

# 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 Priviledged To Serve:

Sunday, February 23rd

### *Bible Classes*

Song Leader

..... Mark McIntyre

Bible Reading .... (Psalm 78:18-33)

..... Rocky Rose

Prayer

..... Phil Pressnell

### *Morning Worship*

Song Leader

..... Mark McIntyre

Prayer

..... Ronnie Phillips

Lord's Supper/Collection

Presiding..... Claus Martel

..... Jerry Best

..... Daniel Clemmons

..... Jason White

Closing Prayer

..... Ray Tucker

### *Evening Worship*

Song Leader

..... Jim Phillips

Bible Reading .... (Psalm 78:34-55)

..... Jimmy Glass

Prayer

..... Mark McIntyre

Lord's Supper

..... Claus Martel

Closing Prayer

..... Curtis Mosley

Volume X

February 23, 2003

No. 8

## *Obstacles To Our Growth*

**Jason Moore**

The growth of the Christian's character is essential to acceptable service. "Like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation" (1 Peter 2:2). The disciple is either in a state of growth or decline. There is no in-between. The difference between growing and declining is the will of the Christian. Physical growth is not entirely up to you. Spiritual growth is. The desire to be taller does not make it so. But the desire to increase your spiritual stature can be fulfilled no matter your age, your medical record, or your family history. That's why it can be commanded. Hear the passage again, "long... that by it you may grow." Growth is a matter of choice. Your choice. Observe then the obstacles to growth that you must choose to remove if growth is to be realized.

**Busyness.** Over commitment to worldly aims at the expense of spiritual pursuits is the bane of the modern Christian. The devil need not involve you in wicked things to stunt your growth. He need only to fill your plate with a little of this-and-that so that you never have room for things of substance. Children spoil their appetites with cakes and snacks and in-between meals. You ruin your appetite for the word of God and for spiritual activity when you don't save room for the Lord's things. Hungering and thirsting for righteousness is the motivation of the growing Christian with the Lord's promise of fulfillment (Matthew 5:6). That incentive is missing in the heart of the Christian who is too busy.

**Hypocrisy.** Secret sin is a cancer. It's presence is not readily apparent, but it's there nonetheless--growing. From the outside, a man may seem sound and godly, but inside he is "full of dead man's

bones” (Matthew 23:27). Hypocrisy is a cancer of the heart. It eats at your character from the inside out, so that you fall before anybody diagnoses your problem. Nobody sees it coming. You appear to leave the faith all at once when, in reality, you died long ago. Hypocrisy destroys the core of your character, and renders the entirety of your life and religion a mere shell. The hypocrite is a walking corpse, a living tomb. There can be no growth when you nurture secret sin. It will eat you alive. You will look to be growing, when in fact you’re dying. Be sure of one thing – “your sins will find you out” (Numbers 32:23).

**Performance.** Mistaking public performance for growth is a subtle and far too common variety of hypocrisy. Preachers beware. A man can suppose that as goes his preaching, so goes his spirituality. Not so. All of Nineveh repented at the preaching of Jonah (3:5), while the prophet himself was eaten up with bitterness (4:1). Teachers beware. “Thou that teachest another, teachest not thyself” (Romans 2:21)? Don’t mistake your skills and successes in distributing and illustrating the word of God, as the end of your service. “Be ye doers of the word” (James 1:22) and not teachers only who delude themselves. Worshipers beware. The Pharisees led fine public prayers and wore their best “Sunday dress” but neglected mercy and holiness (Luke 20:47). You can suppose that occupying a pew or even participating in the public assembly is sufficient exercise for spiritual growth. It’s an exercise in futility, if day-to-day righteousness, week-in and week-out cross-bearing, and seventy-times-seven forgiveness are not habits of character for you.

Watch out for these enemies to your growth. There are others. But these, particularly, are common and doubly dangerous because of their familiarity. What you do about them is up to you, because growth is a choice. Your choice. Nobody can do it for you. Nobody will. It’s up to you. “Choose you this day...” You can either stay where you are, or you can grow.

~via *Southside Sunday*, Pasadena, Texas.

## *Chance or Providence?*

**Ben May**

There are some things we clearly know from scriptures because God has chosen to reveal them to us. We know exactly what God would have us to do to be saved because He has clearly told us through His word. We know that God hates divorce, a proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood and many other sins that we might commit against each other (Malachi 2:16; Proverbs 6:16-19).

But when it comes to knowing how God interacts in our every day life, we cannot be as sure. Things happen in our lives and in the lives of others that cause us to wonder, is this God’s providence or just something that is happening by chance? The wise man made this observation in Ecclesiastes 9:11-12, “I returned and saw under the sun that—the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor bread to the wise, nor riches to men of understanding, nor favor to men of skill; But time and chance happen to them all. For man also does not know his time: Like fish taken in a cruel net, like birds caught in a snare, so the sons of men are snared in an evil time, when it falls suddenly upon them.”

God not only has spiritual laws through Christ which are always true but He also has natural laws which are always true. Heat will burn you, electricity can kill you and gravity will bring you back to earth. Often a persons interaction with these laws brings about serious harm or even death. Sometimes this occurs because of our own actions and we suffer the consequences. But at other times we suffer the consequences of the decisions of others who violate God’s laws of nature.

But herein lies our uncertainty. Are there times when God’s providence enables us to avoid situations that could have terrible consequences? Yet when tragic things happen we can’t help but second guess our own actions and maybe even ask

God, “why?” The wise man, by inspiration said “For man also does not know his time:” (Ecclesiastes 9:12). To these questions we simply do not have the answers to the “why”.

Let us not forget some other great truths that we know about our great God. Hear Peter’s words in 1 Peter 3:12, “For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.” The conclusion that I have reached in my own life is this, it doesn’t really matter whether things happen by chance or through God’s providence. You see our God is able to see us through anything this life can bring our way. “And God is able to make all grace abound toward you...” (2 Corinthians 9:8). Paul reminds us in Romans 8:28 that “...all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.”

I believe that we have seen God’s grace and mercy in action among our own number over the last few weeks. Two precious souls have rendered obedience to the gospel of Christ. One was granted some eight years and the other over thirty years to hear the gospel, believe it, repent of their sins, confess Jesus as the Christ and be buried with Him in baptism for the forgiveness of their sins. Yet, tragically we have lost a dear sister in a terrible accident. I believe she was ready to stand before the Lord and give account for her life. Can’t we rejoice in God’s goodness in that He allowed time for the lost who could have suffered tragedy in their own lives during the time they waited. Yet when tragedy struck, we do not have to grieve as “those who have no hope” (1Thessalonians 4:13).

We do not know what the future holds but we know who holds the future. While we aren’t given to know all the “why’s” we can be assured that God works in the lives of His children. He will not allow more to be demanded of us than we can endure. Not even “chance” will be allowed to do so. God’s providence and promises will see to

that.

“No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.” (1Corinthians 10:13)

-via *Stanley Avenue Bulletin* Andalusia, Alabama



### Remember Our Bible Class Periods

Sunday at 9:45 a.m.

Wednesday at 7:00 p.m.

## News and Notes

**THE SICK:** *Onzell Tucker* continues to recover at home from her surgery... *Amber Hammond* has been sick this past week, but is now doing better ... *Faye Hammond* continues at home and is going for rehabilitation during the week... *Lisa Word's father, Austin Dillinger*, continues in the Sunbelt Rehabilitation in Orlando, Florida... *Tisha, Zachary and Jacob Rogers* have all been sick this past week, but are now doing better... *James McConnell* was sick and not able to be with us Sunday, but is now better and was at Bible study Wednesday night... *Corey Goode* was sick this past week and was not able to be at services .. *Jim Phillips* has been sick this past week and was not able to be at services .. *Janice Glass' grandmother, Emma Ray*, continues at home .. *Billy and Madia Haraway* have been sick this week and unable to

be out. They are both better now..*Billy, Anthony, Emma, Ella and Ivy Wallen* have all been sick this past week and not able to be at services, but are now doing better...*Mycala White* was sick this past week and not able to be at services ...*Janice Glass' grandmother, Emma Ray*, continues at home ...*Eddie Hammond's cousin, Ricky Davis*, has cancer and is being treated ...*Marla Clemmons' grandmother, Mildred Blackburn*, continues at home... Remember *Mattie Blanche Word* continues at home ...*Marcia Cooper's and Brian Word's uncle, Paul McCafferty* who is at 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... *Freda McConnell's father, Alton Wray*, who is at home.

**COMMUNICATION GROUPS:** Tonight will be the time for Communication group four to meet after our evening service. If you are in group four plan to meet this evening.

**THE COMMUNICATOR:** Be sure to pick-up a copy of the *Anderson Communicator* today on the table in the vestibule.

**GOSPEL MEETING:** The *Russellville church* in Russellville is beginning a meeting today and it will continue through Wednesday with services at 7:00 p.m. Monday through Wednesday. *Marc Smith of Hewitt, Texas* will be the speaker.

# Gospel Meeting

March 30 - April 4

Robert Harkrider, Speaker

Anderson church of Christ  
Highway 207  
Anderson, Alabama

## 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

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