

# 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 Privileged To Serve:

Sunday, February 24th

### Bible Classes

Song Leader

..... Jerry Dickey

Bible Reading .... (1 Thess. 1:1-10)

..... Larry White

Prayer

..... Jerry Dickey

### Morning Worship

Song Leader

..... Jerry Dickey

Prayer

..... Ronnie Phillips

Lord's Supper/Collection

Presiding ..... Mark McIntyre

Serving ..... Phil Pressnell

..... Eddie Hammond

..... James Albert McConnell

Closing Prayer

..... Michael Clemmons

### Evening Worship

Song Leader

..... Claus Martel

Bible Reading .... (1 Thess. 2:1-12)

..... Phil Pressnell

Prayer

..... Larry White

Lord's Supper

..... Mark McIntyre

Closing Prayer

..... Ray Tucker

Volume IX

February 24, 2002

No. 8

## Asking Too Much From Life

Jim Jonas

*"I know that there is nothing better for them than to rejoice, and to do good in their lives, and also that every man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labor – it is the gift of God" (Eccl. 3:12-13)*

In Ecclesiastes Koheleth, or the Preacher, is sharing his observations on life. He is not expressing divine insight per se; rather, he is giving his assessment from the standpoint of human experience. He says, "I set my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all that is done under heaven... I applied my heart to know wisdom and to see the business that is done on earth, even though one sees no sleep day or night" (Ecclesiastes 1:13; 8:16).

The Preacher examines various human endeavors to discover happiness: sensuality, materialism, longevity, beauty, strength, posterity, wisdom and other endowments of earthly life, which man reveres. His analysis: true fulfillment is not to be found in the human experience. "All is vanity and grasping for the wind" (cf. Ecclesiastes 1:2, 14, 17; 2:11, 17, 26; etc.).

Life is too arbitrary and unpredictable to provide genuine happiness (cf. Ecclesiastes 7:15; 8:14). Our ignorance combined with God's unfathomable providence makes us unable to effectively determine our own course (cf. Ecclesiastes 3:11; 6:12; 7:13-14; 7:23-24; 8:17). All will eventually die, our possessions will be left to others and we will be forgotten (Ecclesiastes 2:14-16; 2:20-23; 3:18-20; 9:5-6). This is not pessimism; it is simply the way things are.

It was never intended that we find our ultimate happiness upon the earth. The Preacher affirms that, for all the evil and

misfortune that befalls us in this life, God has provided a sufficient supply of goodness, satisfaction and enjoyment. Thus his repeated exhortation: “Here is what I have seen: It is good and fitting for one to eat and drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labor in which he toils under the sun all the days of his life which God gives him; for it is his heritage” (Ecclesiastes 5:18; cf. 2:24-25; 3:12-13; 8:15).

Let’s stop asking more out of earthly life than it can deliver. It is so constructed by God to be a place of testing, a time of growth, a span of both joy and hardship. Learn to appreciate the simple things of today and stop pretending that true happiness is just around the next bend. When considered properly, life presents reasonable happiness but whets our appetite for heaven.

~via *Biblical E-Sights*, Vol. 2 No. 2



## “Proving Things”

Richie Thetford

Have we ever stopped to realize that from the time we awake in the morning until the time we fall asleep at night that we are proving things. As we walk through life we are proving who we are in various ways. Paul told the Thessalonian brethren to “Examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; abstain from every form of evil” (1 Thessalonians 5:21-22). As Christians we can readily see that we have a grave responsibility to God to ensure that we prove to others that we live by His commandments. Sit down sometime and make a list of things you do during the course of a day. On one side label it “proving things for Jesus” and on the other side label it “proving things for man.” Now list everything you do that day in the respective category and then see if your life is one that is proving you’re godly or humanistic.

### It Begins With Our Heart

There are many aspects of our life that need

to be proven. It all starts with our heart doesn’t it? We read again “but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men but God, who examines our hearts” (1 Thessalonians 2:4). We learn from this scripture that we are not to speak in such a manner that is pleasing to man but to God because God knows our hearts. He knows where we are putting our emphasis in life. Everyday we are faced with new situations that tests our faith. We prove ourselves to be godly when we can overcome these tests and show God that we are loyal to Him. James says “knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance” (James 1:3). We also need to prove we are Christians by our work.

### Proving By Our Work

Read 1 Corinthians 3:10-15. We can see that all of our work here on this earth will be revealed with fire. Our work will become evident. Paul explains that gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, and things such as this (earthly things) will be destroyed. But what is it that will not be destroyed? Our spiritual works. Nobody or anything can take away our spiritual treasures. When the fire comes, the one who has put their treasures in heaven will be saved. We need to constantly test ourselves. Paul told the Corinthians “Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you - unless indeed you fail the test?” (2 Corinthians 13:5). We must examine ourselves everyday of our lives! We must prove to ourselves that we are walking in the footsteps of Jesus and no other.

### Why and How to Prove Things?

But why are we to prove things? We go back to our opening text in 1 Thessalonians 5:21. We are to examine everything – why? To find the good. Christians should earnestly seek only what is right in the sight of God, not what might be pleasing to man or self. We need to prove things so we do not become reprobate (2 Corinthians 13:5), and deceived (1 John 4:1-6).

However we are never going to know how to prove things and we'll never really know if we are doing what is pleasing in the sight of God if we do not go to the source to find out how we are to prove things. What is the source? The Gospel! It is by the gospel that we can know whether we are doing things in accordance with the spirit of truth or the spirit of error (1 John 4:6). We cannot expect to live a life proving ourselves as Christians if we adopt our manner of walk (morals) based on human standards that are all around us. "For we are not bold to class or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves; but when they measure themselves by themselves, and compare themselves with themselves, they are without understanding." (2 Corinthians 10:12).

### Questions to Ponder

From time to time we need to take a good hard look at ourselves and ask some questions. Am I proving that I am a **Christian** by my walk in life? Can others see beyond a doubt that I am a Christian by the way I act, the way I talk, and the way I dress? Remember, the world doesn't care what we are – but we have something to prove to God.

"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15).

~via *The Castleton Light*, Indianapolis, Indiana.



## Making Bricks of Mud

Robert F. Turner

Paul was set upon by a mob, and then dragged from their hands by the police. Falsely charged, he spent 2 years in Jewish prisons, and was then sent to Rome to appear before Caesar. His traveling days ended, and threatened with death by savage beasts (2 Timothy 4:17), we could understand his being depressed and feel-

ing "all is lost." Instead, he wrote to the Philippians, "the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel" (1:12-21). He could write, "I rejoice!"

Discounting his personal discomforts, he saw the good side of the bad -- saw victory in defeat. I know his selflessness, his trust in the Lord, is the key. "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Paul had to learn this attitude; but I am impressed that he learned it so well it seems to have become a part of him. He "learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content" (4:11); and this kind of thinking spawned hope instead of despair. Throw mud at Paul and he made bricks of it, and built a house. Send him a lemon, and he would enjoy the lemonade, and thank you for them. It is hard to defeat a person with such an attitude as that.

We do not refer to an artificial Pollyannish attitude, out of touch with reality. Paul sought relief from his "thorn in the flesh" (2 Corinthians 12:8), but, when this was denied him, he could "glory in my infirmities," making the most of them in defending his apostleship (vs. 7-11). He did not enjoy being forsaken by his brethren any more than do we, but he could "pray God that it may not be laid to their charge" (2 Timothy 4:16-17). He was confident that the Lord would save him.

Nor is this simply the SELF-reliance, "indomitable ego" that is so highly recommended by psychotherapists. Human philosophies "plug in" to no higher source than man himself, and, when society fails (as it does repeatedly), the individual despairs -- sometimes ends it all in suicide. But the "look up" attitude of a true believer in God removes fear of the future, his soul is anchored (Hebrews 6:18-20), and he "shall not be moved." As one rancher friend of mine put it: "Things are going to pick up!"

~via *Gospel Observer*, Avondale, Pennsylvania.

Remember Our Bible Class Periods

Sunday at 9:45 a.m.

Wednesday at 7:00 p.m.

# News & Notes

**THE SICK:** *Millinea Word's brother, Paul McCafferty*, continues in the ECM Hospital in Florence room 173... *Cindy Pressnell's father, Richard Hagood*, is in the Athens-Limestone hospital room 220 ...*Tisha Rogers* went to the doctor this past Tuesday with her back and was told to rest in bed for a week and return to the doctor on Tuesday ..*Eddie Hammond* was sick and unable to be at services this past week...*Erin Cooper* was sick this past week with the flu, but is now better ... Remember *Scottie Goode's father, Hubert Goode*, as he is taking treatments in Athens... *Kerry Cox's grandfather, Coy Lowman*, continues at home and is not well ... *Mattie Blanche Word* continues at home and not able to be out ..*Millinea Word's mother, Nola 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.

**OUT OF TOWN:** *Daniel Clemmons* is in Denver, Colorado this week with his work...**The Words:** *Brian, Lisa, Michael and Corey* have been in Florida this week...**The McConnells:** *James and Freda* have been away on their vacation in Florida.

**SYMPATHY:** We want to extend our deepest sympathies to **Wanda Tucker** and all the family in the passing of Wanda's uncle, *Don Letson*, this past week...Also to **Angie McCrary** and all the family in the passing of Angie's uncle, *Hubert Newton*, this past Tuesday.

**CONFESSION** Last Sunday morning **Doug McCrary** came forward confessing unfaithfulness and asking for prayers. I appreciate Doug and his desire to live a life that sets a proper example to those around and for the good heart that he has. May the Lord bless him and all of us as we work together in this life encouraging one another so that we may enjoy the blessings of eternity with God.

## 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

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Scottie Goode ..... (931) 565-3391

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