

# 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 Privileged To Serve:**  
Sunday, September 1st

#### **Bible Classes**

Song Leader  
..... Ronnie Phillips  
Bible Reading ..... (Psalm 11)  
..... Jerry Dickey  
Prayer  
..... Rodney McCrary

#### **Morning Worship**

Song Leader  
..... Ronnie Phillips  
Prayer  
..... James Word  
Lord's Supper/Collection  
Presiding ..... Claus Martel  
Serving ..... Jim Phillips  
..... Daniel Clemmons  
..... James Albert McConnell  
Closing Prayer  
..... Ray Tucker

#### **Evening Worship**

Song Leader  
..... Jerry Dickey  
Bible Reading ..... (Psalm 12)  
..... Larry White  
Prayer  
..... Brian Word  
Lord's Supper  
..... Claus Martel  
Closing Prayer  
..... Jerry Best

Volume IX

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No. 35

## Grace Under Fire

W. Frank Walton

*"Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation. If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you" (1 Peter 4:12-14).*

Peter teaches God's "grace" can bolster persecuted Christians in the increasingly hostile Roman empire (1 Peter 2:9, 5:10,12). Fire destroyed much of Rome, capital of the empire, in 64 A.D. Rumors started that Nero started it, allegedly to make room for his building projects.

In 100 A.D., Roman historian Tacitus wrote: "Therefore, to stop the rumor [that Nero had set Rome on fire], he falsely charged with guilt, and punished with the most fearful tortures, the persons commonly called Christians, who were hated for their enormities. Christus, the founder of that name, was put to death as a criminal by Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judea, in the reign of Tiberius, but the pernicious superstition - repressed for a time, broke out yet again... Those were arrested who confessed they were Christians; next on their information, a vast multitude were convicted, not so much on the charge of burning the city, as of "hating the human race" [by not attending social events involving idolatry]. In their very deaths they were made the subjects of sport: for they were covered with the hides of wild beasts, and torn to death by dogs, or nailed to crosses, or set on fire, and when the day waned, burned to serve for the evening lights. Nero offered his own gardens for that spectacle... For this cause a feeling of pity arose towards the sufferers, though guilty and deserving of

exemplary capital punishment, because they seemed not to be cut off for the public good, but were victims of the ferocity of one man.” (Annals 15.44).

Peter counsels distressed brethren that they can, by trusting in God, exemplify “grace under fire.” Trials test the depth and quality of our faith in God. “A faith that hasn't been tested cannot be trusted.” Do we wonder if we could rise to the occasion for Christ under the painful threat of torture and death? God being my helper, I hereby highly resolve that I can daily live faithfully. Christ did not let me down. I literally owe him my whole life (1 Peter 1:19).

For the faithful Christian, the power of God's grace and the providence of His Spirit will give the strength to bear up under unjust sorrows (1 Peter 2:9, 4:14). God sees and knows our struggles. He can take care of us. Amid life's injustices, we can keep rejoicing by looking to the wonderful eternal world to come. There God will right all wrongs (1 Peter 2:23). This world is not our home. We're simply “aliens” passing through to a better place (1 Peter 1:1).

In the great conflict between good and evil, this world is a battleground for the souls of men. Suffering for the right, against the evil schemes of the devil, is inevitable before we enter glory on the other side. Neutrality is impossible. We must show to a dark and dying world which side we're on. If there were no trials, there could be no triumphs.

This divine grace in them demonstrated that the gospel could survive and thrive, despite terrible persecution. In 150 A.D., Justin Martyr said, “The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.” The Roman Empire was filled with empty sinners, burned out and weary of sin's futility, who saw the calm serenity and triumphant peace that Christians had in bravely facing persecution and death. They were attracted to this grace that supernaturally helped them rise above crushing opposition. They would ask, “What is this hope you have?” (1 Peter 3:15).

In this fallen world, the destiny of precious souls is at stake. By exhibiting Christ-like “grace under fire,” we can make a difference in the life of a lost soul by helping them discover the life-changing power of Christ and receive a “visitation” of salvation (1 Peter 2:21). The world is watching us. The lost might be more interested if we were more interesting. The “God of grace” has the power, if we will have the faith to accept it (1 Peter 1:5, 5:10).

~via *Biblical E-Sights*, Vol. 2 No 22



## *The Worth of Children*

**Warren E. Berkley**

“Then little children were brought to Him that He might put His hands on them and pray, but the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.’ And He laid His hands on them and departed from there.” (Matthew 19:13-15)

Jesus cares deeply for children. He did not consider them an annoyance on this occasion, but honored them by His touch and tender attention. The text is from Matthew 19. Ken Chumbley well observes: “In this paragraph Christ blesses little children (ironically, the ones most often the victims of divorce or ‘live-in’ mates)...” (The Gospel of Matthew, p. 343).

A society cannot survive the mistreatment of its' children. Hence, our indignation and anxiety when the news includes word of their oppression daily:

1. The adult use of children as weapons.
2. The aggressive incitement of children to hate and kill in the name of religious or

- national preservation.
3. The abduction of children to satisfy perverse and lewd desire.
  4. Leaving children in cars to die in the summer heat.
  5. Using children as instruments of revenge in divorce/custody cases.
  6. The modern practice of abortion.
  7. The absence of fathers.
  8. Paid, substitute parents.

In addition to misbehaviors commonly disapproved, there is the sad failure of parents to attend to the spiritual and moral education of their children. And the neglect of providing warmth, protection, time and example.

Jesus perfectly models the attitude we ought to have toward children and our treatment of them. In our time there should be a renewed emphasis on the preciousness of children. We ought to start at the earliest time to bring them eventually to Christ. Pray with them, pray for them and teach them to pray. Read the Bible to them and with them. Jesus looks with pleasure on all good efforts to protect, nurture and lead children to Him (see 2 Timothy 1:5, 3:15; Proverbs 22:6; Psalms 78:1-8; Ephesians 6:4; Titus 2:4). Let us protect their innocence, brighten their lives, teach them our sincerity, give them reasons to trust in God and obey Christ.

“Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, The fruit of the womb is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one’s youth. Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them; They shall not be ashamed, But shall speak with their enemies in the gate.” (Psalm 127:3-5).

~via *Expository Files*, Vol. 8 No. 9



Remember Our Bible Class Periods

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

## God’s Plan

Bill Walton

In the first century, God’s plan for saving the lost and caring for the saved was made know through the apostles and put into practice by the disciples. God’s plan was simplicity itself. And its success was the marvel of all the world.

The gospel was sent to the lost. The poor and needy were cared for. And the church was edified.

How was the gospel sent to the lost? By congregations (1 Thessalonians 1:2-8) and individual Christians (Galatians 6:6) supporting evangelists to carry the gospel message all over the world, and by every faithful Christian “*who (would) teach others also*” (2 Timothy 2:2).

How were the poor and needy cared for? By each congregation caring for its own needy (Acts 4:34-35, 1 Timothy 5:16) and receiving help from other congregations when needed (Romans 15:25-26), and by each individual Christian “*doing good unto all men*” as there was opportunity (Galatians 6:10).

How was the church edified? By the elders of each congregation “*feeding the flock which is among them*” (1 Peter 5:2), and by Christians “*exhorting another*” and “*provoking one another unto love and good works*” (Hebrews 10:24-25).

This plan is tried and proven. It worked in the first century, and it will work today. We do not need a new plan. We do not need an improved plan. But we do need and renewed zeal for executing God’s plan.

~via *The South Cullman Companion*, Cullman, Alabama.

## News & Notes

**THE SICK:** *Faye Hammond* continues her rehabilitation in Huntsville ..*Lou Helms* is now back home after spending several days in the Huntsville hospital this past week..*Lou*

**Ann Phillips** is making good progress in her recovery from surgery ...**Wanda Tucker** was able to be back at services Wednesday after being sick last week..**Morgan and Callie Grisham** were better and able to be at Bible study Wednesday night after being sick over the weekend..**Amber Hammond** was sick and was unable to be at services Wednesday night ...**Katy Goode** was not feeling well and not able to be at services Wednesday night...Remember **Scottie Goode's father, Hubert Goode**, continues at home taking his medication... **Mattie Blanche Word** continues at home..**Marcia Cooper** 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.

**SYMPATHY:** We want to express our deepest sympathy to **Brad Hammond** and all the family in the passing of his uncle, **Shorty Wright**, last weekend. His funeral was Monday afternoon.

**COMMUNICATION GROUPS:** This week is Communication Group one's week to meet. If you are in group one, plan to participate with the group tonight.

**OUT OF TOWN: The Butlers:** *Aric and Andrea* are away this weekend visiting with family...**The Rogers:** *Mike, Tisha, Zachary and Jacob* are away today.

**CONFESSION** On Wednesday night **Curtis Mosley** came forward asking for forgiveness and prayers. We appreciate the good heart Curtis has and we appreciate his desire to please God. May we all encourage him as he encourages us in our walk of life.

**THE RECORD:** *Averages for August 2002*

**Sunday:** Bible Classes ..... 88  
Morning Worship ..... 105  
Evening Worship ..... 77  
**Wednesday:** Bible Classes ..... 72

*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 ..... 6:00 p.m.

**Wednesday**

Bible Classes ..... 7:00 p.m.

**Elders**

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

**Deacons**

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Rocky Rose ..... (256) 247-0011  
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