

# 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

May 6, 2001

No. 17

## *The Time Is Up!*

Carl McMurray

Time limits are sometimes difficult things to work with. Who has not felt the press of time in getting some chore finished, or in preparing for someone to arrive, or leave? The Lord has set time limits on occasion and they likewise have proven difficult for some to accept. Just like an expired parking meter the Bible reveals to us that the time is up in some areas, and just like that meter, some have difficulty accepting it and moving along.

Zechariah 13:1-6 is an example of a time limit, set and prophesied by God. Verse one identifies the time of fulfillment as when the "fountain" for "sin and impurity" will be opened in Jerusalem. The time for fulfillment then is obviously the first century, when the cleansing fountain of Christ's blood is opened by the preaching of the gospel. Note what verses 2 and 3 tell us.

"And it will come about in that day," declares the Lord of hosts, 'that I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they will no longer be remembered; and I will also remove the prophets and the unclean spirit from the land. And it will come about that if anyone still prophesies, then his father and mother who gave birth to him will say to him, 'You shall not live, for you have spoken falsely in the name of the Lord'; and his father and mother who gave birth

to him will pierce him through when he prophesies.'" (Zechariah 13:2-3).

There was coming a day when prophets (and demons) would be removed from the land. True prophecy is so much a gift from God that when this gift is removed and a man continues to claim it, even the parents of a false prophet would be able to see and know the deceit being practiced. Even his parents would reprove and attack him for his deceit. It is baffling that something can be so plainly stated as to when it would end (in the same time period the fountain was opened) and people still misunderstand. The New Testament verifies this same time period for the ending of prophecy (and all other miraculous spiritual gifts) in Ephesians 4:8-16 and 1 Corinthians 13:8-13. In these two passages we are taught that the reason for their passing is that 1) their purpose is fulfilled (i.e. maturing the saints to a certain level) and 2) their need is fulfilled (i.e. being replaced by an unchanging written word. Zechariah reminds us that they were never intended to be permanent aspects of serving God, there was a time limit put on them. The two passages above simply explain why and how that time limit was reached.

Today there are many who are still trying to park their spiritual car at a meter whose time

is up. The Spirit taught in 2 Corinthians 5:7 that we should be walking by "...faith, not by sight." As our Lord makes His will known to us in His word, we should be satisfied without having to see the dead raised, the blind seeing, and the sick healed.

Isaiah 35:5-6 is where the Jews were told that miracles would be the sign of the coming kingdom, the way of holiness for the ransomed people of God. That ministry of miraculous power was begun by Jesus at his age of 30 and in Acts 1:8 He reminded His apostles that they too would receive power. Hebrews 2:3-4 explains that this power was given to confirm their words. That confirmation continued as needed while the news of the gospel spread throughout all creation (Colossians 1:6, 23) but that confirmation was never intended to continue forever.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit (an immersion in power) was only promised to the apostles. Although they laid hands upon and imparted miraculous gifts to others, no others ever received the power to pass the Spirit in that way. That gift of "giving" ended with the apostles. Why? Because it was no longer needed. Confirmation was not needed because God's word had already been confirmed. Prophecy was not needed because all had already been revealed and written down, Jude 3. The kingdom was established, the order was set. The plan was in motion. Nothing else was needed save to preach it and obey it. That is why in Acts 20:32, Paul left the elders at Ephesus, not looking for miracles, but depending on "...the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified."

For miracles, the time is up. Those who wait for one wait in vain today. God has told us already what to do, we simply need to do it. Those who claim them today either do so innocently (not knowing that a Bible miracle was actually a supernatural occurrence) or they do so deceitfully (knowing better but doing so for money, peer pressure, men's praise, or a host

of other reasons).

The alarm clock has clicked on, the meter has turned over, and time ran out in the first century on those gifts of spiritual childhood that were given to lead us to the maturity of faith. Go to your Bible and determine what it is that God desires of you. You'll not be left unsatisfied and when the time is up for this life – you'll be ready, not still waiting for something long gone.

~via *The Brownsburg Bulletin*, Brownsburg, Indiana.



## *The Truly Precious*

Frank Walton

"He who believes in Him will not be disappointed.' This precious value, then, is for you who believe" (1 Peter 2:6-7 NASB).

Louisville's Speed Art Museum has acquired a Paul Cezanne masterpiece. It measures only 10" by 13"; amazingly, this precious painting cost \$3.5 million!

Peter teaches that Christians have the "precious" privilege of beginning life anew by a living faith in Christ. Earthly life often disappoints (cf. high divorce & suicide rates). Yet, Peter reminds us that Jesus will never disappoint us. Whatever it costs, it is worth it to be a faithful Christian!

1 & 2 Peter reminds Christians, originally facing persecution and false teachers, what's truly precious. Whether we face external pressure or internal perversions, we're motivated to faithfulness by appreciating the truly precious. The stock market's recent fall should remind us that what's really valuable isn't here on earth.

**1. Precious Blood of Christ.** "You were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of

Christ” (1 Peter 1:18-19). Sinful man cannot buy his salvation. We’re spiritually bankrupt in an empty, futile life. Life without God is a hopeless end.

Yet, God has given us endless hope by the priceless, perfect gift of Jesus. God’s grace offered the best and dearest He had to win us back. Justice demands the guilty be punished. Jesus our substitute paid our debt and died our death. We’re the costliest of God’s creatures. So, you’re infinitely precious to God.

2. **Precious Corner Stone.** “And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God...For this is contained in Scripture: “Behold, I lay in Zion a choice stone, a precious corner stone” (1 Peter 2:4,6). The Jewish religious leadership (expert builders) “rejected” Jesus. Isaiah predicted this ignorance of human experts. Ironically, men disdained Jesus, but God honored Him as the focal point of building His redeemed people into His New Covenant Temple, the Lord’s church (Ephesians 2:19-22). We can rebuild our fallen lives on the merits and life-changing example of Jesus, enjoying sweet fellowship with God.

True Christians enjoy this “like precious faith” (2 Peter 1:1). The local church is a faith-family, from diverse backgrounds with different personalities. Yet, our common faith in Jesus brings us together in loving fellowship. By “coming to Him,” we appreciate why we are here and where we are going. Together, we can optimistically live with a song in our heart and purpose in our step. We know who we are and whose we are.

3. **Precious Promises.** “He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust” (2 Peter 1:4). As penitent, obedient believers (1 Peter 1:22), we have forgiveness of all past sins, the lifting of the burden of guilt, the hope of heaven, the avenue of prayer, the guiding light of the Word

of Christ, peace of mind, joy in living, and God’s daily providence watching over us. Indeed, we have the greatest quality of life in Christ, truly “life more abundant” (John 10:10).

The Lord has freely given us these things, worth much more than a \$3.5 million Cezanne painting or stock options! In Christ, “you are rich” (Revelation 2:9). There is nothing more precious. Thank God!

~via *Biblical E-Sights*, Vol. 1 No. 23.

---

## News & Notes

**THE SICK:** *Millinea Word* received a good report from the doctor this week and will be taking the chemo treatments orally that she has been taking in Nashville ... **Mary Best** is to have a biopsy done Monday on her thyroid ... **Hoyt “Coon” Hammond** is in the ECM hospital in Florence after having breathing problems this past week. They will do an arteriogram on Monday ... **Shelia Goode** was sick and not able to be at Bible study Wednesday night... **Jesse Tucker** was sick and not able to be at Bible study Wednesday night ... **Mary Best’s brother, Larry Johnson**, is in the Crockett hospital in Lawrenceburg with pneumonia ... **Glenda Phillips mother, Eula Pearl Green**, had surgery this past week on her back to determine the cause of her pain and is now at home. They believe that it is an infection and inflammation... 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:** **Corey Goode** has been in Jackson, Mississippi with his work recently ...**Ronnie and Lou Ann Phillips** are in Gulf Shores this week on vacation.. **Jim and Brooke Phillips** are also in Gulf Shores this week on vacation.

**CLEANING BUILDING:** The month of May is group three's month to clean the building.

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

**MEETING APPROACHING:** Our meeting with **Mark White** of Florence, Alabama is quickly approaching. The dates are June 17-22. There are some fliers on the table in the vestibule. Take some to pass along to people you invite.

**SONG SERVICE:** Next Sunday evening, May 13th, we will have our monthly song service. We are doing it the second week due to Carlton McPeak being here to speak for us on the third week. **Mark McIntyre** will be directing the service.

**SYMPATHY:** We want to express our deepest sympathy to **Larry White** in the passing of his uncle, **Royce McGill**, this past week. The funeral was on Tuesday morning.

**THE RECORD:** *Averages for April 2001*

**Sunday:** Bible Classes ..... 92  
 Morning Worship ..... 107  
 Evening Worship ..... 65

**Wednesday:** Bible Classes ..... 63

# 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

### 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