

# 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](http://Anderson-church.org)

**Men Priviledged To Serve:**  
Sunday, November 21st:

### *Bible Classes*

Song Leader

..... Eddie J. Hammond

Bible Reading ..... (Isaiah 44:1-8)

..... Mike Rogers

Prayer

..... Ronnie Phillips

### *Morning Worship*

Song Leader

..... Eddie J. Hammond

Prayer

..... Michael Clemmons

Lord's Supper

Presiding ..... Mark McIntyre

Assisting ..... Larry White

Serving ..... James McConnell

..... Andrew Gatlin

..... Mark McCrary

..... Rodney McCrary

Closing Prayer

..... James Word

### *Evening Worship*

Song Leader

..... Daniel Clemmons

Bible Reading ..... (Isaiah 44:9-17)

..... Jimmy Glass

Prayer

..... Scottie Goode

Lord's Supper

..... Mark McIntyre

..... Larry White

Closing Prayer

..... Jerry Dickey

Volume XI

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No. 46

## *What Does The Bible Say?*

**David McClister**

"Brother \_\_\_\_\_, please read James 4, verse 5." When he is done reading, another person in the audience says "That's not what my Bible says." Indeed, the King James Version (KJV) and the New American Standard Bible (NASB) translate that verse differently. The same thing happens when you compare those translations on 1 Corinthians 4:6, or a handful of other passages.

Now the question that comes to some is, "how can we know what the Bible says if there are so many different translations, and especially if those translations do not all give the same sense for each verse?" That's a very good question. Some people even use it as an excuse for not studying and obeying the gospel. It raises the issue not only of what makes a good translation, but more importantly of the real content of the word of God.

It is not our intention here to get into a discussion of the virtues and vices of various Bible translations. I am not dogmatic about any of the modern translations, and neither should anyone else be dogmatic about anyone of them. But we are faced with a genuine problem when we have various translations giving different readings of a text. If we are indeed serious about learning God's will just as accurately as we can, it is important that we be able to discern what the Bible is actually saying.

Some might suggest that a good knowledge of Greek and Hebrew would solve the problem, but such is not true. Every time I hear someone try to iron out a difficult verse by appealing to the Greek or Hebrew, I cannot help but remind myself that things are usually no clearer in the Greek or Hebrew than they are in English. If a verse seems ambiguous in some regard in our translations, it is

probably (but not always) equally ambiguous in the original language of the Bible as well (and the opposite happens as well; sometimes our English translations attempt to clarify ambiguous statements by making them more specific, which is purely a matter of the translator's or editor's judgment). While knowing the original Biblical languages is a great help to anyone who wishes to study the Bible carefully, there is no case I know of in which it is crucial to understanding anything in the Bible. That is, the modern translations such as the King James, New King James (NKJV), American Standard (ASV) or New American Standard all do a decent job of getting the ideas of the original languages into English.

No, the solution is not an appeal to the intricacies of Greek or Hebrew, but lies in being careful to follow a line of thought as the Bible presents it. For example, you do not need to know Greek in order to know that the New American Standard rendering of James 4:5 is off the mark, because the way that verse is translated there does not fit the train of thought in James 4. Compare the translations:

KJV: "Do ye think that the Scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?"

NASB: "Or do you think that the Scripture speak to no purpose: 'He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us?'"

The point James is making in that context is that when we are worldly we are enemies of God (v. 4), and giving ourselves to worldliness makes the Spirit jealous for us. So, even though the NASB rendering here is the less desirable of the two, if you are paying attention to what James is saying it is still easy to catch his meaning.

Similarly, one can see right away that the rendering of the ASV and the NASB in 1 Corinthians 4:6 misses the point simply by looking at the context. Again, note the two renderings:

KJV: "...that ye might learn in us not to think of men above what is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another."

NASB: "... that in us you might learn not to exceed what is written, in order that no one of you might become arrogant in behalf of one against the other."

The Corinthians had divided their allegiance to different leaders in the early church, and Paul's point there is about how the Corinthians should not be rallying around human leaders. But even given the poorer rendering of the NASB, it is still not difficult to see Paul's point in that verse if you will be careful to follow the context.

This brings us to a more general point about the word of God. The word of God is essentially a message, not a particular set of words. The words of Scripture are there to communicate God's truth to us, and it is that truth that is the "real" word (message) of God. Now that does not mean that the words themselves are unimportant, but it means that we must do more than read the words of Scripture. We must get into the message which those words convey to our minds.

I once had a lady rebuke me for saying that the blood of Christ was poured out on the cross. Her contention was that the correct - and only - word to use was "shed." Christ's blood was shed, not poured out, she told me. Now for the life of me I do not see any difference between the two words. They both express the same idea. As a matter of fact, the KJV (to which she was loyal) uses the words "poured out" in Acts 10:45 to translate the very same Greek word that is used of Christ's blood in Matthew 26:28.

You see, as long as the words mean the same thing the same message is communicated. The word of God is a message, and as long as two different words express that message without alteration, it does not matter what words are used. Of course, if using a different word alters the content of the gospel message, then the word must not be used.

In addition to this, we must remember that we need to consider everything the Bible has to say on a subject before we can say we understand it. Many careless interpretations could be avoided

altogether if we would simply explore our Bibles more carefully. It has been said that the Bible is its own best commentary, and that is true. If you are having trouble understanding one verse, perhaps you need to look at other passages where the same subject is discussed. Or look at the context more carefully. It is seldom possible to make sense out of any statement in the Bible if you only consider that statement by itself. But that difficult verse will become easy to understand if we will let the Bible present itself completely to us.

There is no single translation that renders every verse of the Bible in a completely satisfactory way (and for this reason, again, none of us can afford to be dogmatic about any one translation). But this does not mean that we can have no clue as to what God is saying in His word. Given any of the modern translations above a good Bible student ought to be able to come to a knowledge of the truth by paying attention to what is said, its context, and the rest of the Bible's teaching on the subject at hand. Whether your translation says "enmity" or "hatred" in a particular verse will not get in your way of getting at the message of the Bible in any part of it. The answer lies not in learning the Biblical languages, but in being careful and observant when we read the Bible.

-via *Palmetto Reminder*; Palmetto, Florida.

# News and Notes

**THE SICK:** *Willie Ridgeway* is now at home after spending a couple of days in the hospital ... *Myrtie Williams* is at home and fell again this past Monday ... *Angie McCrary's father, Buford Shook*, is to go back to the hospital today and to have additional portion of his leg amputated ... *James Word's brother, J.T. Word*, is now at home following surgery to remove spurs on his back this past Wednesday in Columbia, Tennessee ... *My mother, Jackie Cox*, is to have back surgery at ECM hospital in Florence ... *Leota Springer's husband, Bob Springer*, is at home following his stay at the VA hospital in Birmingham. He is beginning kidney dialysis ... *Lou Helms' son-in-law, Tim Thornton*, is to go for additional tests on Monday ... *Mike Rogers grandmother, Alice Rogers*, is now at home after spending several days at ECM ... *Tisha Thomas' mother, Shelia Johnson*, is taking chemo by mouth ... *Helen Stewart's grandson, Adam Stewart*, is at home now, but needing a kidney transplant ... *Curtis Cooper* is continuing his radiation treatments in Columbia ... *Amber Hammond* was able to be back at Bible study Wednesday night after being sick over the weekend... *Mandy Griffin* was sick this past week and unable to be at services ... *Virginia Lovell* was sick over this past weekend ... *Ava Mosley* was sick this past week and unable to be at Bible study Wednesday night ... *Phil and Ethan Pressnell* were sick and unable to be at Bible study Wednesday night ... *Valerie and Michelle Stewart* were sick and unable to be at Bible study Wednesday night... 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*, contin-



*Remember our regular scheduled song service will be this evening at 6:00. Daniel Clemmons will be directing the service. I hope all of us will make our plans to attend as we teach and admonish one another in songs, hymns and spiritual songs.*

ues at home ... *Tisha Thomas' grandmother, Nellie Hunter*, is in the Meadow Brook Nursing Home in Pulaski.

**COMMUNICATION GROUPS:** Tonight is the night for Communication group three to meet. If you are in group three, remember to meet with your group this evening after our service.

**OUT OF TOWN:** *The Butlers: Aric and Andrea* are out of town in Kentucky today ... *Glenda Phillips* is also away in Kentucky today...*The McConnells: James and Freda* are on vacation ...*Angie Cook* has been out of town on vacation this week...*The Stewarts: Stephen, Valerie, Michelle and Trenton* were in Taylors, South Carolina this past weekend...*Helen Stewart* was also in South Carolina.

**BUSINESS MEETING:** The elders will be meeting this afternoon at 4:30 at the building.

**THE RECORD:** *For the week of November 14th*  
**Sunday:**

Bible Classes ..... 93  
Morning Worship ..... 110  
Evening Worship ..... 90

**Wednesday:**

Bible Classes ..... 83



The Anderson  
church of Christ  
website at:

[www. Anderson-church.org](http://www.Anderson-church.org)

**On The Site You Will Find:**

1. Information about the church at Anderson
2. The *Gospel Power* in .pdf format uploaded each Sunday.
3. Sermons preached at Anderson in Real Audio.

*Please Visit Our Site Regularly.*

**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  
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Larry White ..... (256) 247-0988  
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