

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, July 20th

Bible Classes

Song Leader

..... Brian Word

Bible Reading .. (Psalm 119:41-48)

..... Mike Rogers

Prayer

..... Mark McIntyre

Morning Worship

Song Leader

..... Brian Word

Prayer

..... Ray Tucker

Presiding Jerry Dickey

Serving Phil Pressnell

..... Ethan Pressnell

..... Curtis Mosley

Closing Prayer

..... Larry White

Evening Worship

Song Leader

..... Mark McIntyre

Bible Reading .. (Psalm 119:49-56)

..... Rodney McCrary

Prayer

..... Rocky Rose

Lord's Supper

..... Jerry Dickey

Closing Prayer

..... Jerry Best

Volume X

July 20, 2003

No. 29

Living As A Leader

Jim Jonas

A true leader of God's people doesn't wait for a formal appointment to begin serving. Rather, we come to recognize leaders among us as those who in the regular course of life have already been serving the congregation "without the credentials," so to speak. We're not talking about an autocrat, one who arrogates unto himself a position, title or authority that doesn't belong to him – a usurper, if you please.

Remember, the primary function of leaders, whether elders, deacons, preachers, class teachers, etc. is to serve the people of God: "And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave – just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:27-28). Being a leader is not about giving orders, being "in charge" or throwing one's weight around. That was the concept that led James and John to petition for seats of honor in the kingdom, and Jesus replied, "You do not know what you ask" (Matthew 20:20-22).

It would behoove us to keep a mental index file of those whom we observe serving the Lord in various capacities. These are the men who show up at work days (are you there to know who they are?!). You may see them at a gospel meeting (are you there to see them?!). You may bump into them at a hospital (are you there for a chance meeting with them?!). They will attend group meetings; they will frequent social occasions such as potlucks. You will not hear of them willfully choosing other activities over the opportunity to worship; they will be there when the doors are open. Leaders are those who gradually materialize in our consciousness as dependable, interested and willing participants in the daily events and experiences of the

congregation. They are not reluctant servants. They don't ask, "Do I have to go?" Rather, they are the ones who probably beat you there.

At this point we may sense a potential problem. Is our level of association with each other such that we are truly familiar with our fellow brethren? Or is our inter-action so sketchy and casual that we don't really have a clue as to the leadership traits of a given brother?

The obvious solution is to take steps to become better acquainted with others in our spiritual family, for the time will come when we will be asked to formally recognize the leaders among us. Unfortunately, other solutions have sometimes been substituted:

1) Let the elders pick the next elders and deacons. Human wisdom may say that since the elders should ideally be more spiritually mature than others and probably more intimately acquainted with various members, perhaps the selection should be left to them. Such reasoning is a great first step toward creating a self-perpetuating hierarchy. When searching for leaders to handle a delicate problem in the early church "the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said ... seek out from among you seven men of good reputation ..." (Acts 6:2-3). The people made the choice because it was the people who would have to submit to the judgments of the leaders.

2) Abbreviated qualifications have been substituted for a comprehensive knowledge of a person; i.e., the man whose children are all baptized and faithful becomes an automatic candidate for elder. It seems so rare these days to find a man whose children are all faithful that we tend first to look at this qualification perhaps forgetting that other equally valid qualifications must also be met.

Men, what do your brethren see in you when they are looking for a leader? *"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works."*

-via *Hueytown Church Bulletin*, Hueytown, Alabama

Judged By The Word of God

Allen Dvorak

Paul was standing before the Jewish council, under Roman arrest and accused by the Jews, when he made the statement, "Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day" (Acts 23:1). The high priest Ananias commanded that he be struck on the mouth for the audacity of his statement! The high priest was probably reacting to what he saw as a contradiction in the speech of a Jewish man who had openly associated with Gentiles, even affirming that they should have the gospel preached to them.

I am confident that Paul's conscience did not reprove him for preaching to Gentiles. I wonder if, in his statement, he was including the time of his life when he was a persecutor of Christians. When Paul later appeared before king Agrippa, he noted that, even as a persecutor, he had done what he thought was right (26:9). A man can have a good or pure conscience only if he consistently does what he believes to be right. His conscience is defiled if he does what he understands to be wrong.

Unfortunately, there are many people whose conscience does not bother them although they are engaged in many activities which are prohibited by the Scriptures. In some cases, they have simply ignored their conscience for so long that its voice has been silenced. Paul described such consciences as seared with a hot iron (1 Timothy 4:2). Ignored long enough, the conscience ceases to do its work, and stops condemning wrong behavior.

In other cases, the conscience just hasn't been properly trained. It approves what God, in His word, does not approve. Thus a person has a pure conscience while, in fact, engaging in sinful behavior.

Paul spoke of this problem while writing to

the Corinthians. The Corinthians were elevating preachers as though the message that each preached was his own making. Paul affirmed that preachers are mere stewards and it is the character of stewardship that a steward is accountable to the one who made him a steward (1 Corinthians 4:1-2). As a steward of Jesus Christ, Paul was unconcerned about the evaluation of his stewardship by others. He wrote, "But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by a human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. For I know nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; but He who judges me is the Lord" (1 Corinthians 4:3-4).

Even if Paul "knew nothing against himself", such was not a guarantee of his innocence. Paul would not be judged ultimately by his own conscience, but rather by the Lord Himself. The Lord will "bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts" (vs. 5). Even if our conscience does not condemn us, we must make sure that our conduct is approved by God's word since He will judge us with His word as the standard of judgment (John 12:48).

-via *Mining The Scriptures* ; Madison, Alabama



Sour Grapes

Stacy Crim

The children of Israel had a proverb in the days of the prophets. "...The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?" (Ezekiel 18:2). This of course is simply not true. A father does not eat a sour grape and a child's face is puckered from the tartness of the fruit. God would set the record straight and no longer allow Israel to cite such foolishness (Ezekiel 18:3).

We learn in the text of Ezekiel 18 that "The

soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him (verse 20).

This passage teaches us that we do not have to fall victim to our circumstances. If we have a wicked family we do have to fall prey to their wickedness. We can rise above their lawlessness, and be rewarded for our own obedience. The opposite is also true. If we have a good family, that goodness does not preserve us in our wickedness. "...for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. for it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Romans 14:10-12). Truly this is the only way it can be for God to be just and fair. "Is not My way equal..." (Ezekiel 18:25).

-via *The Cornerstone* ; Richmond, Virginia

News & Notes

THE SICK: *Mary Best* is in rehabilitation at NHC Hillview in Columbia, Tennessee ... *Billy Haraway* continues at home ... *Hubert Goode* continues at home ... *Taylor Mosley* has been sick this past week with a rash from a virus, but is now doing better ... *Freda McConnell* was feeling better and able to be back at services Wednesday night after being sick over the weekend ... *Eddie Hammond's father, Berl Hammond*, is at now at home after spending about a week at ECM hospital in Florence ... *Cindy Pressnell's aunt and Billy Haraway's cousin, Corine Carter*, battling cancer...*James Albert*

McConnell's mother, Della Mae McConnell, who is at home... *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 ... *Mary Best's nephew, Shannon Johnson*, who is 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 at home.

OUT OF TOWN: *The Butlers Aric and Andrea* are back home after being out of town this past weekend.

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

NEW BABY: This past Monday we rejoiced over the birth of *Noah Lane Hammond*. He weighed 7lbs. 2 ozs. He is now at home and doing well with parents *Eddie and Amber Hammond* and his big sister, *Lakin*. We want to congratulate them as well as, *Ray and Wanda Tucker*, the grandparents, and *Jack and Onzell Tucker*, the great-grandparents.

THE RECORD: *Attendance for the Week of July 13th*
Sunday:

Bible Classes 89
 Morning Worship 105
 Evening Worship 76

Wednesday:

Bible Classes 71

Remember our regular scheduled song service this evening at 6:00. Mark McIntyre will be directing the service. I hope all of us will make our plans to attend as we sing songs of praise to God.

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

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

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