


# Gospel Power



*"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation..." (Romans 1:16)*

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## Commitment and Joy

Gary Henry

One of the disadvantages of a complex, fast-paced society like ours is that we get entangled in so many different concerns that there's little time or inclination to be deeply involved in any of them. We don't delve deeply; we dabble. But dabblers accomplish very little. Dwight Moody said, "Give me a person who says *This one thing I do*, and not *these fifty things I dabble in*." Trying to do too much often keeps us from doing our best at anything. And to make matters worse, the very spirit of our age militates against the making of serious commitments. Modern people are wary of getting into anything they can't easily get out of. We like to keep our options open. So we have two distinct tendencies that, when coupled together, make for a dangerous situation: we are frantically "busy," but at the same time we don't want to get "involved." We suffer at once from a surplus of activity and a shortage of commitment. Our hectic fiddling with this, that, and the other puts us right there next to the fellow who described himself as being "deeply superficial."

It is little wonder that we "get" so little "out of" what we do. We have forgotten the wise advice of our grandparents who told us, "You get out of things what you put into them." They were telling us something that holds true for all of life's endeavors: commitment and joy are

partners. When we stand at a distance from the work and the relationships that ought to be dear to us, we forfeit the fulfillment that is available to us. But when we dig in, get truly involved, and risk the vulnerability of being genuinely committed, we find that life is a storehouse of satisfaction.

Consider three examples. *First, our marriages.* If, like so many in our day, we eschew any real commitment and treat our marriages as "open," disposable relationships, we ought not to be surprised that they provide little in the way of deep gratification. Do we spend little time nurturing our marriages? If so, they will simply not grow into rich and rewarding relationships. Marriage will never fulfill the expectations of those who only dabble with it.

*Second, our involvement in the local congregation.* Do we attend only the services that are convenient, and participate only in the work that suits us? Do we criticize what "they" are doing? If so, there will not be any real sense of joy that comes from our membership in the local church. We'll receive little benefit from what God meant to be a rewarding relationship if we refuse to make a commitment to it.

*Third, and most important, our devotion to the Lord Himself.* Do we pray irregularly, study the

Scriptures haphazardly, and reduce religion to grist for purely intellectual debate? Do we limit ourselves to routine, formal expressions of worship and praise? Do we fail to “love the Lord [our] God with all [our] heart, with all [our] soul, and with all [our] mind” (Matthew 22:37)? If so, we will surely find spirituality to be the least interesting facet of our lives. But if, on the other hand, we have the courage to pursue God with a risk-it-all commitment, we will discover that “the joy of the Lord is [our] strength” (Nehemiah 8:10). God says, “You will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart” (Jeremiah 29:13).

It is, of course, “dangerous” to care deeply about important matters. When we put our heart into something, we put ourselves in position to be inconvenienced, disappointed, frustrated, and possibly even hurt. But if we take the easy way out and avoid serious commitments in life, we doom ourselves to an impoverished existence. Sooner or later, the person who sows sparingly will find that he also reaps sparingly.

So, my friend, care and care deeply about God. Without delay, do two things: commit yourself passionately to the *worship* of God, and involve yourself tirelessly in the work of God. It will cost you dearly. In fact, it will cost you everything you ever thought was “yours.” But you will be the richer for risking this great investment. Joy will be the reward for your *commitment*. Having risked all else for the joy of God, you’ll be able to say with Paul, “For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day” (2 Timothy 1:12).

~via *Focus Magazine*, Vol. 4 No. 12.



**Remember:**  
**Read and Study Your**  
**Bibles Daily**

## Tell The Truth

Jason Moore

Every relationship between persons is built on trust. That our relationship to God is founded on trust (or faith) is not unique from other relationships. It’s just common sense. Persons are free to make choices that help or harm themselves and others. The only way then that two or more persons can enjoy any kind of partnership is if they trust one another to make choices that are mutually helpful and not harmful. The willingness to run the risk of being hurt by someone else is what faith or trust is all about. When you trust someone you have faith that they will act in your best interest. You show your trust in them by giving your time and energy on their behalf as well as by granting them access to your private life. “Faith without works is dead” is true not just of faith in God. It’s true of faith, period. If you have faith in any person, you work for them and trust them to work for you.

Consider, as an example, Paul’s plea to the Corinthians: “Our mouth has spoken freely to you, O Corinthians, our heart is opened wide. You are not restrained by us, but you are restrained in your own affections. Now in a like exchange – I speak as to children– open wide to us also...Make room for us in your hearts; we wronged no one, we corrupted no one, we took advantage of no one” (2 Corinthians 6:11-13; 7:2). Paul and his companions had shown themselves trustworthy among the Corinthians. In fact, they had conducted themselves as parents and cared for the Corinthian brethren as children. Paul had made himself vulnerable (opened their hearts) to the risks of such sacrificial love for a people who might spurn him. Even Paul’s letter is evidence of his faith in them to make a right choice. He begs them to show faith in him in return: “open wide to us also.” That’s not only an inspired, but a common sense plea. Because relationships are built on trust.

Since any relationship between persons is built on trust, a lie is devastating to any relationship because it undermines the foundation of trust that supports it. To tell a lie is to create an explosive and bury it in the foundation of trust that stands beneath you and the person to whom you lied. It lies there, pardon the pun, silent and deadly beneath the two of you. As time ticks by, a lie actually grows in its explosive potential. The longer it remains undiscovered, the larger and more destructive it becomes. Life above the lie and inside the relationship continues normally with the deceived party ignorant and you knowledgeable of the danger hidden beneath. No harm appears to be done until they stumble upon the deception. Lies in the very nature of the case explode upon discovery. They are always violent in their effect. Even confessing a lie and so exposing it yourself involves an explosion. A lie, once told, is impossible to disarm. The person to whom you lied is injured by the blast and the foundation of trust is broken up.

Tell the truth. Truth brings people together – even when it hurts. But a lie, like slander, separates friends. All lies behave in the manner depicted above. They all strike with deadly force at the trust that supports a relationship. Broken doors and windows and leaking roofs are easily fixed, but broken foundations are not so quickly repaired. It takes a long time to undo the damage done by the telling of a lie because rather than damaging a single part of the house, it rattles the entirety and shatters the base which supports it.

Don't expect, if you've told a lie, to be believed soon afterwards. Liars forfeit the right to be trusted with the truth, just like thieves forfeit the right to be trusted with your wallet. Trust is not something you demand, especially when you've proven untrustworthy even once or even over a seemingly unimportant matter. Trust is not something you win automatically when you turn a certain age like sixteen, or sixty for that matter. Trust is something you earn by showing yourself trustworthy. You win someone's

trust by showing yourself capable of handling the freedoms and responsibilities you currently possess. If you can't fulfill the responsibilities that are currently yours, then why should you be trusted with greater opportunities? If you abuse the smallest of freedoms, then how do you deserve greater privileges and independence?

Show yourself trustworthy and you will be trusted. Show yourself untrustworthy and you will be distrusted. You may coax or bully others into giving you freedom or license, but you don't win their trust with such devices. You only manipulate their love. They may let you have your way, not because they trust you, but because they don't trust you and fear losing you and your affection for them. I have no respect for those who hold others hostage with their love. I suspect the Lord does not respect such behavior either. It undermines the common sense foundation He established for respectable relationships.

One more thing. Don't ever lie to someone and then tell them you love them. When you do that you become a Judas, betraying those who genuinely love you with a deceitful kiss. That's despicable. It's not just dishonest, it's hypocritical. It's not just unloving, it's hateful. It's not just one lie, it's two – a falsehood sugarcoated with a false love. That makes the deception not just a black lie, but a black hearted lie.

~via *Southside Reminder*, Pasadena, Texas.

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## News & Notes

**THE SICK:** *Wynell Ridgeway* is to have surgery on Tuesday ..*Kerry Cox's grandfather, Coy Louman,* is now at home from Birmingham and this prognosis is not good at all... *Jerry Dickey's mother, Pat Dickey,* continues in the ECM hospital room 665...*Erin Cooper* was sick and unable to be at Bible study

Wednesday night...**Lisa Word** was also sick and unable to be at Bible study Wednesday night...**Claus and Sanda Martel** were feeling better and were able to be at Bible study Wednesday night ...**Arvel Newton's nephew, Chester Newton**, continues at home with his battle with cancer ...Remember **Millinea Word** as she continues her treatments/medication ... **Mattie Blanche Word** continues at home and not able to be out ...**Aldeen Noles** is in the SunBridge Nursing Home in Lawrenceburg ..**Shelia Moore's mother-in-law, Laurene Whitehead**, is in the Athens Convelesant Center ...**Mary Best's nephew, Shannon Johnson**, who is at home ... **Millinea Word's mother, Nola McCafferty**, and **Tisha Thomas' grandmother, Nellie Hunter**, who are both in the Meadow Brook Nursing Home in Pulaski.

**SYMPATHY:** We want to express our deepest sympathy to **Rodney McCrary** and *all the family* in the passing of Rodney's father, *Austin McCrary*, this past Wednesday afternoon. His funeral was on Saturday.

**OUT OF TOWN:** **Ray Williams** has been in Arkansas this week with his work...**The McConnells:** *James and Freda* are away on vacation this week in Florida...**The Rogers:** *Mike, Tisha, Zachary and Jacob* are in Mississippi this weekend

**COMMUNICATION GROUPS:** Communication group two will meet tonight after the evening service. If you are in group two remember to meet with your group this evening.



Next Sunday night, November 18th, will be the time for our regular scheduled song service. Mark McIntyre will be directing the service. Make your plans to be present as we sing songs of glory and praise to God.

# Gospel POWER

is published in interest of New Testament Christianity and to enhance the work of the Anderson church.

## 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.

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Anderson-church.org

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