

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. 19

Peace

Sewell Hall

There is "a time for war and a time for peace" (Ecclesiastes 3:8). One of the challenges we face is determining just what the times and circumstances require.

Peace is highly praised in scripture. In the New Testament alone, there are more than 100 references to it. It is mentioned in every book except First John.

Peace With God

Peace with God is the most important peace of all. Peace with Him is impossible as long as we are guilty of sin. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men" (Romans 1:18). Christ died to make possible forgiveness of our sins. "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1). This peace must be maintained even at the cost of peace with family (Matthew 10:34-37; 1 Corinthians 7:15) or peace with brethren whose fellowship could jeopardize our relationship with God (1 John 9-10).

Peace Within

"And let the peace of God rule in your hearts to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful" (Colossians 3:15). "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and

supplication, with thanksgiving, let your request be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6-7). This inner peace "surpasses all understanding" because it can flourish even when all around is chaotic.

Peace With All

"If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men" (Romans 12:18). Not everyone loves peace. Among the works of the flesh are "hatred, contentions, jealousies, outburst of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy" (Galatians 5:19-20). These are as much desired by some people as "adultery, fornication, uncleanness and lasciviousness" are by some others. Those who desire them are unconverted. "You are still carnal, for where there are envy strife and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?" (1 Corinthians 3:3). "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness" (Galatians 5:22). The instructions to Christians, are clear: "Pursue peace with all people" (Hebrews 12:14).

Peace with the Church

In view of this teaching, one would expect to find peace in every congregation of God's people. Alas, it is not so. While this is

reprehensible we should not be disillusioned by it. Peace was lacking from several New Testament churches.

The church in Corinth is a notorious example. Paul wrote: "It has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household, that there are contentions among you" (1 Cor. 1:11). Much of Paul's first letter to them deals with their divisions. He indicates that relationships were so bad that when they came together it was not possible to eat the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:20-21).

The church where Diotrophes held sway was in trouble (3 John 9-10). Even the great church in Philippi had two sisters who were not getting along (Philippians 2:2).

When there is trouble in a church, it is Satan's work. "But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. The wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without hypocrisy" (James 3:14-17). "for God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints" (1 Corinthians 14:33).

Satan may sometime do his work in a church by introducing error which calls for opposition. But all too often, he accomplishes his purpose by the very means suggested: envy and self-seeking.

Things that Make for Peace

"Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace" (Romans 14:19). Following are some of those things:

"Endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:4). "Seek peace and pursue it" (1 Peter 3:11).

Pray "that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence" (1 Timothy 2:2).

Be willing to be involved in peacemaking when necessary. Paul wrote concerning those two sisters who were at odds in Philippi: "And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel" (Philippians 2:3). When Christians are in a dispute, we can either inflame their passions or we can help them. "Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God" (Matthew 5:8).

"Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others" (Phil. 2:3-4).

Whenever we offer criticism or suggestion, we must be sure that it is one "by which we may edify one another" (Romans 14:19).

Conclusion

"Therefore, beloved, ...be diligent to be found by Him in peace" (2 Peter 3:14).

~via *The Word at Westside*, Tunnel Hill, Georgia.



"I Thought On My Ways"

Dan Richardson

"I thought on my ways and turned my feet unto thy testimonies." (Psalm 119:59)

David said "I thought on my ways..." How imperative it is that we all do that. God commands that we continually do a self-inventory of our ways to determine if we are in right standing with Him (2 Corinthians 13:5). The standard for such scrutiny is God's Word (James 1:25). In the context of Psalm 119:57-64, please note what was involved when David thought on his ways.

The Heart (vs. 57-58). "I entreated thy favor with my whole heart". This is the beginning point in any serious thinking about our ways because God looks on the heart (1 Samuel

16:7). Furthermore, what's in our hearts determines who we really are (Proverbs 4:23). Within David's heart was formed his values: "Jehovah is my portion." The God-ward heart will always place God first (Matthew 6:33; Colossians 3:1-2). From within David's heart also came his resolve (or determination): "I have said that I would observe thy words." It was only when the prodigal realized what was of true value that he could resolve to go to his father (Luke 15:17). Like David, we must also resolve to observe God's word (Matthew 7:21, 26-27). Also, it was from David's heart that he made his life's commitment to serve God, "with my whole heart." Half-hearted service is never acceptable to God. Solomon so instructed his son to "Trust Jehovah with all thy heart and lean not upon thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him and he will direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3:5-6). Jesus is our example - "he committed himself to him that judgeth righteously" (1 Peter 2:23). We must have the mind of Christ (Philippians 2:5).

The Feet (vs. 59). "And turned my feet unto thy testimonies." The reference to "feet" suggests one's walk, actions or the direction of one's life. The apostle Paul instructed Christians to "...walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called"; to not "walk as the Gentiles", and that we "walk...as wise, redeeming the time because the days are evil" (Ephesians 4:1, 17; 5:15-16, emphasis mine, DR). To think on our ways is to consider how we "walk" in life. Basically, we walk one of two roads - one leads to eternal destruction and the other to eternal life (Matthew 7:13-14). David says our feet can be "turned" toward the good, thus establishing the relationship between the heart and feet. With this understanding, listen again to Solomon's charge to his son: "Make level the path of thy feet and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left. Remove thy foot from evil." (Proverbs 4:26-27).

Time (vs. 60-62). As David thought on his ways, he makes three observations regarding

the use of his time. First, he said, "I made haste..." concerning his obedience to God (vs. 60). Such matters demand an urgency in our lives because of their great importance and the eternal consequences involved (see 2 Corinthians 6:1-2). Second, David observed the wickedness of the world around him and resolved not to waste his time (vs. 61). We too must realize that there is no time to waste in our fight against sin (ours and in helping others). Such will not be done by catering to the carnal desires of man with a "social gospel." Man's only hope is in Christ (John 14:6) and responding to His truth (John 8:32; Romans 1:16-17). Third, David understood that in order to maintain a close relationship with God, he must be a good steward and reserve time for communion with God. He said, "At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee..." (vs. 62). With all the demands of life, we would do well to learn this lesson from David and schedule our time to put the things of God first (Matthew 6:33). This is an essential element when we think on our ways.

Friends (vs. 63). "I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that observe thy precepts." Invariably, when one thinks on his ways, his friends enter into the picture because of the great influence they wield in one's life either for good or bad (1 Corinthians 15:33). We are warned: "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers..." and "Come ye out from among them and be ye separate..." (2 Corinthians 6:14, 17). Surrounding ourselves with those who fear God and obey his word will greatly enrich our lives spiritually by their godly example and encouragement (1 Thessalonians 5:14; Hebrews 10:25; James 5:14-16).

In conclusion, may we, like David, soberly think on our ways.

~via *Vanduser Bulletin*, Bell City, Missouri

News & Notes

THE SICK: *Millinea Word* is to go to the doctor on Tuesday of this week for a check-up

...**Hoyt "Coon" Hammond** is not been feeling well this past week ..**Suzette McIntyre** has been not feeling well recently ... Remember **Wanda Tucker's father, Billy Letson**, who is continuing to take medication for his Leukemia ...**Helen Trousdale and Gurtie Snoddy's neice, Martha Henson**, who is battling cancer ...**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: The Coopers: Curt, Marcia and Erin are in Orlando, Florida this week...**The Martels: Claus and Sanda** are in Seattle, Washington this weekend and will be back on Monday.

GOSPEL MEETINGS: The **Midway church** in Greenhill will begin a meeting on Monday and it will continue through Wednesday with services at 7:00 p.m. **Robert Jackson** will be the speaker in this meeting.

PREACHING TODAY: Carlton McPeak is preaching for us today and we are glad to have him with us. The church here supports Carlton in his work with the **Westside church in Tunnel Hill, Georgia**. We look forward being able to spend some time with **Carlton, Rosemary, Katie, Clayton and Charlie** and getting to know them.

CONFESSION: Buffy Wallen came forward Sunday morning and confessed that she has not lived the kind of life that she ought. We appreciate Buffy and her desire and courage to do what is right and to be the kind of example to those around her. The church here is blessed to have people like Buffy with tender hearts.

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

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