


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

April 15, 2001

No. 14

Clowning Around For Jesus

Kent E. Heaton, Sr.

The death of Jesus on the cross is the most profound statement of love ever given. God's love assured mankind of the promised salvation through the blood of this sacrifice. "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned (Mark 16:16). The disciples of Jesus went into all the world teaching the saving message of the cross.

The Jews scoffed at the cross and sought for signs. The Greeks thought the cross as folly and desired wisdom. Neither the Jew nor the Greek could find what they desired. The disciples only preached the cross, "to the Jews a stumbling block and the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (1 Corinthians 1:23-25).

Paul declared to the saints in Corinth that he "did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of

human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God" (1 Corinthians 2:1-5)

The disciples of Christ did not seek to color the message of Christ or 'jazz' it up to make it more appealing to so many. Stephen was killed because his message was not very exciting to the listeners (Acts 7) Paul preached and wrote with strong, plain and direct language. They followed the character of Jesus as even those who sought to entrap him admitted – "Teacher, we know that You are true, and care about no one; for You do not regard the person of men, but teach the way of God in truth" (Mark 12:14).

Why then do we find people today clowning around with the message of Jesus? Now we have to have clowns to tell the story of Jesus, great pomp and circumstance to relate the meaning of God's word. Great cathedrals are built to extend the message and social activities planned to draw people to salvation. People want church to be fun and exciting and as much like recreation as we enjoy the other six days of the week. "You Never Thought Church Could Be Like This" is the motto so many in the religious world follow.

The truth of the word of God is that it does

not take all the social, political and recreational draws of the world to help people understand the gospel of Christ. It only takes an honest heart and a willing mind to obey its truths. Jesus did not die on the cross so that you and I can have fun. He told the rich young ruler to take up his cross and follow him. The religious world would have you believe the cross is padded, motorized and self-propelled with a couch as a seat.

Clowns have nothing to do with the death of Christ. Social halls and ball teams have nothing to do with the death of Christ. Political causes have nothing to do with the death of Christ. The only thing you have when you finish with these church sponsored activities are people who have laughed hard at a clown, socialized, played hard and learned who to vote for. If a person cannot preach the word of God and it not have any impact on the lives of the hearers, the hearers will be lost. Man cannot change the power of God to fit his own wisdom. Paul was not ashamed of the gospel because it was the power – not the frills that men seek to add to the word.

There is nothing wrong with clowns, recreation, social enjoyment and politics in and of themselves. What is wrong, my friend, is when it takes all these things to get you interested in the cross. Jesus died – that is all I need to know to be interested.

~via *The Bulletin at Helton Drive*, Florence, Alabama



Restoring the Real Thing

Dee Bowman

It is an unlikely occurrence, but try to imagine that in the next several generations football becomes unknown. No one plays it or even knows about it. It's as if it never existed.

One day, while rummaging in an attic in an

old house, your great-great-great grandson comes across a rule book for football. Blowing the dust off the document, he sits down on an old trunk and begins to read it. Over the next few weeks, he becomes fascinated with the game - so much so that he decides to try to restore it.

He finds a suitable place and marks off the field according to the rule book. He reads the stipulations regarding equipment and manufactures it accordingly. The ball is constructed in accordance with the shape, weight, and size in the instructions. He finds the men to play and acquaints them with the rules of the game. When all is ready, they play the game. According to the rules.

He has restored football.

Before long, the quarterback, who has small hands, requests a change in the size of the ball. The hash marks are removed in preference for one mark in the middle of the field to accommodate some slower players. The field is shortened to 80 yards plus the end zones. Other changes are made as time goes on.

It is no longer the original.

It looks like football. The game still does many of the things in the old rule book. In fact, there are probably more similarities than differences. But it has been changed. It is no longer the real thing.

The most pressing need of this generation is to return to New Testament Christianity. The key to such a return is the doctrine of Christ. Without the rule book, every person will be left to his own devices. Man, left unattended by God's instructions, descends into a putrid bog of sin and degradation (Romans 1:18ff).

Restoration is not a movement, but a constant, never-ending process requiring impeccable integrity and the most careful diligence. Even the smallest changes can have devastating effects on the purity of the original New Testament order. To sow the wind is to expect the whirlwind (Hosea 8:7).

To restore the purity of the New Testament

church, we must subscribe to the New Testament, the apostles' doctrine (Acts 2:42). It is a complete revelation (2 Timothy 3:16-17), one which will thoroughly furnish a man to every good work. It had its origin in the mind of God (1 Corinthians 2:1ff; Ephesians 3:1ff; 2 Timothy 3:16), not the result of some ecclesiastical council, synod, or religious gathering. It will tolerate no change (2 John 9), nor abide any perversion (Galatians 1:6-9), under penalty of eternal death. It is that by which every man will be judged (John 12:48) and is the "power of God unto salvation" (Romans 1:16). Only as we restore this doctrine can we restore the New Testament law of pardon, as well as the directives for the organization, work, and worship of the church.

How can I help?

1. **By viewing the doctrine as authoritative** (Romans 1:16-22). Human creeds are the basis for disunity. As long as they are tolerated, there will be division. Only God's word is authoritative.

2. **By scrupulously protecting its purity** (Jude 3). We must never try to manage the word of God, but allow it to manage us. It will work no other way.

3. **By personally illustrating its principles in our lives** (1 Timothy 4:12-16). The best preacher God has is the man who shows the world the gospel written in his everyday life.

4. **By enthusiastically recommending it to others** (Acts 8:4; 2 Timothy 2:2). No man wants something not recommended by good sources.

We must each do our part in restoring and maintaining the purity of the New Testament. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (1 Peter 4:11).

~via *The Southport Sounder*, Indianapolis, Indiana

News & Notes

THE SICK: *Millinea Word* is back at home after receiving her treatments in Nashville ...*Onzell Tucker* continues to recover at home following her surgery...*Tika White* was not feeling well and unable to be at Bible study Wednesday night...*Mary Best* was sick and not able to be at Bible study Wednesday night ...*Scottie Goode's uncle, O.L. Prince* is in the ICU at ECM in Florence following his hip surgery...*Judy Williams mother, Flossie Kazzire*, is scheduled to have surgery Monday at the Druid City Hospital in Tuscaloosa ...*Glenda Phillips mother, Ula Pearl Green*, is now home after having some tests at ECM this past week and will be return to the doctor on Tuesday... Remember *Wanda Tucker's father, Billy Letson*, who is continuing to take medication for his Leukemia ...*Sheila Goode & Lou Ann Phillips mother, Shirley Slaton*, continues 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.

OUT OF TOWN: *Claus Martel* is back in town this past week after being away in the northeast for a few days...*Corey Goode* has been out of town this past week with his work in Mississippi...*The Williams: Ray, Judy and Chase* are in Arkansas this weekend.

GOSPEL MEETING: *The Brookhill church* in Killen is beginning a meeting today and it will continue through Wednesday with services

Remember Our Bible Class Periods

Sunday at 9:45 a.m.

Wednesday at 7:00 p.m.

each this evening through Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. The speaker will be *Bill Hall*...The **Market Street church** in Athens is beginning a meeting today and it will continue through Friday with services at 7:00 a.m. & 7:00 p.m. The speaker in this meeting will be *Gardner Hall* ...The **College Place church** in Lawrenceburg, Tennessee is beginning a meeting today and it will continue through Wednesday. Monday through Wednesday services will begin at 7:00 p.m. *John Kilgore of Houston, Texas* will be the speaker ...The **Jordan Park church** in Huntsville is beginning a meeting today and it will continue through Friday with services at 7:00 p.m. The speaker in this meeting will be *Robert Harkrider of Orlando, Florida*...The **Sunny Hill church** in Athens is beginning a meeting today and it continues through Friday. Monday through Friday services will begin at 6:30 p.m. The speaker in this meeting will be *Bill McGregor*.

COMMUNICATION GROUPS: Tonight will be the time for communication group 3 to meet. If you are in group three, plan to attend this meeting tonight after our service.

SONG SERVICE: Tonight is the night for our regular schedule song service. *Jerry Dickey* will be directing the service this evening. Plan to be present as we sing songs of praise to God.



Gospel Meeting

June 17-22

Mark White, Speaker

Anderson church of Christ
Highway 207
Anderson, Alabama

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.

Anderson church Home Page

Anderson-church.org

Elders

Michael Clemmons (256) 247-0836
Scottie Goode (931) 565-3391
Monroe Pressnell (256) 232-0780

Deacons

Phil Pressnell (256) 232-8509
Rocky Rose (256) 247-0011
Larry White (256) 247-0988

Evangelist & Editor

David A. Cox (256) 247-1049
Office-(256) 247-5539
E-mail address: dacox@hiwaay.net

U.S. Postage
Paid
Bulk Rate
Anderson, Alabama
Non-Profit
Permit #6

Anderson church of Christ
P.O. Box 66
Anderson, Alabama 35610

Address Correction Requested