

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 17th

Bible Classes

Song Leader
..... Mark McIntyre
Bible Reading (Isaiah 37:1-13)
..... Mike Rogers
Prayer
..... Scottie Goode

Morning Worship

Song Leader
..... Mark McIntyre
Prayer
..... Monroe Pressnell
Lord's Supper
Presiding Phil Pressnell
Assisting Aric Butler
Serving Andrew Gatlin
..... Eddie L. Hammond
..... Jim Phillips
..... Mark McCrary
Closing Prayer
..... Eddie J. Hammond

Evening Worship

Song Leader
..... Jerry Dickey
Bible Reading (Isaiah 37:14-29)
..... Rodney McCrary
Prayer
..... Michael Clemmons
Lord's Supper
..... Phil Pressnell
..... Aric Butler
Closing Prayer
..... Brian Word

Volume XI

October 17, 2004

No. 41

The Gospel and Culture

Allen Dvorak

The gospel of Jesus Christ began to be preached in Palestine during the first century A.D. The spiritual principles set out in the gospel clearly are often expressed in terms of oriental culture, but do not find their source in such culture. Jesus commanded His apostles to preach the same gospel throughout the world (Matthew 28:19) and they did (Colossians 1:23).

Cultural differences existed between Jewish and Gentile societies. They existed between the east and the west of the Roman empire. And yet, the apostle Paul clearly prohibited the changing of the message preached for the accommodation of cultural differences. To the Galatians he wrote, "I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:6-9). The Lord intended the same gospel to be the power unto man's salvation in each part/culture of the Roman empire.

It has been the habit of men over the centuries since the gospel began to be preached to slowly adapt its message to their cultural values. Donald Carson, in his commentary on 2 Corinthians 10-13, made a perceptive observation about the response of man to the gospel: "We find it easier to interpret the gospel in terms of our received culture than the other way around...The gospel will purify and transform any culture; or, more accurately, the gospel will purify

and transform the people from any cultural heritage who bow unreservedly to Jesus Christ. By this means it will modify or eliminate many of the culturally transmitted values of those new Christians; and they in turn may in some measure influence their culture and society as salt exerts its influence in food (cf. Matt. 5:13). But there will always be some who are controlled by a light 'Christianized' version of their own culture: i.e., their controlling values spring from the inherited culture, even when such values are deeply pagan and not Christian." (From *Triumphalism to Maturity*, p. 40).

I believe that we are doing this very thing with the gospel in western culture. We embrace certain values without recognizing that they find their origin in culture rather than Scripture. For example, as western culture has become more tolerant to the practice of homosexuality, churches are following suit. The same phenomenon can be observed with respect to the role of women, divorce and standards of modesty.

The only way to avoid the mistake of adapting the gospel to our cultural values is to become intimately familiar with what the Scriptures actually say. Let's get back to studying the Bible!

-via *News & Notes*; Madison, Alabama.



How Faith Behaves

Dee Bowman

Faith is the foundation on which the Christian system rests. Without faith, there is no Christianity, no Jesus Christ, no salvation for man. "Without faith it is impossible to please him, for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6). It's a passage with which nearly every Christian is familiar

and to which every Christian subscribes. Faith is necessary, we all know that.

But the passage doesn't stop at that point: it doesn't quit when it says "without faith it is impossible to please him." Nor does it stop when it says, "for he that cometh to God must believe that he is." It goes on to say, "and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Now, that part gets left out most of the time. And yet, it's just as much a part of the verse as is the first part.

What that says is that belief, by itself, is not sufficient. There's just more to faith than mental assent. There must be some action to demonstrate that faith, some activity that supports the contention that God is and that He rewards the faithful. Faith must behave itself.

Well, how does faith behave?

First, it behaves obediently. True faith does not question God. It does, without question, what God says to do. And it does not do what He prohibits. True faith has such abiding confidence in Who and What God is that there is never any question about what He requires. For instance, if He says we should be baptized for the remission of sins (Mark 16:15-16), there is no hesitation about that: we just say, "here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized" (Acts 8:36). If He says "forsaking not the assembling of yourselves together" (Hebrews 10:25), we don't hesitate about that or ask why, we just go assemble with the saints. When He says that the "disciples came together on the first day of the week to break bread" (Acts 20:7), the true believer doesn't question why that is required, he just comes together with the saints every first day of the week to observe the Lord's supper. Real faith obeys.

Secondly, faith behaves consistently. That is, it doesn't vacillate; it stays steady all the time. There is no such thing as a part-time faith, one you put on and take off when it's convenient. You either have faith full-time or you don't. And to just say you have it is not tantamount to having

it, either. Faith is not something that you put on and put off, it's something you embrace for the duration. "He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven and tossed," we are told (James 1:6). Faith is firm. Faith is fixed. Faith is secure. Faith is consistent, enduring, established and uncompromising. That doesn't mean that faith is mean-spirited; but it does mean that you can't bend it to fit the society or change it to accommodate the masses.

Faith behaves with hope. In fact, faith and hope are just about inseparable. Faith, for instance, believes all that God has said on a matter; and it puts its confidence in that so firmly that hope is the result. For instance, when the Hebrew writer gives us a characteristic definition of faith he says, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Hope, you see, rests on a man's faith. Without faith, there isn't any real hope. Faith firms hope; hope is supported by faith. Both the desire and expectation of heaven are the product of an abiding faith (1 Peter 1:3). And when there is a coupling of faith and hope, based on the assurances and promises of God, it becomes "a lively hope," one that includes "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away," for those who are "kept by the power of God through faith..." (1 Peter 1:4-5). Just as surely as those verses are connected contextually, so is the faith and hope of which they so eloquently speak.

Finally, true faith is not mis-placed. Faith in God is stronger than anything man can imagine. Look at the ancients described in Hebrews 11. By it "the elders obtained a good report." Enoch's faith pleased God and because of it, he was "translated." Noah believed God and saved the people. Abraham went out "not knowing where he went," but knowing that by doing so, he was pleasing God. Sarah, Moses, Joseph, Gedeon, and a host of lesser lights, pleased God by their faith and all "obtained a good report by faith" (Heb. 11:39 LBX). Faith caused all of them to receive the blessings of God. The fact is—faith works. And it is the same for us. Believe Him, do

what He says, and be blessed. It's as simple—and yet as difficult—as that.

What about your faith? Is it there? Is it active? Is it real or imagined faith? Only you and God know for sure. Remember, "faith without works is dead, being alone" (James 2:17). So, "be ye doers of the word and not hearers only..." (James 1:23).

-via *Southside Sunday*; Pasadena, Texas.

News and Notes

THE SICK: *Willie Ridgeway* is now at home after spending several days in the hospital... *Jack Tucker* has not been able to be at services due to breathing difficulties, but is doing better ... *Mattie Blanche Word* continues in rehabilitation at Mitchell Hollingsworth in Florence... *Monroe Pressnell* received a good report from his biopsy this week ... *Stephen Stewart* was not feeling well and not able to be at Bible study Wednesday night... *Helen Stewart's grandson, Adam Stewart*, is at home now, but needing a kidney transplant... *Lou Ann Phillips* was sick and not able to be at Bible study Wednesday night ... *Morgan and Callie Grisham* were sick and not able to be at Bible study Wednesday night... *Jerry Dickey's father and mother, David and Pat Dickey*, are now in rehabilitation at Florence Comprehensive care... Remember *Kathy Smith's sister-in-law, Sue Gilliam*, is undergoing chemo and radiation treatments... *Marcia Cooper's and Brian Word's uncle, Paul McCafferty* is at the Countryside Nursing Home in Lawrenceburg ... *James McConnell's mother, Della Mae McConnell*, continues at home... *Jerry Best's nephew, Shannon Johnson*, continues at home ... *Tisha Thomas' grandmother, Nellie Hunter*, is in the Meadow Brook Nursing Home in Pulaski.

GOSPEL MEETING: The *Old Moulton Road church* in Decatur is beginning a meeting today

and it will continue through Friday with *Darryl Smelser* preaching...The ***Underwood Heights church*** in Florence will be having a gospel meeting this week through Friday with *Larry Fain* preaching.

HOYT HAMMOND: It is with great sadness to mention the passing of brother Hoyt Hammond this past Wednesday morning. Hoyt had struggled with sickness the past several months, but was always glad to hear about the church and the work here when he was unable to attend. We will miss his presence among us here at Anderson, but we are thankful for the time we were able to share with him in this life. We want to express our deepest sympathy to *Faye* and all the family in his passing. May the Lord bless them.

CONFESSION: We rejoiced this past Sunday morning, when ***Virginia Lovell*** came forward asking for prayers for forgiveness in unfaithness in her life as a Christian. We appreciate her attitude of heart and her desire to please the Lord. We are glad to have Virginia among us and may we all encourage her in her life as a Christian.

COMMUNICATION GROUPS: Tonight will be the time for Communication Group three to meet following our evening service. If you are in group three remember to meet with your group this evening.

OUT OF TOWN: *Cindy Pressnell* has been out of town this past week...*June Calvert* has been out of town...*Helen Stewart* is in South Carolina.

TEACHERS SCHEDULE: Remember the teachers schedule that has been posted on the bulletin board in the vestibule. Be sure to check on this and let ***Mark McIntyre*** know if you have any needs for your class.

THE RECORD: *For the week of October 10th*

Sunday:

Bible Classes 102
 Morning Worship 122
 Evening Worship 88

Wednesday:

Bible Classes 87

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
 Monroe Pressnell (256) 232-0780

Deacons

Jimmy Glass (256) 247-0571
 Mark McIntyre (256) 233-1953
 Phil Pressnell (256) 232-8509
 Rocky Rose (256) 247-0011
 Larry White (256) 247-0988
 Brian Word (256) 229-5823

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