

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 31st

Bible Classes

Song Leader

..... Ronnie Phillips

Bible Reading (Isaiah 40:1-11)

..... Daniel Clemmons

Prayer

..... Andrew Gatlin

Morning Worship

Song Leader

..... Ronnie Phillips

Prayer

..... Eddie J. Hammond

Lord's Supper

Presiding Jerry Dickey

Assisting Claus Martel

Serving Stephen Stewart

..... Jim Phillips

..... Curtis Mosley

..... Daniel Clemmons

Closing Prayer

..... Larry White

Evening Worship

Song Leader

..... Eddie J. Hammond

Bible Reading (Isaiah 40:12-24)

..... Jimmy Glass

Prayer

..... Brian Word

Lord's Supper

..... Jerry Dickey

..... Claus Martel

Closing Prayer

..... James Word

Volume XI

October 31, 2004

No. 43

Will Your Life Make A Difference?

Mark W. White

When it comes to the problem of influence, many disciples are suffering from a tremendous inferiority complex. Not many of us have ever come to terms with just how much influence we really wield in this world. Our thinking is that unless one has wealth, political clout, physical beauty, or belongs to the "right" group, that he will have little impact on the world about him. If "making a difference" depends on this worldly criteria, then it is doubtful that the lives of most Christians I know will ever make any difference at all. And that is just the point - our influence in the world is not dependent on such earthly standards.

If we ever have any kind of influence on the world around us, it must be the kind Jesus wants His disciples to exert! Jesus tells us that we must make a difference! A portion of the sermon on the mount illustrates the influence Christ expects us to have on this spiritually dark and tasteless world. Matthew 5:13-16 states, "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men. You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven." This is the Lord's classic text on the influence of kingdom citizens.

When Jesus said this, those hearing the sermon could have immediately made the connection between the illustration and the lesson to be learned. The Greeks called salt "divine". The Romans had a saying that went, "There is nothing more useful than sun and

salt.” Likening the influence of His disciples to salt was a particularly impressive idea to the minds of those present when Jesus preached that sermon. Salt possesses three peculiar abilities. It is a purifier, and if the Christian is to be the “salt of the earth” he must remain pure and unadulterated. He cannot lose his “savor” (saltiness) through contamination by the impurities of the world. If he does, he loses his ability to “make a difference.” Salt also preserves. As a boy, I appreciated the preservative ability of salt when we “salted down” the hams in our “salt box” which eventually yielded that southern delicacy - country ham. Without the salt, the meat decayed and putrefied because the preservative influence was absent. Salt prevents corruption, and as William Barclay puts it, “If the Christian is to be the salt of the earth, he must have a certain antiseptic influence on life.” Finally, salt changes what it touches. Nothing tastes the same when salt is added. It can enhance the flavor, or destroy it, depending on how it is used. Did you ever try and eat popcorn without salt? It’s about like eating cardboard! If you add a little salt, it makes a lot of difference. The influence of the Christian should always be felt. If the Christian loses his “flavor”, he has become useless. We are meant to be the salt of the earth and if we do not purify, preserve, and change we do not “make a difference.”

And then there is light. Jesus describes himself as the “light of the world” in John 9:5. The text actually says that as long as Jesus was in the world he was the light of the world. Who could deny the illuminating influence Jesus has on the world? Is it not a great compliment then, for the disciples to be called the “light of the world”? Paul wrote the Philippian church and called on them to “shine as lights in the world” (Philippians 2:15). We are lights and wherever there is light, there is hope! The primary function of a light is to be seen to make a difference! Our light should shine, not to call attention to ourselves, but to bring glory to our heavenly Father. Our lights should dispel the darkness so that men can see God. Christianity must be a visible commitment.

It was never intended to be a secretive thing. Our lights must shine brightly through the fog of sin to bring men to Jesus. Our lights must make the way clear. At our house, in each bedroom, we use a little “night light”. What a tremendous difference their influences make in the middle of the night when you have to get out of bed for some reason. And, I can’t tell you just how many monsters have been chased away because of the influence of those tiny little lights. Light is a remarkably comforting property.

“Do I really make a difference?” Jesus says, “You have to!” The world just has to be a better place because of the disciples of Christ. My neighborhood has to be a better place to live because I live there. The plant or office I work in must feel my good influence. The church of which I am a part just must be a better congregation because of my life. May we all live so as to have it said of us when we die: “It was easier to be good when he/she was with us.”

~via *College View Columns*; Florence, Alabama.



“A Little Fire”

Marc R. Hinds

A couple years ago, a forest servicewoman intentionally set a huge wildfire near Denver, Colorado that ravaged one of our nation’s beautiful forests. Around the same time in Arizona, a part-time firefighter also intentionally started a wildfire that consumed half a million acres, destroying hundreds of homes along its path.

Both blazes cost several millions of dollars in property damage as well as in the efforts of thousands of firefighters. Each, however, started as a small contained fire that was purposely permitted to spread and reach gigantic proportions. And, to make matters worse, both arsonists

were employed to protect the destroyed property from the very fires they set.

“See how great a forest a little fire kindles!” wrote James in his epistle (James 3:5b). He wasn’t just talking about forest fires, though. He was comparing them with something far more powerful: the human tongue.

In comparison with other muscles in the body, the tongue is very small. Comparing it with the bits placed in horses’ mouths (v. 3) or the rudder on a great ship (v. 4), he states that “the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things” (v. 5). A horse or a ship is controlled by something comparatively tiny. It is like a fire that starts out small and then burns down an entire forest.

It is amazing how something so small can spread devastation so far and wide. Similarly, our tongues can spread insidious gossip like a forest fire, permeating a congregation of God’s people and wreaking havoc for years to come.

To gossip is to talk behind someone’s back. This sin is described by such words as “whisperer” (Romans 1:29) and “backbiter” (Romans 1:30) which are included in a list of other sins that cause one to be worthy of death (Romans 1:32)! Often we broadcast gossip by saying, “I’m not trying to spread a rumor here, but *did you hear about such-and-such?*” Or we salve our conscience by prefacing what juicy details we repeat about someone else by saying, “Bro. So-and-so, bless his heart...” If someone begins a conversation with, “I really shouldn’t be telling you this...” immediately finish their sentence for them with: “then just don’t say it.” That’s easier said than done, but it’s the only way to put out the flames of gossip.

Consider also that words spoken cannot be taken back. When a fire gets out of hand and becomes impossible to contain, it is again like our tongues that utter words we wish could be taken back. James goes on to say that the tongue “sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell” (v. 6b). When a fire is intentionally started, there is no wishing it away once it is out of

control. The words we say that are intended to tear into others cannot be taken back. Remember the adage, “A friend is gained by many words and lost by only one.”

Your word is your bond Mean what you say and “do not lie to each other” (Colossians 3:9). When lying lips betray the trust of others, no manner of words will likely restore it. Liars, we are warned, will have their place “in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone” (Revelation 21:8).

Christians, of all people, should watch what they say. Those forest fires started in the western United States were intentionally set by people who had sworn to protect against such catastrophes. Similarly, how can disciples of Jesus utter words that are intended to cut down and destroy, rather than to build up and encourage? May our “speech always be with grace, seasoned, as it were, with salt” (Colossians 4:6). Heed the words of James’ epistle: “From the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way” (3:10).

The tongue, like a little fire, is a powerful tool for good. But when it is misused or abused, it will set ablaze an unquenchable fire that may only be matched by the flames of hell.

“See how great a forest a little fire kindles!”
-via *Think On These Things*; Texarkana, Arkansas

News & Notes

THE SICK: *Willie Ridgeway* is in the ECM hospital in Florence... *Roger Mosley’s father, T. W. Mosley*, is in the ECM Hospital in Florence ...*Monroe Pressnell’s brother-in-law, Leamon Britton*, has been in the Athens-Limestone hospital following a stroke last week ...*Jerry Dickey’s father, David Dickey*, is now home from the hospital...*Jack Tucker* has been able to be back at services ...*Helen Trousdale’s sister, Margaret Neal Newton*, is at home and not doing well ...*Helen Stewart’s grandson, Adam*

Stewart, is at home now, but needing a kidney transplant ... *Amber Hammond* was sick and not able to be at Bible study Wednesday night ... *Curtis Cooper* began his radiation treatments this week in Columbia...Remember *Mattie Blanche Word* is at home...*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 *Brookhill church* in Killen is beginning a meeting today and it will continue through Wednesday with *Jim Deason* preaching... The *Jackson Heights church* in Columbia, Tennessee will begin a meeting on Friday and it will continue through next Sunday with *Carl McMurray* preaching.

PREACHING TONIGHT: This evening *Claus Martel* will be preaching at our evening service.

OUT OF TOWN: *The Butlers: Aric and Andrea* are in Atlanta, Georgia this weekend... *Tisha Rogers* is out of town in Atlanta... *June Calvert* is away out a trip to Mexico.

NEW QUARTER BEGINS: Our new quarter in our Bible classes will begin this morning. I appreciate the diligence of our teachers this past quarter and I know that everyone that has been in our classes have learned a lot. I am looking forward to this quarter and I hope that everyone will make every effort to be in class each Sunday morning at 9:45 and Wednesday at 7:00 p.m.

ELDERS & DEACONS MEETING: The elders and deacons will be meeting this afternoon at 4:30.

THE RECORD: *For the week of October 24th*

Sunday: Bible Classes 91
 Morning Worship 112
 Evening Worship 69
Wednesday: Bible Classes 86

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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