

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

September 30, 2001

No. 38



Beginning Today

Gospel Meeting

September 30 – October 3

(Sunday – Wednesday)

Schedule of Services

Sunday: 9:45 a.m.; 10:45 a.m. & 7:30 p.m.

Monday – Wednesday: 7:30 p.m.

V. C. (Vic) McCormick, Speaker
Brooksville, Florida

Anderson church of Christ

Highway 207 South
Anderson, Alabama

“The Conversion of Saul”

Richie Thetford

The book of Acts chapters 9 and 22 tell us of the conversion of Saul, known later as the apostle Paul. By learning about Saul and his conversion we can learn what we must do in order to be a Christian. What kind of man was Saul? When he was talking to young Timothy and explaining that Jesus came into the world to save sinners he added: “of whom I am chief” (1 Tim 1:15). He clearly admitted that he was beyond a doubt a sinner before God. Before we can be converted to the Lord, we must first recognize as Saul did that we are a sinner (Romans 3:23). Saul knew he was a sinner even though he came from a very good ancestry (Philippians 3:5), and had a great education (Acts 22:3). So just because we might have a wonderful family background and a great education, that alone can’t save us. No matter how well known our family is and no matter how much college and other schools we have attended and completed, we still must acknowledge we are in sin and need God’s help.

What Was Saul’s Great Sin?

But what was Saul’s great sin that moved him to tell Timothy that he was chief among sinners? He explains in Acts 22:4 that he was involved in persecuting Christians. There it says: “I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.” He felt bad that he had delivered Christians up to be killed and thrown into prison. He did this, but he did this ignorantly. He told Timothy “although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief” (1 Timothy 1:13). Saul’s mistake was in regard to religion, he thought that he was right, but in fact he was very wrong. In Acts 26:9 he said: “Indeed, I myself thought I must do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. This I also did in Jerusalem, and many of the saints I shut up in prison, having

received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. And I punished them often in every synagogue and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly enraged against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities.” Paul later admitted before anyone that would listen that he was wrong in what he did. He further stated that when he was doing these things contrary to God’s will that “I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers” (Galatians 1:14). And all the time that he was zealously persecuting Christians he did so in all **Good Conscience** (Acts 24:16). What can we learn from Saul’s great sin? We should learn that a person may think he is right, be zealous, have a good conscience and yet still be **wrong!** Until we are willing to open up the Word of God and read what we **must** do in order to be saved, with an honest and open heart, then we too might very well be guilty of doing sin, yet in good conscience. Remember “faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17). We will never know what it is that we are **supposed** to do if we do not read it. We can never gain Bible faith, if we don’t read it!

Saul Becomes an Apostle and a Christian

Let’s take a moment to carefully distinguish between the things that made Paul an apostle and the things that made him a Christian. The things that transpired in Acts 22:6-9 is what allowed Paul to call himself an apostle. The text says: “Now it happened, as I journeyed and came near Damascus at about noon, suddenly a great light from heaven shone around me. And I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? So I answered, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And He said to me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting. And those who were with me

indeed saw the light and were afraid, but they did not hear the voice of Him who spoke to me.” In this reading we can understand that Jesus appeared specifically to Paul (verse 9), not to any other. He understands and explains that this event happened because he was chosen to be a “witness” for Christ. The scripture says: “Then he said, ‘The God of our fathers has chosen you that you should know His will, and see the Just One, and hear the voice of His mouth. For you will be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard’” (Acts 22:14-15).

Saul became a Christian when he **obeyed** the voice of the Lord. In Acts 9:6 it says: “So he, trembling and astonished, said, ‘Lord, what do You want me to do?’ And the Lord said to him, ‘Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.’” Why did the Lord tell Saul to go to Damascus and see a man named Ananias? Because that work had been committed into the hands of men. Why was it that Ananias did not tell him to believe? Because Saul was already a believer at this point. Why didn’t Ananias tell Saul to repent? Because he was already penitent. So what was it then that Saul was told to do? In Acts 22:16 it says: “And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.” Saul was not saved, was not a Christian, until he was baptized into Christ (Galatians 3:27). That is the only way his sins could be washed away. The very same way that the sins were washed away (forgiven) on the day of Pentecost when Peter preached the first sermon. At that time Peter commanded the people: “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38).

We can learn a valuable lesson from Saul. When he learned the truth - he **obeyed** and was baptized. Have you learned the truth, **obeyed**, and been baptized? Tomorrow may be too late!

~via **Castleton Light**, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Is Faith A Work?

Billy Norris

“Jesus answered them and said, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for this food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.’ Then they said to Him, ‘What shall we do do that we may work the works of God?’ Jesus answered and said to them, ‘This is the work of God, that you believe on Him whom He has sent.’” (John 6:26-29).

Christ is talking about laboring for two kinds of food, one, material, that perishes; the other, spiritual, that endures to everlasting life. One must work to obtain either. When they asked what to do to work the works of God, Christ answered, “This is the work of God that you believe in Him whom He sent.” The work of God is work required by God to be done by men.

When men believe in Christ and obey the gospel, they perform that work. The word of God classifies faith on the part of man as a work of obedience.

~via **Gospel Guide**, Vol. 30 No. 5

News & Notes

THE SICK: *Eddie Hammond's father, Burl Hammond* is at home following surgery to put a stint in his heart ... *Scottie Goode's father, Hubert Goode*, is in the HealthSouth Rehabilitation in Huntsville ... *Signa Skipworth's step-grandson, Nicholas Woods*, is at home making gradual progress ... *Janice Glass* has been sick this past week and was unable to be at Bible study Wednesday... *Rodney McCrary's mother, Nadine McCrary*, came home from the Florence Comprehensive Care Rehab this past week... *Arvel Newton's*

nephew, Chester Newton, continues at home with his battle with cancer ...Remember *Millinea Word* as she continues her treatments/medication ... *Mattie Blanche Word* continues at home and not able to be out ...*Aldeen Noles* is in the SunBridge Nursing Home in Lawrenceburg ..*Shelia Moore's mother-in-law, Laurene Whitehead*, is in the Athens Convelesant Center...*Mary Best's nephew, Shannon Johnson*, who is at home ... *Millinea Word's mother, Nola McCafferty, Tisha Thomas' grandmother, Nellie Hunter*, who are both in the Meadow Brook Nursing Home in Pulaski.

CONGRATULATIONS: We want to congratulate *Susan Ridgeway & Greg Williams* on their marriage yesterday evening. We iwsh for them a long and happy life together as husband and wife. They are in Hawaii on their honeymoon. Remember them as they travel.

GOSPEL MEETING: There is a gospel meeting this week through Wednesday at the *College View church* in Florence. *Mike Sobiech* is the speaker...The *Market Street church* in Athens is beginning at meeting today through Wednesday with different speakers. Let us remember these efforts in our prayers.

SINGING: The *Underwood Heights church* in Florence has planned a singing for this afternoon at 2:30.

OUR MEETING: Our meeting is beginning this morning with brother Vic McCormick preaching. Let us all remember the meeting in our prayers and make our plans to be present for all the services. I know that brother McCormick will do his job well and that we will be glad for the opportunities we will have to study along with him from the word of God. The meeting will continue through Wednesday with services including this evening at 7:30 p.m.

Remember Our Bible Class Periods

Sunday at 9:45 a.m.
Wednesday at 7:00 p.m.

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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