

POWER

“the gospel is the power of God unto salvation” (Romans 1:16)

Editorial Introduction

This issue embarks upon a two month (June and August) examination of the subject, “Discerning right and wrong.” Numerous events over the course of this year have lead us, the editors, to believe that some have failed to make fundamental connections in this area.

With the recent decision by the United States Supreme Court to legalize homosexual marriage in all 50 states (to one degree or another), it has never been more necessary to ensure the Church understands the fundamentals of discerning good and evil, right and wrong.

Having set the foundational thoughts on who can discern good and evil, consider the Pharisees situation in Jesus’ day--what was their real sin? How did they actually come to fight against God while claiming to uphold and enforce His laws?

Then, in POWER from the Original, see the scope of Scripture’s application to our lives and actions through the little word, “all.”

Finally, in POWER from the PAST, examine an article that discusses our nation’s current status as a “Christian” nation (and see how little has changed since 1996 in America).

But before all of that, let us offer you a special presentation. In times like these in our country it is good to be reminded of where we started, our roots. We invite you to spend a few moments with brother Tom Holland and “Stand Up For America.” We want to provide you, our readers, access to the Gospel Broadcasting Network Radio’s episodes of this wonderful web and radio program.

We are grateful for your readership and want to say, Thank You, and may God Bless You.



To listen to these programs online, you can visit GBN’s archive page:

WWW.GBNTV.ORG/SFA

For more details, see page 5.

THIS ISSUE

DISCERNING GOOD AND EVIL (1)

EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION

WHO CAN DISCERN
GOOD AND EVIL?
BY AARON COZORT

THE PHARISEE’S REAL PROBLEM
BY EDDY CRAFT

POWER FROM THE ORIGINAL

THE IMPORTANCE OF ALL
BY ADAM B. COZORT

POWER FROM THE PAST

PURE RELIGION
BY BILL BRYANT

PUBLICATION INFORMATION

POWER IS A MONTHLY PUBLICATION
OVERSEEN BY THE ELDERS OF THE
SOUTHAVEN CHURCH OF CHRIST,
SOUTHAVEN, MISSISSIPPI.

EDITORS

MARK TESKE
AARON COZORT

ELDERS

LARRY EVERSON
CON LAMBERT
VERN SCHRIMSHER

CONTACT US

PHONE: 662-393-2690

FAX: 662-342-7152

EMAIL: POWER@SOUTHAVENCOC.ORG

WEB: WWW.SOUTHAVENCOC.ORG/POWER

Only ONE Month Remains Until...



2015 POWER LECTURESHIP JULY 26 - 30, 2015 REPROVE, REBUKE, & EXHORT SOUTHAVEN CHURCH OF CHRIST

1483 Brookhaven Drive; Southaven, MS 38671 • Telephone (662) 393-2690

Sunday, July 26

- 9:30 am - 10:30 am Jesus: A Case Study of Reproving, Rebuking, and Exhorting..... Glenn Hitchcock
- 10:30 am - 11:30 am 2 Timothy 4:2 – An Overview Robert Jefferies
- 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm Christian Relationships: Getting Past the Superficial and into Deeper Relationships.....B.J. Clarke

Monday, July 27

- 9:00 am - 10:00 am Preaching the Word with All Authority – Titus 2:15 Gary Colley
- 10:00 am - 11:00 am Developing an Atmosphere Conducive to Growth in the Local Congregation Mike Hixson
- 1:00 am - 12:00 pm Preaching Only Positive Sermons Kills Congregations..... Lane Dix
- 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm Matthew 18 – Going to a Brother in Sin without Gossiping..... Dan Cates
- 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm Teaching with Meekness – 1 Peter 3:15 Clifton Angel
- Ladies — 2:00 pm Training Up My Children Without Provoking Them to Wrath..... Becky Honeycutt
- 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm Making Christianity Attractive..... Joe Wells

Tuesday, July 28

- 9:00 am - 10:00 am A Case Study of Barnabas..... Chad Dollahite
- 10:00 am - 11:00 am Eli: A Case Study in Failing to Discipline Children Eric Lyons
- 11:00 am - 12:00 pm How God Chastises His Children – Hebrews 12:7-11 Rob Whitacre
- 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm Training Up My Child in an Anti-Spanking World Kevin Rutherford
- 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm “As Many as I Love” (Revelation 3:19): The Proper Motivation for Reproof..... Jim Dearman
- Ladies — 2:00 pm “Angry Words, O Let Them Never.....” Sheri Blackwell
- 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm Preaching on the “Taboo” Topics: Modesty, Morality, and Mixed Swimming..... Cliff Goodwin

Wednesday, July 29

- 9:00 am - 10:00 am Death and Life are in the Power of the Tongue Proverbs 18-21 Bill Irby
- 10:00 am - 11:00 am Preaching Against Sin: Homosexuality Ben Giselbach
- 1:00 am - 12:00 pm If Your Brother Sins Against You, Rebuke Him Luke 17:3..... Sam Willcutt
- 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm Overcoming Negativity and Learning to be an Encourager Frank Shepard
- 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm The Hateful Rebuker – Rebuking with Love Without Compromise..... Neal Pollard
- Ladies — 2:00 pm “Setting My Husband Straight” – Dealing with a Husband with a Sin Problem Kathy Pollard
- 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm Am I “Shepherd-able”? Submitting to the Authority of Elders..... Eric Owens

Thursday, July 30

- 9:00 am - 10:00 am When It’s My Toes: When the Rebuke Applies to Me Phillip Hines
- 10:00 am - 11:00 am Church Discipline: How to Do It Successfully – Proper Motivations, Methods for Winning Back Souls, etc... Timothy Wilkes, Sr.
- 11:00 am - 12:00 pm Rebuking: Is it Sinful to Call Names? Must I Go Privately to a Public False Teacher? Rick Popejoy
- 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm Elders Must Have Backbone – Titus 1:9 Tony Lawrence
- 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm A Soft Answer Turns Away Wrath Steve Higginbotham
- Ladies — 2:00 pm How God Encourages His Children – “Comfort Scriptures” Bonnie Ruiz
- 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm A Case Study of Paul: Knowing the Difference Between Matters of Judgment and Doctrine (Acts 15 vs Galatians 2)..... Robert Taylor, Jr.

Ladies’ Classes will be held in the Fellowship Hall



SOUTHAVEN
CHURCH OF CHRIST



Rick Popejoy

Bonnie Ruiz

Kevin Rutherford

Frank Shepard

Robert Taylor, Jr.

Joe Wells

Rob Whitacre

Timothy Wilkes, Sr.

Sam Willcutt

WWW.SOUTHAVENCOG.ORG/POWER

Who Can Discern Good and Evil?

by Aaron Cozort

Consider the theme, *Discerning Good and Evil*, you must first consider “Who **can** discern good and evil?” Not who has the authority to do so, but who has the **capacity** to do so.

The Hebrews penman stated this concerning the Christians in the first century:

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised **to discern both good and evil** (Hebrews 5:12-14).

Consider some conclusions from this passage:

1. God expects mature Christians to be capable and practiced at discerning good and evil.

When situations arise in the life of a Christian, or in the local body of Christ, God expects the mature Christians to be prepared to use the tools He has provided to discern the correct path.

He has delivered sufficient revelation to mankind to guide us through the issues of life, no matter what they may be (cf. Psalm 119:105; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3).

He has also delivered sufficient examples for how to remain steadfast in the faith (Hebrews 11; 12:1-2).

He has even provided an example of a perfect life, Jesus, achieved through one who gave himself fully discerning good and evil and submitting to God (Luke 2:52; Matthew 4).

No man will be able to stand before the Judgment Seat and say, “I had no way to know!”

2. There are some people, who because of mental faculties or disorders, are not capable of discerning good and evil.

It is important to realize that some individuals in this life, in their current mental condition are incapable of discerning good and evil. They may have a mental disorder or retardation. They may have a physical sickness that inhibits their ability to discern.

God has always judged righteously upon people’s true ability to obey. Mature Christians should work with individuals in these conditions to help them be obedient to God to the greatest capacity that they can achieve.

3. There are some people, who because of failure to grow, are

spiritually insufficient to properly discern good and evil.

The babe in Christ (a new Christian) will not yet be prepared to properly discern good and evil, at least to a full extent. This is not a condemnation upon them, for God has provided grace to cover their sins (Romans 5:13-6:1).

Yet, God expects that the young Christian, the babe, does not live the rest of his life at this level. He, like a child, is to grow. As Peter wrote,

Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious. Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 1:1-5).

Those who are legitimately insufficient in their exercise (i.e. newer Christians) are not lesser Christians and are not to be put down, but instead are helped and not hindered by other Christians respect them because of price paid for their souls (cf. Romans 14:15; 15:1-4).

4. Proper discerning of good and evil in God’s eyes requires effort, practice, and experience.

In all of this, we come to the conclusion that discerning good and evil is no easy task, but a necessary one. God has given us tools, He has provided us with the ability and responsibility, and He will judge us based upon our growth in this regard.

God said to Israel,

“Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil, Learn to do good; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow. “Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the LORD, “Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool. (Isaiah 1:16-18).

If God will judge us based upon our performance, then there must be a standard upon which he will judge. If God is righteous in judgment, then He will judge by a standard to which we have access and the capacity to understand and obey. God is certainly righteous in judgment, and He has given us, “all things that pertain to life and godliness.” It is up to us to be ready for that Judgment.

THE PHARISEES' REAL PROBLEM

by Eddy Craft

The real problem with the Pharisees was not that they were just binding the washing of pots and pans. Many times when looking at a problem, things can fog the way to keep us from getting a clear understanding. Notice a couple scriptures regarding the Pharisees that will help us to see the heart of the problem: "Saying, *The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not*" (Matthew 23:2-3). "For I say unto you, *That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven*" (Matthew 5:20). (Emp. EC).

The Pharisees had the authority of Moses. What they taught was truly the word of God, and those that heard them needed to obey it. So, the problem with the Pharisees was not what they taught as much as it was what they did not do. They would teach the people to obey the law of Moses but then turn right around and lay aside the law of Moses to keep their traditions. They placed their traditions above the law of God. When they did that, they taught for doctrines the commandments of men (Mark 7:7). They would bind things on people that God had not and then not keep them (Matthew 23:4). The Pharisees did not understand that they were the ones that could not see! They were spiritually blind. They thought that they could circumvent the word of God by saying words like "Corban" (Mark 7:11).

It is interesting to notice that Jesus wanted our righteousness to exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees. How could this be

done? If they gave a tenth, we would give more; if they prayed three times a day, we would pray six, and etc. Is this what Jesus meant? Well, obviously not. What kind of righteousness did they have? They would say and do not. Our righteousness is the kind that says and does what God wants. It is hypocritical to preach and not live what you preach, or it is sin to practice what you preach but not practice it from the heart. We have those in the church today that say and do not. We need to be Christ-like and preach what we practice and practice what we preach (Acts 1:1). Some people talk a good talk but don't walk the walk. A good question to ask is: "Is there any Pharisee in me?" Most of us would probably say, "No." but we really need to be honest here, JUDGMENT DAY HONEST!

Another problem with the Pharisees was that they did what they did to be seen of men: "*But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments*" (Matthew 23:5). That is why they loved the greetings in the markets, to be called "father," to have the uppermost rooms at feasts and to have the chief seats in the synagogues. They were doing all that they did for all of the wrong reasons. If that is the reason why we keep the commandments of God, then we are sinning and thus our righteousness is not exceeding the Pharisees'. We are to let our lights shine so that God can be glorified and not to make ourselves look good in the sight of men. In spite of what some think, attitude does make a difference. May God help us as we try to exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees!

2015 POWER LECTURESHIP

THEME: Reprove, Rebuke, & Exhort

JULY 26 - 30, 2015

SOUTHAVEN CHURCH OF CHRIST

1483 Brookhaven Drive

Southaven, MS 38671

Telephone (662) 393-2690

*SEE LECTURESHIP SCHEDULE ATTACHED

EMAIL BULLETIN

If you have received Southaven church of Christ's bulletin, *The Searcher*, in the past and would like to continue to receive it, it will be emailed weekly and you can sign up to receive it at our website.

Visit our website to sign up today!

WWW.SOUTHAVENCOC.ORG



POWER from the ORIGINAL

THE IMPORTANCE OF “ALL”

by Adam B. Cozort

We live in an age of opinions. Everybody has one and anticipates that theirs carries as much weight as someone else's. This perception often carries over into the realm of Scripture as well. But have we lost the importance of God's opinion? For it is the only one that really matters. Paul told Timothy: “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16-17, NKJV). The term that is translated “all” in this passage is the Greek word *pas*, and it means: “all, everything, the whole.” God said through Paul that the whole of Scripture is given by His inspiration.

God takes it a step further through the apostle Peter when He inspired him to write: “As His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue” (2 Peter. 1:3). The phrase “all things” is another form (*panta*) of the same

word used in the previous verse and it means exactly the same thing. God is affirming that He has given to us everything that pertains to life (physical needs) and godliness (spiritual needs).

If God says that He has given us everything for physical and spiritual well-being, what does that leave out? Additionally, if God says He gave every Scripture by inspiration and it is profitable for such things as instruction in righteousness, do we have the right to then say man's opinions on matters of righteousness are equal to God's?

We need to be certain we never forget the weight of God's inspired word. There are things that are matters of opinion, but God said He has given us everything we need to fully equip us in life and godliness. That means in matters of morality and righteousness, there are no matters where my opinion is equal with God. His principles and precepts always reign supreme and mankind is bound to abide by them.



If you would like to receive new episodes as they are released, subscribe to the GBN Email Blast at www.gbntv.org/EMAIL

[STAND UP FOR AMERICA - EPISODE 12](#)

[STAND UP FOR AMERICA - EPISODE 11](#)

[STAND UP FOR AMERICA - EPISODE 10](#)

[STAND UP FOR AMERICA - EPISODE 9](#)

[STAND UP FOR AMERICA - EPISODE 8](#)

[STAND UP FOR AMERICA - EPISODE 7](#)

[STAND UP FOR AMERICA - EPISODE 6](#)

[STAND UP FOR AMERICA - EPISODE 5](#)

[STAND UP FOR AMERICA - EPISODE 4](#)

[STAND UP FOR AMERICA - EPISODE 3](#)

[STAND UP FOR AMERICA - EPISODE 2](#)

[STAND UP FOR AMERICA - EPISODE 1](#)



POWER from the PAST

The archive of POWER is a vast storehouse of sound, doctrinal articles from some of the best writers in the brotherhood, past and present. The POWER from the Past articles will provide another generation of readers the opportunity to read the best of the best from previous POWER issues.

PURE RELIGION

by Bill Bryant

Isn't it great to live in a "Christian" nation where over 90% of the population believes in God and over 100 million people attend a weekly religious observance? Let us note some of the amazing results of this "religiosity" in the homeland of religious liberty. America is the most violent, crime-ridden, drug-infested Western industrialized nation. Three out of every ten births are illegitimate. Virginity is a joke. Half of all marriages end in divorce. Homosexuality is an "alternative lifestyle." Abortions have claimed more lives than all the combined wars America has fought. The second highest cause of death among teenagers is suicide. If this is a "Christian" nation, aren't you glad you don't live in a pagan nation like Japan? (In "Christian" America there are 100 times more burglaries than in "pagan" Japan.) If there are so many religious people in our country, then why is our country in such dire straits?

There was an article that appeared some time back in the USA TODAY that dealt with religion in America. Much of the article had to do with the findings of a book written by Barry A. Kosmin and Seymour P. Lachman entitled, "One Nation Under God." This book analyzes the 1991 National Survey of Religious Identification. This survey asked 113,000 adults across the country about their religion. This book indicates that which many of us have known for some time, that religion for most Americans is only of the "lip-service" variety. A few excerpts from the article are as follows: "While 90% of us say we've gotten religion, living it is another story...religious identity today is often a spiritual gloss on a largely secular society...we like our religion without the particulars...no requirements for moral action...no restraints on personal pleasures."

Statements like these indicate that many who claim to be religious are not truly listening to God with an obedient spirit what to do He says. For years now, denominational preachers have been explaining away what the Bible has to say about salvation, the Lord's true church, unity, worship, church organization, and other doctrinal matters. They have left the conclusion in the minds of people that you can substitute your own will in these matters as long as you are sincere. Now people have concluded that if the Bible does not mean what it says about those "doctrinal" matters, then it surely

does not mean what it says about adultery, divorce, alcohol, homosexuality, pure speech, etc. People are now going their own way and calling it religion and wondering why morals in America are headed toward the cesspool.

There are some even in the Lord's church today who are calling for change who are more concerned about attendance than they are the purity of the church. They encourage us to be more sensitive to the felt needs of those who attend our worship services or else we will lose them. We need to remind those who are so concerned about numbers that if preaching the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27) will cause people to leave, then the Lord has already lost them. They might still be counted on the attendance board, but the Lord stopped counting them as one of His when they sought first their own will as opposed to His.

This is not the time to back down from the bold proclamation of the truth. This is the ideal time to teach the world that respect for authority begins first and foremost with the Creator of the world. This is the ideal time to "earnestly contend for the faith" (Jude 3), to preach the message of repentance to a world that is willingly ignorant (Acts 17:30), to worship God in the only way that He will accept (John 4:24), to cling to the New Testament pattern that will always be right (II Tim. 1:13), to tell of the Lord's love for His church and be willing to give ourselves for it as He did (Eph. 5:25), and to tell the world that judgment is coming (II Cor. 5:10). We need to be shouting from the roof tops that the church that Jesus promised that He would build (Matt. 16:18) still exists and that no one will be saved apart from it. We can pick and choose all we want at Wal-Mart, but God will never allow anyone to do that with Him. Augustine of Hippo made the statement, "If you believe in the gospel what you like, and reject what you don't like; it's not the gospel you believe, but yourself." Pure religion is defined well in the Scriptures (James 1:27). It's fruit can be seen in the godly lives of its adherents. Man-made religion can be identified as well. Just open up the newspapers and inspect its fruit then be willing to tell our supposed "Christian" nation the reason for the difference.

This articles was first released
in the August 1996 issue.

