

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, December 18th

Bible Classes

Song Leader

..... Mark McIntyre
Bible Reading (Exo. 6:1-9)
..... Eddie L. Hammond
Prayer
..... Rocky Rose

Morning Worship

Song Leader

..... Mark McIntyre
Prayer
..... Ray Tucker
Lord's Supper
Presiding Ronnie Phillips
Assisting Andrew Gatlin
Serving Curtis Mosley
..... Mark McCrary
..... Jimmie Lovell
..... Rodney McCrary
Closing Prayer
..... James Word

Evening Worship

Song Leader

..... Brian Word
Bible Reading (Exo. 6:10-19)
..... Jimmy Glass
Prayer
..... Mark McIntyre
Lord's Supper
..... Ronnie Phillips
..... Andrew Gatlin
Closing Prayer
..... Larry White

Volume XII

December 18, 2005

No. 50

Serving God With Emotion

W. Frank Walton

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength" (Mark 12:30). The prime imperative of true religion is to love God supremely with our entire being. This includes lovingly serving God with our God-given emotions! An emotion is a strong mental feeling prompted by an evocative mental idea.

A factual grasp of Scripture's presentation of God's loving nature and holy being should evoke love for Him, which is cherishing, reverencing and honoring Him. How thrilling that One so High and Holy is concerned with little me (John 3:16)! A rational knowledge of God should engage our emotional energy to strongly desire a closer relationship with Him in loving obedience (1 John 5:3).

1. Emotion Abused. "Emotionalism" is allowing subjective feelings (which are often selfishly volatile) to manipulate and deceive our objective reason, instead of letting rational truth guide our inner emotions. This is the error of "a zeal for God not according to knowledge" (Romans 10:2).

Religionists, such as in Pentecostalism, Mormonism, etc., too often rely on subjective feelings for ascertaining a belief in religion. "I feel it in my heart" is often elevated above the divine standard of truth in Scripture for guidance, which leads to error. God clearly warns us that our subjective emotions are a deceptive, unreliable guide in religion (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12). "There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death" (Proverbs 14:12).

2. Emotions Balanced. We should not conclude that the abuse

of emotion means we should suppress our God-given emotions in serving Him. In fact, the Bible teaches it is sinful to serve God unemotionally!

We're commanded to have emotional fervor in obeying God: "not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord" (Romans 12:11). "Fervent" (Gr. *zeontes*) means "boiling." How many are on fire for the Lord (Acts 18:25)? Intellectually knowing God's truth should motivate emotional fervency in serving the Lord. Zeal is an emotional reaction to a rational understanding of God and His will.

Jesus said we should show emotional excitement in faithfully serving God. Even when persecuted, He said "be glad and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven" (Luke 6:23). Let's not be religious reactionaries who merely react to what's wrong, instead of being proactively guided by truth. Wisdom knows how to balance the rational understanding of truth with the emotional response to it.

Wilson Adams well observed in the 2005 Florida College Lectures: "I am equally concerned about those who have a desire for truth but no desire of heart. When was the last time you wept during a sermon because it touched your heart?... Certainly zeal without knowledge has always posed a clear and present danger but equally harmful to the people of God is knowledge without heart. Do your children see you as enthused about worshipping the God of eternity as they see you excited about a Saturday ball game or anything else that captures your heart? Little eyes are watching" (True Worship, pp. 12-14).

The thrilling, life-changing gospel is not a stoic faith of cold, emotionless facts, rote rituals and sterile knowledge. Too many churches seem emotionally lethargic like Sardis (Revelation 3:1). They're so externally sound in the truth that they are sound asleep! Uplifting, Spirit-filled singing should come from hearts filled with worshipful enthusiasm, not drag on like a death march (Neh 12:27,43; Ezra 3:13, Psalm 103:1). Appropriate and earnest "amens" would be welcomed by most

gospel preachers to help emphasize the importance of the truth.

3. Authorized Emotions. God our Father isn't impassive toward man, but has deep, tender emotions for our welfare (Hosea 11:8-9, Ezekiel 6:9, Luke 1:78). Jesus was emotionally eaten up with zeal in serving God (John 2:11). He was emotionally angered by men's hard hearts (Mark 3:5). He felt just like the Psalmist: "Rivers of water run down from my eyes, because men do not keep Your Law" (Psalm 119:136). Jesus was emotionally involved, "as a man of sorrows" (Isaiah 53:3), in caring about man in order to save Him (Hebrews 5:7). He wept over the death of His friend Lazarus (John 11:35), as well as the tragic rebellion of the Jewish nation (Luke 19:41).

Also, Jesus served God with great joy and inner emotional peace (John 14:27, 15:11). He was emotionally thrilled with joy over His disciples' spiritual progress (Luke 10:21). Jesus shows us the proper place of emotional energy that ignites faithful service to God. The apostle Paul was emotionally stirred, as Christ's finest servant of sacrificial service. His love for men's souls evoked tearful preaching (Acts 20:31) and tear-stained letters (2 Corinthians 2:4). The emotional nature of genuine brotherly love is seen in Paul's tearful farewell to the Ephesian elders (Acts 20:37, cf 1 Peter 1:22, Romans 12:10).

We should be emotionally involved in one another's lives and "rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those that weep" (Romans 12:15). Distant relationship in the church is from stoically keeping our emotional distance from one another, which is wrong. We see Barnabas put joyful passion into preaching the truth (Acts 11:23). He preached the truth not just from the top of his head but from the bottom of his heart. In the Scriptures, as in the Psalms, we see the entire spectrum of human emotions engaged in serving God, from the tears of a penitent prostitute (Luke 7:38) to the "great joy" of spiritually enthusiastic people who obeyed the gospel (Acts 8:8,39).

The whole of our service to the Lord must be done “heartily” (Colossians 3:23). Knowledge of the truth must energize our emotional fervency to be “always abounding in the work of the Lord” (1 Corinthians 15:58).

~via *Charleston Bulletin*, Brownsburg, Indiana.



Pleasing Men or God?

G. Clark Duggar

“For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? or am I striving to please men? If I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ? (Galatians 1:10).

At the beginning of his letter to the Galatians, Paul points out that some had perverted the gospel of Christ. He reminds these brethren that the gospel he preached to them came from God and is the only gospel that will save. “But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema” (Galatians 1:8). And now the motive behind all that would pervert the gospel is made clear: they seek the favor of men rather than God.

The false teachers under consideration in this passage are the Judaizing teachers who were attempting to force upon Gentile Christians such things as circumcision and the eating of meats according to Moses’ law so that their Hebrew identity would distinguish them from the Gentile. But Christ had fulfilled the law (Matthew 5:17) and “the law of commandments contained in ordinances” had been abolished (Ephesians 2:15); therefore, such requirements perverted the gospel.

The Judaizers were simply trying to make the gospel more palatable for their Jewish brethren by including certain aspects of the Law of Moses in their teaching. Would they attract

more Jews with this perverted gospel? I expect so. Would they save more souls? Absolutely not! Their teaching was an abomination to God and they were separated from God (“anathema”) for preaching it. Truly they had “fallen away from grace” by preaching and practicing this perverted gospel (Galatians 5:4).

The fact is, we cannot be concerned with pleasing men and still serve Christ. The word rendered “servant” literally means “slave” and is indicative of absolute obedience which knows no will but that of the master. Paul was concerned with God’s favor and if his preaching the gospel in its unadulterated form alienated the Jews or anyone else from himself, so be it. He could not and would not change the gospel to accommodate those that would not otherwise receive it. So should it be with us today.

Unfortunately, however, this is not the case today. Men pervert the gospel today for the same reason the Judaizers did – they want to please men. Why do they insist on using an instrument of music in their worship of God? They do so because men like it. It doesn’t matter that God hasn’t authorized it and that it perverts the gospel of Christ. Men like it and it will therefore attract more people, so let’s use it.

Why do some insist on including entertainment and recreation in the work of the church? Men like it! Will the social gospel attract more people? I expect so. Will it save more souls? Absolutely not! The only appeal we have is the gospel Paul preached for it is the only gospel that will save. If we use carnal means to attract more people we simply attract carnally minded people and in the process make ourselves “anathema.”

We must remember it is God’s favor that we seek, and if we are to be a servant of Christ we must limit ourselves in our teaching and practice to that which He authorizes (Colossians 3:17). This may make us unpopular with the world and perhaps even with some of our own brethren. If it does there’s nothing we can do about it, for we

will not pervert the gospel of Christ to accommodate anyone, even ourselves.

-via *The Proclaimer*; Tyler, Texas.

News & Notes

THE SICK: *Amber Hammond* is now at home following surgery on Wednesday to remove a cyst... *Kerry Cox* is now home from the hospital after experiencing problems following her recent surgery... *Angie McCrary's mother, Edna Shook*, is in the ECM hospital in Florence following a stroke last week and is not doing well... *Jerry Dickey's father, David Dickey*, is in the ICU at ECM hospital in Florence... *Lydia Clemmons* has been sick and has been unable to be at services this past week ... *Cori Williams* was sick and unable to be at Bible study Wednesday night... *Corey Word* has been sick and not able to be at Bible study Wednesday night... *Myrtie Williams* continues at home... *Mattie Blanche Word's son, Billy Word* is at home now recovering from a fall... *Mattie Blanche Word* continues at home ... *Judy Williams' mother, Flossie Kazzaire*, continues in a nursing facility in Fayette. Her condition has declined... *Monroe Pressnell's aunt, Mildred Pressnell*, continues at home ... *Tisha Thomas' grandmother, Nellie Hunter*, is in the Meadow Brook Nursing Home in Pulaski

COMMUNICATION GROUPS: Tonight will be the time for communication group three to meet. If you are in group three remember to meet with your group this evening.

SONG SERVICE: Tonight will be the time for our regular scheduled song service. Brian Word will be directing the service. I hope that everyone will make their plans to be present.

THE RECORD: *For the week of December 11th*

Sunday: Bible Classes 93
 Morning Worship 114
 Evening Worship 72
Wednesday: Bible Classes 71

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 (256) 247-1451
 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 (931) 565-3799

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