

# 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. 10

## Higher Thinking

Dee Bowman

Thinking is reserved for humans. Dogs and cats do a primitive form of it, but not like humans. Humans have the ability to assimilate information, then discriminate and decide in regard to it. All the mental faculties come into play in thinking — the intellect, the will, even the emotions. The intellect is the area for pondering facts and the will is for the making of choices as a result of what the intellect has done. The emotions, in turn, subordinate to the will and intellect. Thinking is natural to humans but it is a very complex procedure.

The ability to understand God and His will is based on proper thinking. For instance, the recognition of God is a matter of faith, not of sense perception. Faith, the faculty for seeing the unseen, for knowing the unknown, is based on thinking. Paul says, "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). Faith is achieved by thinking, weighing information and coming to a decision after having done so.

God has never forced man to think in a certain way, although He does give him the opportunity to think very high thoughts and entertain sublime, spiritual ideas. What a man entertains in his mind is up to him; it is part of his free moral agency. But the mind will not

function well on low, base thought and conversely, it will function at a high level when entertaining the higher spiritual information. God does recommend to man what kind of thinking will help him and make him better.

For instance, He says, "Finally ...whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be anything praiseworthy — meditate on these things (Philippians 4:8). Thinking on high things, things of piety and goodness, has a predictable effect. Moral excellence is the product. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7).

All immorality is the result of poor thinking. Jesus said that a man will not commit adultery who does not first lust. Most of today's immorality is astoundingly simple; it is based almost entirely on self-justification. The thief steals because he thinks he has been mistreated; the fornicator commits fornication because he feels unloved or because he thinks it does no harm; the embezzler steals from his employer because he thinks he has been poorly compensated. All of it is rationalizing, the result of poor thinking.

Poor thinking results from a lack of exposure to the higher information in God's word. Believe me, the less the people of this or any other culture contemplate the high ideals and methods of inspiration, the further their degeneration, the deeper their decadence. You cannot have a strong culture based on poor thinking; and you cannot have good thinking when the fodder used is low, crass, and self-serving.

It is possible to think evil thoughts in the midst of what is seemingly a religious service. Men in all ages have done that. The Middle Ages produced all manner of evil and ungodly actions in the name of religion. Thousands were killed in the name of the church; all kinds of evil was performed as the result of religious fervor out of control. The same kind of thinking can be done today. People can be so wedded to a cause, so involved in a party, that the end comes to justify the means. The party becomes the icon and suspicion the *modus operandi*.

Good thinking is an act of the will. One decides to do it. We would all do well to cultivate the ability to entertain thoughts that edify instead of those that merely satisfy. It takes considerable discipline to squelch the tendency to think about evil and replace it with good. It often takes more than one try. But habits are formed by small steps and good thinking can only come to those who are willing to make the effort.

Good thinking is extremely beneficial because of what it produces. If it is so that a man becomes what he thinks it is very advantageous for one to think on the higher plane. True religious fervor, the kind that seeks the best interest of all concerned, is the result of true religious thinking, so is every good deed; and whoever sacrificed anything for the cause of Christ did it because he thought it was good to do so.

Three things are necessary to make good

thinking into habitude: 1. Decide you want to. Every person does what he decides to do; and good thinking is no less a product of the will than any other decision. 2. Search and find good thoughts to occupy your mind. Read the Bible; it will give you fodder for contemplation that is higher, more noble. 3. Obey the law of displacement. You cannot fill up your mind with the higher kind until you have first divested it of the lower variety.

~via *Southside Reminder*, Pasadena Texas

## What A Contrast!

Willard M. Cox

One of the many gracious statements of Jesus is found in Matthew 26:26 where He said, "...This is my body..." When Jesus came to earth, He "was made in the likeness of men" (Philippians 2:7). "God was manifested in the flesh" (1 Timothy 3:16). In referring to Jesus the Hebrew writer quoted a prophecy: "...a body thou hast prepared for me" (Hebrews 10:5).

In His body the eternal, all-wise, omnipotent Son of God became weary in walking the dusty roads of Palestine (John 4:6). In His body Jesus slept (Mark 4:38), became hungry (Mark 11:12), and became thirsty (John 4:10). It was in His body that Jesus "went about doing good" (Acts 10:38). Jesus said, "This is my body", but He used it for others. Jesus was not selfish, nor did He call for special "rights."

Today many people selfishly say, "This is my body. No one can tell me what to do with it. I'll abuse it if I want to. I'll get drunk; I'll become addicted to drugs. I'll live it up, and have a big time. This is my body. I can make my own choices how to use it. I'll eat drink and be merry. I will have an abortion; I will kill the little baby in my body."

What a contrast: the generous loving self-

sacrificing attitude of Jesus, in the use of His body, and the lustful, mundane, self-seeking attitudes of millions of people in the use of their bodies! How many in this second group will see the difference of their attitudes from Christ's loving attitude and actions and become like Jesus? After all is said and done, there is an eternal soul in everyone's body that will some day give an account to God. Then, where will that soul be throughout all eternity?

Jesus said, "This is my body which is broken for you" (1 Corinthians 11:24). The inspired Peter wrote of Jesus in 1 Peter 1:24 "who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree..." Will you give your life to Jesus who gave His life for you, by being baptized into His spiritual body, (1 Corinthians 12:13), which is His church (Colossians 1:18)?

~via *Cape Fair Candle*, Cape Fair, Missouri.



## A Changed Relationship

Luther G. Roberts

After one believes in Jesus Christ, repents of his sins and confesses Jesus as the Christ, even though he has taken his affections from the things of this world and has decided to turn away from those sins, he must change his relationship to the world. Such a person has ceased to love the world and to practice sin, but he is still guilty of those sins of his past life. He must be delivered "out of darkness, and translated ...into the kingdom of the Son of his love; in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of our sins" (Colossians 1:13-14).

The apostle Paul told the Ephesian saints, "And you did he make alive, when ye were dead through your trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1). He also wrote to the saints (saved ones)

at Rome, "Even so reckon also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus" (Romans 6:11). Again, Paul wrote to the Christians at Rome, "But thanks be to God, that, whereas ye were the servants of sins, ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered; and being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness" (Romans 6:17). The state of the Ephesians and Romans was changed when they were made dead to sin and alive to righteousness. "For he that hath died is justified from sin." If a slave died, he was freed from service to his master, sin. In obedience to the gospel of Christ we die to sin, and are dead to sin but alive unto God (Romans 6:11).

The act that changes the relationship or state of a person is baptism in obedience to the command of Christ. The person who is a sinner believes in Christ, repents of his sins, and his affections and life are changed and when he is then baptized into Christ he is made dead to sin and alive unto righteousness. The state is changed — he is delivered from the world of sin and translated into the kingdom of God's dear son; he is a Christian, a citizen of the kingdom of Christ. He has turned from darkness to light.

~via *The West End Way*, Richmond, Virginia.

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## News & Notes

**THE SICK:** *Doris Newton* is at home recovering from her recent surgery ...*Onzell Tucker* has not been able to be out and at services recently...*Sadie McIntyre* was sick this past week and has been unable to be at Bible study Wednesday night...*Millinea Word* was referred to a doctor in Nashville and is in Baptist Hospital... *Angie McCrary's father, Buford Shook*, is scheduled to have surgery on Wednesday in Birmingham to remove a cancer on his

face...*My father, Cecil Cox*, is to have gall-bladder surgery on Wednesday in Florence ...*Scottie Goode's uncle, O. L. Prince*, is now home from the hospital and will return in a few weeks to have his hip reset... Remember *Wanda Tucker's father, Billy Letson*, is continuing to take medication for his Leukemia ...*Sheila Goode & Lou Ann Phillips mother, Shirley Slaton*, is continuing treatments for her cancer... *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...*Aldeen Noles* who is 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 Hunter*, and *Millinea Word's mother, Nola McCafferty*, who are both in the Meadow Brook Nursing Home in Pulaski.

**OFF FOR TRAINING:** *Doug McCrary* is leaving this morning to begin his basic training in Paris Island, South Carolina. He will be away for 13 weeks. We wish him well and look forward to seeing him again. Remember Doug while he is away.

**COMMUNICATION GROUPS:** Tonight is the night for communication group 2 to meet. If you are in group two remember to meet this evening.

**GOSPEL MEETING:** *The Shoal Bluff church* near Minor Hill, Tennessee is beginning a meeting tomorrow and it will continue through next Sunday with services each evening through Saturday at 7:30. The speaker Monday through Thursday will be *Charles Littrell* and Friday through Sunday will be *Kevin Harbin*...*The Posey church* in Franklin County is beginning a meeting today and it will continue through Wednesday with services Monday through Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. *Raymond Harville* will be the speaker.

**THE RECORD:** *Averages for February 2001*  
**Sunday:** Bible Classes ..... 73

# 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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