

# 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, September 12th

### *Bible Classes*

Song Leader  
..... Daniel Clemmons  
Bible Reading ..... (Isaiah 29:13-24)  
..... Curtis Mosley  
Prayer  
..... Ronnie Phillips

### *Morning Worship*

Song Leader  
..... Daniel Clemmons  
Prayer  
..... Monroe Pressnell  
Lord's Supper  
Presiding ..... Mark McIntyre  
Assisting ..... Jimmy Glass  
Serving ..... Andrew Gatlin  
..... Eddie L. Hammond  
..... Rodney McCrary  
..... Stephen Stewart  
Closing Prayer  
..... Claus Martel

### *Evening Worship*

Song Leader  
..... Jim Phillips  
Bible Reading ..... (Isaiah 30:1-11)  
..... Mike Rogers  
Prayer  
..... Larry White  
Lord's Supper  
..... Mark McIntyre  
..... Jimmy Glass  
Closing Prayer  
..... Brian Word

Volume XI

September 12, 2004

No. 36

## *Out of Focus*

**David Posey**

A severely out of focus picture is not worth the paper it is printed on. An out of focus life is not much better.

Actually, it is rarely the case that a photograph is totally out of focus. Usually, you can find parts of the picture that are clear and sharp. But it's not the part of the scene you planned to capture.

Why did it happen? The focus mechanism of the camera will bring into focus the part of the scene at which the view finder is pointed. If you're trying to take a picture of your four-year old sitting in a chair and he suddenly moves, you'll probably get a nice, sharp picture of the wall behind him. Your four-year old, meanwhile, will be a blur.

Christianity can be like that. We mean to focus on the Lord, but instead of the Lord moving, we move the view finder of our life. There He is, in all His glory, filling up the frame. But right behind him is a shiny, dark blue BMW Z4 and, ever so subtly, we turn the lens toward the car and the focus follows.

John calls this problem the lust of the eyes in 1 John 2:16. In this case, the lust of the eyes may be motivated by another class of sin he mentions, the *boastful pride of life*. "Wouldn't people think I'm something special if they saw me driving this car," we may catch ourselves thinking. All of this may lead to a third category of sin that John mentions, *the lust of the flesh*. Our appetite for recognition and our hunger for the fleshly exhilaration of owning such an automobile may lead to covetousness and greed and all kinds of binding lusts. Peter said, "for by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved" (2 Peter 2:19).

All that because of a hunk of metal. What a bargain, eh?

Meanwhile, Jesus is a just a blur in our life, hardly recognizable to us anymore. He has been replaced. Individuals do this, churches do this, we all are susceptible to doing it. We forget why we are here.

Unfortunately for those caught in this web, the film of life will be developed one day and “we’ll get the picture.” At judgment, when Jesus stands before us as our Judge, He will be the only one we see and He will be in terrifying focus. If we should hear those words, “depart from me, you worker of iniquity, I never knew you” we’ll know why. It’ll be because we couldn’t keep Jesus in our sight and maintain our focus on the only thing that really matters after all.

-via *The Folsom Point View*, Folsom, California.

## Tolerance

Luke Chandler

One of the popular concepts gouging its way through society today is the notion of “tolerance.” While our nation was founded upon such principles as religious and political tolerance; it has moved rapidly to label many formerly taboo subjects as “tolerable.”

We needn’t look far to find examples of this. If we read a newspaper or watch television, we are constantly deluged with evil ideas. We are told that fornication (a word we don’t hear much any more) is okay. We’re also told that abortion is a proper and necessary thing in family planning and population control. Many now declare that homosexuality is a natural thing and should be labeled as merely an alternate lifestyle. If anyone stands up and opposes these things, he/she is labeled as intolerant, close-minded and a hater-monger. Add to this the ever-growing diet of profanity, nudity, violence and immorality in our entertainment and we see ourselves nearly overwhelmed by worldly concepts. Even our government has allied itself with these forces in recent years. High-ranking officials have told us we must learn to tolerate and accept these.

What is the danger for us? Will we suddenly decide that we really have been close-minded and immediately accept these behaviors and practices? Most likely no. The vast majority of Christians will not turn away from godliness overnight. There is a very real and present danger for us though. *Our principles can begin to erode* from the constant, steady pressure of society. We run a high risk of becoming desensitized to evil things, to the point that we are not bothered by them as much as we should be.

Are we already desensitized to worldly things? Have the sharp edges of our conscience been blunted by the flood of godlessness we are exposed to? Do we find ourselves increasingly tolerant of worldly things in our movies, TV or music? Does profanity set us on edge, or does it flow



*Come Join Us In Our*

## Gospel Meeting

September 26-29

### Schedule of Services

Sunday: 9:45 a.m.; 10:45 a.m. & 4:00 p.m.

Singing at 3:00 p.m.

Monday through Wednesday: 7:00 p.m.

Jim Deason, Speaker

Anderson church of Christ

Highway 207

Anderson, Alabama

through our ears with no resistance on our part? Do we try to avoid scenes of fornication and nudity, or do we calmly sit and allow them to fill our mind? Have our views on divorce, abortion or other “social issues” been diluted with elements of modern thought? Most importantly, if we see ourselves as slowly drifting one way, or the other, which way would we be going?

God has given us some principles on how to fight the erosion of our conscience, as well as how to sharpen its worn edges.

First, we can guard our minds against the flood of worldly thoughts, ideas and images that swirl around us. In Proverbs 4 :23, Solomon writes “*Guard your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.*” We can protect ourselves against much of the evil flood by simply refusing to watch and listen to things which would fill our minds with worldly ideas. If we do not give sin a chance to enter our hearts, it will not be able to dull our consciences, There are many movies and TV programs that Christians simply shouldn’t see. Proverbs 14:16 warns us about letting our guard down. “*A wise man fears and departs from evil, but a fool rages and is self-confident.*” It is foolish to feel confident in our own strength and allow evil its place in us, but we are wise if we realize its power and stay away from it.

Second, we can learn to have the same mind as Christ did. This basic principle, given in Philippians 2:5, tells us to think in the same way as our Lord did. We have no better role model than He, so we must study His attitude toward worldliness and imitate it. We can see the principles He lived by in passages such as Matthew 15:18-20. Jesus says that our deeds originate from the heart. Evil things are done because the ideas were in the heart to begin with. We must choose which master we shall serve (Matthew 6:24) and keep out the other. Which movies might Jesus watch? Which movies would He avoid watching? Would the Lord allow society to influence His convictions in any possible way? If

He lived in our time, would there be any differences in what He would tolerate? We must have the same mind as He.

Finally, we must fill our minds with things that will sharpen our consciences. Philippians 4:8: describes the kinds of things we should fill our minds with (*things that are true, noble, just, pure, praiseworthy, etc.*). If I fill my mind with godly things, I will develop a conscience that can discriminate properly toward what is tolerable and intolerable. Unfortunately, conscience-honoring thoughts and images are increasingly rare. Nevertheless, they exist and can be found if we make any real effort. The richest source is obviously God’s Word. But if we do not actively fill our minds with it, we shall fail against the erosive storms.

By following these principles, we can fight the moral rot that exists in our society. We can remain sensitive toward that which is evil, and avoid the noxious cloud of the “new tolerance” that threatens our souls.

-via *Sun Valley Illuminator*, Birmingham, Alabama.

## News & Notes

**THE SICK:** *Curtis Cooper* is in the hospital in Pulaski following surgery on Thursday... *Jean Ray* is doing better now and was able to be at Bible study after spending a couple of days in the hospital... *Willie Ridgeway* is now at home after spending several days in the hospital this past week ... *Jerry Dickey* received word that his biopsy done last week was not cancer... *Monroe Pressnell* is going for tests this week in Huntsville ... *Hoyt Hammond* is at home not able to be out... *Ronnie Phillips and Sissy Clemmons’ mother, Lois Ann Corum* received a good report from her tests on Thursday... *Warren Glass, Jr., Charles and Jimmy’s brother* and a former preacher here, is now at home following his surgery in Birmingham on Wednesday ... *Myrtie*

*Williams* continues at home ...*James McConnell's mother, Della Mae McConnell*, is at home ...*Helen Trousdale's sister, Margaret Neal Newton*, is finishing her treatments for cancer ... *Mattie Blanche Word* is at home and is not doing as well ...*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... *Jerry Best's nephew, Shannon Johnson*, continues at home ... *Tisha Thomas' grandmother, Nellie Hunter*, is in the Meadow Brook Nursing Home in Pulaski.

**OUR GOSPEL MEETING:** Our gospel meeting with *Jim Deason* preaching is just two weeks away. I hope that all of you are remembering to tell others about the meeting. There are some fliers on the table in the vestibule for each one to take and give to those you invite.

**OUT OF TOWN:** *The Rogers: Mike, tisha, Zack and Jacob* were out of town in Arkansas last weekend...*Signa Skipworth and Catherine Parker* are away visiting with their sister...*Sonya Blackburn* is out of town today.

**SYMPATHY:** We want to express our deepest sympathy to *Freda McConnell* and all the family in the passing of her aunt, *Ivadean Monroe* last Saturday. Her funeral was Monday.

**GOSPEL MEETING:** The *Mt. Zion church* in Athens is beginning a meeting today and it will continue through Friday. The services will begin each evening at 7:00 p.m. *Dennis Abernathy of White Oak, Texas* will be the speaker.

**NEW DIRECTORIES:** The new pocket directories are on the table in the vestibule. If you have not pick one up yet, be sure to get a copy today.

**THE RECORD:** *For the week of September 5th*

**Sunday:**

- Bible Classes ..... 104
- Morning Worship ..... 124
- Evening Worship ..... 92

**Wednesday:**

- Bible Classes ..... 94

**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**

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- Mark McIntyre ..... (256) 233-1953
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- Rocky Rose ..... (256) 247-0011
- Larry White ..... (256) 247-0988
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