Jesus has its rewards. Whatever one must set aside in order to walk with Jesus, He restores – even in this life (Mark 10:29-30). If following Jesus means family, houses or lands are left behind there will be other family gained or houses or lands, and in the age to come, eternal life!

Following requires implicit trust. Do you trust Jesus to lead you in the right path? Do you believe that He is the resurrection and the life (John 11:25)? Then decide to follow Him, without turning back (Luke 9:57-62).

-via *College View Columns*, Florence, Alabama

News and Notes

THE SICK: *Ozell Tucker* has continued in the ECM hospital in Florence, room 261, recovering from her recent surgery...*Mary Best* has continued to be sick this past week and hopes to be able to be at services today...*Lisa Word's father, Austin Dillinger*, is in the Sunbelt Rehabilitation in Orlando, Florida after spending several days in the hospital this past week. He is making progress in the medication changes they have made...*Janice Glass' grandmother, Emma Ray*, continues at home, but is still not doing well...*Faye Hammond* continues at home and is going for rehabilitation during the week...*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...*Marcia Cooper's and Brian Word's uncle, Paul McCafferty* who is 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.

DEATH: It is with sadness we mention the passing of sister *Aldeen Noles* this past Thursday morning. She was hospitalized last weekend. We will miss Aldeen here and we want to express our deepest sympathy to *Sam and all the family* in her passing.

NEW BABY: This past Thursday *James Albert and Freda McConnell* became the proud grandparents of a new baby girl. *Kevin and Mandy McConnell* are the proud parents. She is in the Huntsville Hospital due to some concern about her heart, but the tests seem to be going well. She should be home in a few days.

LAST WEEK: I appreciate *Dan Bailey* preaching for me last week in my absence and *Mark McIntyre* for teaching my class.

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

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

BACK HOME: Kerry and I arrived back home about 10:00 p.m. on Friday night after attending the lectures this past week at Florida College in Temple Terrace, Florida. The lectures were very good and we enjoyed them very much. I appreciate you allowing me to be away to attend them.

Gospel Meeting

March 30 - April 4

Robert Harkrider, Speaker
Anderson church of Christ
Highway 207
Anderson, Alabama

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

Evangelist & Editor

David A. Cox (256) 247-1049
Office-(256) 247-5539
E-mail address: daco@hiwaay.net

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Anderson church of Christ
P.O. Box 66
Anderson, Alabama 35610

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