


# Gospel Power



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

Volume VIII

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No. 6

## Walking On The Water

Don McClain

After Jesus miraculously fed a multitude of people, He instructed His disciples to get into a boat and go to the other side of the sea. Jesus then dispersed the crowd and went up alone on a mountain to pray. Meanwhile, the disciples were having troubles. They were in the midst of the sea being "tossed by the waves." Jesus allowed them to struggle for some time before walking to them on the water, (vs. 23-25; John 6:16-19). They were afraid when they saw Jesus and "cried out for fear," but He spoke to them quickly, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid."

At the sound of Jesus' voice, the brash Peter spoke out, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." Peter knew that all he needed was the beckoning of his Lord and His will could be done. Here is the basis for faith - a "Thus saith the Lord." We should know that we can do whatever the Lord commands, and that we dare not do anything that Christ has **not** authorized, (Romans 10:17; 2 Corinthians 5:7; Colossians 3:17). Jesus gave the instruction that Peter wanted - "Come." Peter steps out of the boat and walks on the water, but he didn't get far until he began to sink.

Why? Was it because he couldn't walk on

the water? - Because he lacked interest and effort? No, he started to sink because he began to doubt that he could accomplish that which Christ commanded. If we doubt the words of Jesus, we also doubt Him. (Matthew 7:21-27; John 12:48; 2 John 9). Now we raise the question, why did he doubt? Verse 30 tells us that when Peter "saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid." Although not specifically stated, we understand that Peter would not have been focusing on the wind and the waves had his eyes been focused on Jesus, (Hebrews 12:1,2). When we begin to focus on our problems, (the bombardment of temptation, the worldly influences, the ungodliness, and the uphill battles that we face everyday in striving to live a godly life in a corrupt world), it isn't hard to lose heart. Certainly we **must** be aware and concerned about these things, but we also **must** be careful as to **how** we allow them to affect us. Peter's problem wasn't necessarily his awareness, but rather in how he allowed that awareness to become fear, which overcame his faith. He forgot which was more powerful, the wind and the waves, or The One who created them. Therefore Jesus said to Peter, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"

Consider this poem by William Blake:

*This life's dim windows of the soul  
Distort the heavens from pole to pole  
And lead you to believe a lie,  
When you see with, and not through, the eye.*

We often see things as they appear to our carnal senses. We may see our enemies like the Israelites saw the armies of Canaan, (Numbers 13,14). God had promised them the land. It was theirs for the taking. On the side of faith we find Joshua and Caleb - "Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it," (Numbers 13:30). And then on the side of doubt we see the other ten spies - "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we," (Numbers 13:31). They were deceived into thinking that they couldn't win. True enough they couldn't, but only because their faith was swallowed up in doubt due to their perception.

Have we allowed doubt to overcome our faith? If God commands us to be holy – can we be holy? (1 Peter 1:16). If God tells us to live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, can we? (Titus 2:11,12; 1 John 3:7). Some say, "No we can't." - O' Ye of little faith. When we attempt to fight our battles with our own strength, schemes, and in our own ways, turning to human devised ploys to bring in crowds, and/or to do the work of the church, – we demonstrate our lack of faith in the gospel, and in it's author. – "O' Ye of little faith."

We cannot defeat the waves of false teaching, of worldliness, of apathy, or of doubt, by compromising, or pretending they don't exist. Peter's walking on the water was not dependent upon him ignoring the wind and the waves, but by trusting and obeying Jesus Christ despite the wind and the waves. Let us learn to trust completely in Jesus and His way, using the ability and strength He provides. – "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil..." (Ephesians 6:10-17).

Peter walked on the water – When he

began to sink he cried out, – "Lord save me." If we stumble, we are promised that "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). "As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him," (Colossians 2:6). You can do it!

~via *Expository Files*, Vol. 6 No. 5



## *Any Fool*

**Ben May**

God has a lot to say about fools and foolishness. In fact, some form of the word "fool" is used 189 times in the King James Version of the Bible. In our society, we have several expressions about being a fool. One of them is "I'm nobody's fool." None of us want to be considered a fool or foolish. I invite you to consider some of the things that God says that "any fool can do."

God says that any fool can start a quarrel. "It is honorable for a man to stop striving, since any fool can start a quarrel" (Proverbs 20:3). Which takes more strength of character, walking away from an argument or starting one? It takes an honorable man to break the cycle of strife and contention. Any fool can quarrel. "A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul" (Proverbs 18:7). Be a person of honor, not a fool.

Any fool can declare himself to be right. "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but he who heeds counsel is wise" (Proverbs 12:15). If we are our own standard of right and wrong, God says that we are fools! Wasn't this the problem that the children of Israel had during the time of the Judges? "...everyone did what was right in his own eyes" (Judges 17:6). If you

are wise, listen to God, not yourself. Listen to others who love you. Any fool can go through life thinking that he needs no one but himself. It takes a wise man to admit that he needs good counsel.

Any fool can get in over his head! Have you ever known someone who didn't know when to admit that he didn't know? You see, some things are just too lofty (over the head) for a fool. "Wisdom is too lofty for a fool; He does not open his mouth in the gate" (Proverbs 24:7). A fool does not grasp the greatness of our Lord. "O Lord, how great are your works! Your thoughts are very deep. A senseless man does not know, Nor does a fool understand this" (Psalm 92:5-6).

Any fool can make evil his past time. "To do evil is like a sport to a fool, But a man of understanding has wisdom (Proverbs 10:23). Is this not a sad commentary on the very society in which we live? One does not have to look very far to realize that evil has become the past time for many. Whether it is gambling, drinking, drugs, pornography, fornication or just plain selfishness, our society has very little understanding of God's ways. How sad. Be a person of understanding. Any fool can do evil.

Any fool can say that there is no God. "The fool has said in his heart, There is no God" (Psalm 14:1). How foolish it is to think that we will escape the judgment of God. "Yet they say, the Lord does not see, nor does the God of Jacob understand. Understand you senseless among the people; Are you fools, when will you be wise?" (Psalm 94:7-8). Many face a "great awakening" but it will be too late. Any fool can do as he pleases; ignore God, and think that he will answer to no one but himself.

Remember Christians, we were once foolish. Thanks be to God we have turned from that vain way of life. "For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. But when the kindness and the love of God our

Savior toward man appeared...He saved us..." (Titus 3:3-5). Any fool can reject Christ, but if you heed His call, you will indeed be wise. "But we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and wisdom of God" ( 1 Corinthians 1:23-24). Don't be a fool! Accept God's invitation, heed His counsel.

~via *Stand*, Annandale, Virginia

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## News & Notes

**THE SICK:** *Monroe Pressnell* is now at home following his hospitalization and surgery this past week for kidney stones...*Millinea Word* began her therapy treatments this past week in Pulaski...*Angie McCrary* came home Friday morning after spending several days in the ECM hospital having tests done on her heart...*Mary Best* has been sick this past week with the flu and has not been able to be at services...*The Wallens* have about all been sick this past week and *Emma* is still not feeling well...*Marla Clemmons father, Jimmy Blackburn*, is not been doing well and has had a set back in his recovery from his surgery...*Wanda Tucker's father, Billy Letson*, is continuing to take medication for his Lukemia...*Sheila Goode & Lou Ann Phillips mother, Shirley Slaton*, is continuing to receive chemo treatments each week in Birmingham...*Scottie Goode's uncle, O.L. Prince*, continues in the ECM hospital being treated for an infection and will have to have surgery to have his hip reset...*Yvonne Pressnell's mother, Opal McGuire* is in the nursing home in Ardmore...Remember *Sandra Glass' cousin, Tina*

**Strickland**, who is continuing her treatments for her cancer ...Also remember **Mattie Blanche Word** who continues at home and not able to be out...Also remember **Gurtie Snoddy** who is in the Mitchell-Hollingsworth Nursing Home ...**Mary Best's nephew, Shannon Johnson**, who is at home ...Remember **Tisha Thomas' grandmother, Nellie Hunt**, and **Millinea Word's mother, Nola McCafferty**, who are both in the Meadow Brook Nursing Home in Pulaski.

**COMMUNICATION GROUPS:** Tonight is the night for group two to meet. If you are in group two plan to meet with your group this evening.

**OUT OF TOWN:** *The McConnells:* James and Freda are away on vacation this week... **Judy Williams** is in New York with her sister-in-law...**Ray Williams** is in Arkansas...**Chase Williams** is in Fayette this weekend...**Andrea Phillips** has been out of town recently due to the basketball tournaments that are going on.

**THE RECORD:** *Averages for January 2001*

**Sunday:** Bible Classes ..... 82  
 Morning Worship ..... 94  
 Evening Worship ..... 66

**Wednesday:** Bible Classes ..... 57



Remember next Sunday, February 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 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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