

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 1st

Bible Classes

Song Leader

..... Brian Word

Bible Reading (Psalm 45)

..... Mark McIntyre

Prayer

..... Phil Pressnell

Morning Worship

Song Leader

..... Brian Word

Prayer

..... Michael Clemmons

Lord's Supper/Collection

Presiding Claus Martel

Serving Aric Butler

..... Jerry Best

..... James Albert McConnell

Closing Prayer

..... Ray Tucker

Evening Worship

Song Leader

..... Daniel Clemmons

Bible Reading (Psalm 46)

..... Ethan Pressnell

Prayer

..... Larry White

Lord's Supper

..... Claus Martel

Closing Prayer

..... Rocky Rose

Volume IX

December 1, 2002

No. 48

"Your Labor Is Not In Vain"

Jeff May

Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15:58, *"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."*

It's wonderful to know as a Christian that I am laboring in a work that has a guarantee of a reward. No matter how many trials and labors I may have to endure, my labor will not be in vain. God will reward me greatly. Three Old Testament characters teach me that lesson very well. They are Noah, Joseph and David.

Noah's Labor Was Not In Vain

Noah was a man who worked 120 years building an ark for an oncoming flood. All of those years he was preaching to the people of their need to repent of their sins. Did it do any good? Was it in vain? We might be tempted to say, "Yes". No one outside of his own family obeyed. But we must not forget that God was surely pleased with Noah. Noah was faithful in the preaching of God's word and that is all God ever asked of him. He was a huge success!! As I once heard a man say, "We must learn to feel successful just to have had the opportunity to preach the gospel."

Add to that, Noah's teaching did save his family of eight souls. How many times do we fail to do even that. If a man saves his own family he has accomplished a great and eternal thing. Then too, he saved his own soul and his legacy is left engraved in God's "hall of faith" as recorded in Hebrews 11. "By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became the heir of the righteousness which is according to faith" (Hebrews 11:7).

Joseph's Labor Was Not In Vain

Surely there were moments in Joseph's life when a lesser man would have thrown up his hands and said, "What's the use in serving God?" All Joseph had ever done was serve God faithfully. What did it bring him in the process? He was hated by his brothers, thrown in a pit and sold into bondage. A woman falsely accused him of trying to rape her and it landed him in prison. He finally saw a chance to get a good word in with Pharaoh but was forgotten about by the butler. He could have said, "All my labor has been in vain." Instead, Joseph pressed on faithfully trusting in His God. Eventually he was promoted to the second highest position in Egypt and was able to be reunited with his family and save them from a terrible famine.

Through all of his trials Joseph saw the working of God in his life. He told his brothers "But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring about as it is this day, to save many people alive" (Genesis 50:20). Joseph's labor was not in vain.

David's Labor Was Not In Vain

Here was the man after God's own heart. He was a man who lived with a lot of disappointment. For the better parts of his life he had lived loyal and faithful to God but then one mistake brought him much turmoil. He committed adultery with Bathsheba and it had long lasting consequences in David's family. David made things right but still had to see many of his children go by the wayside. David could have been distraught over his children and abandoned his own faith, but he did not.

I once made a foolish statement like that. I once commented, "If my children were to abandon their faith, I just don't think I could continue preaching." I wish I had never said that. Of course, I must continue preaching. To quit would only be to reinforce their quitting. No, I am preaching a gospel that saves men's souls and results in well-rewarded labor. If my children are among those saved, I will rejoice. But I will not quit. I am resolved to go to heaven and give God my all even if the rest of the world

refuses (as in the days of Noah) and even if my children do not (as in the days of David). My labor will not be in vain.

Let us all resolve to have the attitude reflected in an old spiritual. "I shall not be, I shall not be moved. I shall not be, I shall not be moved. Just like a tree that's planted by the water, I shall not be moved." Our labor is not in vain in the Lord.

~via *The Noble Searcher*, Gardendale, Alabama.



Living As A Leader

Jim Jonas

A true leader of God's people doesn't wait for a formal appointment to begin serving. Rather, we come to recognize leaders among us as those who in the regular course of life have already been serving the congregation "without the credentials," so to speak. We're not talking about an autocrat, one who arrogates unto himself a position, title or authority that doesn't belong to him – a usurper, if you please.

Remember, the primary function of leaders, whether elders, deacons, preachers, class teachers, etc. is to serve the people of God: "And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave – just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:27-28). Being a leader is not about giving orders, being "in charge" or throwing one's weight around. That was the concept that led James and John to petition for seats of honor in the kingdom, and Jesus replied, "You do not know what you ask" (Matthew 20:20-22).

It would behoove us to keep a mental index file of those whom we observe serving the Lord in various capacities. These are the men who show up at work days (are you there to know

who they are?!). You may see them at a gospel meeting (are you there to see them?!). You may bump into them at a hospital (are you there for a chance meeting with them?!). They will attend group meetings; they will frequent social occasions such as potlucks. You will not hear of them willfully choosing other activities over the opportunity to worship; they will be there when the doors are open. Leaders are those who gradually materialize in our consciousness as dependable, interested and willing participants in the daily events and experiences of the congregation. They are not reluctant servants. They don't ask, "Do I have to go?" Rather, they are the ones who probably beat you there.

At this point we may sense a potential problem. Is our level of association with each other such that we are truly familiar with our fellow brethren? Or is our inter-action so sketchy and casual that we don't really have a clue as to the leadership traits of a given brother?

The obvious solution is to take steps to become better acquainted with others in our spiritual family, for the time will come when we will be asked to formally recognize the leaders among us. Unfortunately, other solutions have sometimes been substituted:

1) Let the elders pick the next elders and deacons. Human wisdom may say that since the elders should ideally be more spiritually mature than others and probably more intimately acquainted with various members, perhaps the selection should be left to them. Such reasoning is a great first step toward creating a self-perpetuating hierarchy. When searching for leaders to handle a delicate problem in the early church "the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said ... seek out from among you seven men of good reputation ..." (Acts 6:2-3). The people made the choice because it was the people who would have to submit to the judgments of the leaders.

2) Abbreviated qualifications have been

substituted for a comprehensive knowledge of a person; i.e., the man whose children are all baptized and faithful becomes an automatic candidate for elder. It seems so rare these days to find a man whose children are all faithful that we tend first to look at this qualification perhaps forgetting that other equally valid qualifications must also be met.

Men, what do your brethren see in you when they are looking for a leader? "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works."

~via *Hueytown Bulletin*, Hueytown, Alabama.

News & Notes

THE SICK: *Lou Helms* received a good report from her doctor following the surgery on her throat last week...*Faye Hammond* continues at home and is going for rehabilitation three times a week ...*Claus Martel* has been sick this past week and was not able to be at services ...*Alyssa Thomas* was sick this past Wednesday night and was unable to be at Bible study ... *Sanda Martel* was sick and not able to be at Bible study Wednesday night ...*Jerry Best* broke three ribs in his fall last week and has not been able to be out...*Rodney & Angie McCrary* were sick and not able to be at services ... *Ronnie Phillips* has been able to be at services some, but is still recovering from his back surgery ... *Sandra Glass* continues to recovery from her recent surgery ...*Eddie Hammond's cousin, Ricky Davis*, has learned that he has cancer. Remember him in your prayers... *James Albert and Freda McConnell's daughter-in-*

law, Karen McConnell, has been having some problems as of late in her pregnancy. Remember her in your prayers... *Lisa Word* will go Wednesday for a c-section in Pulaski... Remember *Mattie Blanche Word* continues at home...*Marcia Cooper's and Brian Word's uncle, Paul McCafferty* and *Aldeen Noles* are in the SunBridge Nursing Home in Lawrenceburg... *Mary Best's nephew, Shannon Johnson*, who is at home ... *Tisha Thomas' grandmother, Nellie Hunter*, who is in the Meadow Brook Nursing Home in Pulaski.

COMMUNICATION GROUPS: Tonight will be the time for Communication Group one to meet. If you are in Group one, plan to meet with your group this evening.

OUT OF TOWN: *The Butlers: Aric and Andrea* are out of town this week in Florida visiting with family over the holidays.

GOSPEL MEETING: The *Southern Blvd. church* in Sheffield is beginning a meeting today and it will continue through Wednesday evening. *Bob Waldron of Athens* will be the speaker in this meeting. The services will begin Monday through Wednesday at 7:00 p.m.

THE RECORD: *Averages for November 2002*

Sunday:
 Bible Classes 86
 Morning Worship 99
 Evening Worship 67

Wednesday:
 Bible Classes 69



Remember Our Bible Class Periods

Sunday at 9:45 a.m.
 Wednesday at 7:00 p.m.

Come and Study God's Word With Us.

Schedule of Services

Sunday
 Bible Classes 9:45 a.m.
 Morning Worship 10:45 a.m.
 Evening Worship 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday
 Bible Classes 7:00 p.m.

Elders
 Michael Clemmons (256) 247-0836
 Scottie Goode (931) 565-3391

Deacons
 Phil Pressnell (256) 232-8509
 Rocky Rose (256) 247-0011
 Larry White (256) 247-0988

Evangelist & Editor
 David A. Cox (256) 247-1049
 Office-(256) 247-5539
 E-mail address: dacob@hiwaay.net

U.S. Postage
 Paid
 Bulk Rate
 Anderson, Alabama
 Non-Profit
 Permit #6

Anderson church of Christ
 P.O. Box 66
 Anderson, Alabama 35610

Return Service Requested