

# 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. 21

## The Jericho Road

W. Frank Walton

**The Scene.** "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, and they stripped him and beat him, and went away leaving him half dead" (Luke 10:30). J. W. McGarvey observes, "The road from Jerusalem to Jericho is eighteen miles long, and descends about 3,500 feet..It passes through desolate mountain ravines without any habitation save the inn, the ruins of which are still seen about halfway to Jericho..Jerome tells that the road was called the 'bloody way" (The Fourfold Gospel, p. 476). H. Leo Boles adds, "This road to Jericho was through a narrow, deep ravine with holes, caves, and hiding places for robbers" (Luke, p. 224).

**The Story.** "The Jericho Road" is the scene of the great lesson Jesus taught about the Good Samaritan concerning being a compassionate neighbor to anyone in need. Loving our neighbor moves us serve the best interest of a fellow human being. This immortal lesson is in response to a "testy" lawyer who asked for a precise definition of who exactly constitutes a "neighbor" (Luke 10:29). The Jericho Road is where, literally, "the rubber meets the road," in turning our religion from an academic exercise to a practical reality. Vicious robbers had left a man half-dead and destitute. Two religious experts (a

Levite and a priest - sort of like a preacher and a guest editor of a religious paper) passed by without getting involved (Luke 10:31-32). A lowly Samaritan, loathed by the Jews as unclean degenerates, had compassion, got involved and inconvenienced, and sacrificially helped this poor man so he could live (Luke 10:33-35).

**The Sedulity (or Application).** On the Jericho Road, the quibbling lawyer comes to a fork in the road. The Lord turns the tables on him by turning his theoretical quibble (Who is my neighbor?) into a practical challenge: "Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers' hands?" And he said, "The one who showed mercy toward him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do the same" (Luke 10:36-37). Arguing to evade loving obedience doesn't accomplish obedience.

The prime motive behind all obedience, as the lawyer professed and Jesus affirmed, is genuine, heart-felt love: "love the Lord your God with all your heart...and your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:27-28). Jesus excoriates the worthlessness of mere theoretical religion. Right theory is only right in our lives unless we

translate love into life. On the Jericho Road, even amid the rough and tumble inconveniences of humanity, we need to go from theory to practice. "Pity weeps and runs away; compassion comes to help and stays" (J. C. O'Leary).

Compassion is getting into the skin of a fellow human being and feeling their plight. Such can energize us to help wherever needed. "When you help someone else up the hill, you reach the top yourself." We especially should have compassion on helping our brethren (Galatians 6:10). In practicing the truth, we should be even concerned with the personal welfare of those we may disagree. We also need to have compassion on the lost, and bind up their wounds with the gospel of Christ.

Perhaps we need to follow the Samaritan on the Jericho Road to relearn compassion.

~via *Biblical E-Sights*, Vol. 1 No. 33



## God's Warning Labels

Michael Thomas

We all have products within our households that contain warning labels. One of my favorites is on a bottle of eye-drops "Warning: In case of accidental ingestion, seek professional assistance or contact a Poison Control Center immediately." Oh, I get it. It's okay to put this stuff in my eye to get the redness out, but if it gets into my system I must call the poison control center immediately. Makes sense to me.

Overall warning labels are helpful in providing us with information about products that can harm us. It is good to know which poisons we can ingest and which we can only handle with care. I wonder, what are some warning labels God has given us?

### Beware of Men

As Jesus prepared his disciples to tell the

Jews of the kingdom of God, He extended this warning, "But beware of men" (Matthew 10:17). They not only needed to hear this in anticipation of the trials they would face because of men, but they also needed to know that some of God's most aggressive opponents to His will are those "of His own household." This is the application Jesus also made in His sermon on the mount "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves" (Matthew 7:15).

We need enough wisdom and humility to realize that not all who claim to be of God are of God. Outwardly they may praise God and display a genuine desire to do His will, but inwardly their hearts are far from Him. They may say, "I am of God," but as long as they go beyond what the scriptures teach they cannot walk by faith in God. And as long as they refuse to practice only the things God's will allows, they will only deceive themselves in religion (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12). For this reason we are to be careful in dealing with such people ("Christians"). There is such a thing as being misled by people who claim to be of God (2 Peter 2:1-3; 3:16,17). How will we know who is of God and who is not? By reading the labels. Anyone who teaches us to depart from God's revealed will is not of God, no matter how impressive they might be (Romans 16:17,18; Colossians 2:23).

### Take Heed Lest You Fall

Just when we think we have a particular sin conquered, or that our faith is strong enough deal with certain people, we get entangled with things we said would never do. Because "a haughty spirit goes before a fall," we have been given the following warning label from God "**Warning:** "Let him who thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall" (1 Corinthians 10:12). We are all capable of drifting away from the things we have been taught in God (Hebrews 2:1). Convictions we hold convincingly today can be compromised tomorrow if we are not careful to maintain a daily walk with God (Philippians 3:18,19). For this reason we should not get discouraged when there needs to be public

teaching on the basic principles of Christianity (one Lord, one faith, one baptism, authority, etc.). The only time we should not want the basics is when that is all we want (Hebrews 6:1,2). Other than that, we should “take heed to ourselves and to the doctrine” that we might be saved (1 Timothy 4:13-16).

God hasn't warned us of spiritual dangers to avoid a potential lawsuit. He genuinely cares for our soul and wants what is best for us (1 Timothy 2:3,4). May we love and trust Him enough to follow not only the instructions, but also the warning labels, which in this case are the same.

~via *The Owensboro Bulletin*, Owensboro, Kentucky



## ***Forgetting What Lies Behind***

**Greg Litmer**

In Philippians 3:13-14, Paul wrote, “Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

What did Paul mean by “forgetting what lies behind”? Did he mean that he literally forgot all that had gone before in his life, both good and bad? Absolutely not. Paul remembered the bad things in his life. He referred to himself in 1 Timothy 1:13, as “formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor.” He said to King Agrippa, in Acts 26:9, “So then, I thought to myself that I had to do many things hostile to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.” He also remembered the good things he had accomplished and the work in the Lord he had done. In 2 Corinthians 3:2, Paul wrote to the Corinthians, “You are our letter, written in our hearts, known and read by all men.” His point was that the Corinthian church itself authenticated Paul’s work and fidelity to the Lord.

So what did Paul mean? Simply that he would not allow the things of the past, both good and bad, to interfere with his present work. Paul would not allow his past accomplishments to obscure his view of the present. He would not use what he had done in the past to vindicate what he was presently doing. Paul would not boast of previous successes because he still had work to do. May God help us all to have that same attitude. If I live in the past, I will miss the goal.

~via *The Searcher*, Louisville, Kentucky

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## **N**ews & **Notes**

**THE SICK:** *Cindy Mosley's father, Tom Haney*, is in the Huntsville hospital, room 559 with pneumonia ..*Millinea Word* is at home and did well during her trip to Florida..*Eddie Hammond* was sick and not able to be out Wednesday night ...*Cindy Pressnell* was able to be at Bible study on Wednesday after being sick ... Remember *Wanda Tucker's father, Billy Letson*, who is continuing to take medication for his Leukemia ..*Helen Trousdale and Gurtie Snoddy's niece, Martha Henson*, who is battling cancer ..*Sheila Goode & Lou Ann Phillips mother, Shirley Slaton*, is nearing the end of her treatments for her cancer... *Sandra Glass' cousin, Tina Strickland*, who is continuing her treatments for her cancer ... *Mattie Blanche Word* who continues at home and not able to be out...*Aldeen Noles* who is not able to be out ... *Gurtie Snoddy* who is in the Mitchell-Hollingsworth Nursing Home...*Mary Best's nephew, Shannon Johnson*, who is at home ... *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:** *Mark McIntyre* was out of town with his work this past week.

**GOSPEL MEETINGS & VBS:** The *Northside church* in Lexington will begin a vacation Bible school on Monday and it will continue through Friday with services at 7:00 p.m. The speakers in the adult class are as follows: Monday – *Bill Hall*; Tuesday – *Jeff McCrary*; Wednesday – *Dwane Derrick*; Thursday–*Mark White*; Friday – *Grant Caldwell*...The *Hillsboro Heights church* in Moulton is beginning a meeting today and it will continue through Friday of this week with *Clark Dugger* preaching. Services Monday through Friday will begin at 7:30 p.m....*Wooley Springs church* near Toney is beginning a meeting today and it will continue through Friday with *Carrol Sutton* preaching. The services Monday through Friday will begin at 7:30 p.m....The *Highway 157 church* in Cullman is beginning a meeting and VBS today and it will continue through Friday. *Leon Mauldin* will be the speaker in this meeting. Service will begin each evening at 7:30.

**COMMUNICATION GROUPS:** Tonight is the night for Communication group one to meet. If you are in group one, remember to meet with your group.

**CONGRATULATIONS:** This past week has been graduation week for the schools in Lauderdale county. This year *Jason White* graduated from Lauderdale Co. High School. We are thankful for our young people here at Anderson and their accomplishments. We wish for Jason the very best as he goes forward in his life that he will be successful in the choices he makes. But above all things and choices we are thankful that Jason has become a Christian in his youth and pray that the decisions he makes will continue to build his faith.

**THE RECORD:** *Averages for May 2001*

**Sunday:** Bible Classes ..... 81  
 Morning Worship ..... 92  
 Evening Worship ..... 65

**Wednesday:**  
 Bible Classes ..... 65

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*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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