



The South Florida Avenue church of Christ



MESSENGER

1807 S. Florida Ave., Lakeland, FL 33803

Vol. 74 No. 4 January 26, 2021

ELDERS

David Anderson
Kenny French
Brian Kenyon
Bobby Sheumaker

DEACONS

Tyler Anderson
Jason Hendrix
Stacey Paulin
Jimmy Sweeney

MINISTER

Hiram Kemp

ASSOCIATE MINISTER

Vince Daugherty

SECRETARY

Dee Parramore

OFFICE PHONE

(863) 682-4702

SUNDAY SERVICES

Bible Study.....9:30 a.m.
Worship.....10:30 a.m.
Evening Worship.....6:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Ladies Class.....10:00 a.m.
Bible Study.....7:00 p.m.

EMAIL

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WEB PAGE

SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com

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SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist

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Florida School of Preaching
since 1969

MISSION FIELDS

Dub Hill.....Russia
Don Iverson.....India
Marc Veary.....Malawi, Africa
Graham McDonald..Scotland
J. Paguaga.....Honduras, C.A.
Joey Treat.....Pacific Islands
Ted Wheeler.....Ghana, W.A.

The Captain of Our Faith

Vince Daugherty

Lewis and Clark's famous expedition into the Louisiana territory is remembered and taught in American History classes because they did something no one had done. They blazed a trail through new territory previously undocumented and unknown to the people who lived on the eastern coast of the continent. Because of their success, the middle part of North America was opened to people looking to settle west of the Mississippi. If it had not been for the efforts of Louis and Clark showing people the way, they might not have had the confidence to strike out on their own.

Spiritually speaking, we have a pioneer, a trailblazer, a "Lewis and Clark." Hebrews 2:10 reads, *"For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."* A careful study of the original word "captain" is very important in understanding who Jesus was and what He has done for humanity. The original word in Greek is ἀρχηγός (archégos: ar-khay-gos'). Strong's simple definition is founder or leader. HELPS Word-Studies reads, "properly, the first in a long procession; a file leader who pioneers the way for many others to follow. [It] (arxégos) does not strictly mean "author," but rather "a person who is originator or founder of a movement and continues as the leader – i.e. 'pioneer leader, founding leader.'" When one breaks down the word, we find two underlying Greek words which really drives home the definition for this author -- arxé meaning: "the first"; and ágō meaning: "to lead". We have an English term arch meaning, "first or head". Jesus was the first, the beginning. He was the trailblazer of our faith. Not only was Jesus first, but He did not just blaze the trail and leave us behind, He also leads, he lights the trail, He leads from the front, not from behind.

As we study, we find we have a great need for a "captain" of our faith. We also can see that Jesus is the absolute best "Captain" of our faith. Man's great need for a Captain can be traced back to the Garden of Eden when sin entered into the world through Adam and Eve's failure. From that point forward, man's relationship with the holy God was strained. When one sins, he puts a strain on the relationship between God and him. Because God is holy, He cannot be around sin. There is distance, God must keep His distance. It is interesting to read when a sinful man comes near to Holy God. Moses' face lit up like a candle. Isaiah cried, "Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips." Peter, recognizing his own shortcomings, said to Jesus, "depart from me, for I am a sinful man." People had great fear when they came into the presence of holy God. Most of the time, you read the messenger of the Lord saying "do not be afraid".

The strain in the relationship is because of man's doing. The man who claims to feel far from God must ask the question, "who moved?" God has not moved away from us. Man moves away from God when he chooses to walk away. The problem of the strained relationship with God is there was no man to restore that relationship. Isaiah 64:6 reads, *"But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; We all fade as a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, Have taken us away."* Time and time again man has fallen on his face. From the time of the Garden, man found himself in a dreadful place without hope and with a frightening expectation. Romans 6:23 says *"the wages of sin is death."* Snapshots into mankind's history from the Old Testament show examples of both the good men and the men who chose evil but no examples of complete perfection. However, there was a time in mankind's history when there was perfection.

Before Genesis 3, there was a world of perfection. The Garden of Eden and a pre-sin world was a type of perfection that humanity longs for again. After sin entered and the relationship was strained, God did not abandon His creation but had a plan to redeem us back to Him. In the context of Hebrews 2, the writer quotes from Psalm 8 asking, "What is man that you are mindful of him?" (Heb. 2:6).

Jesus is the captain but not only a captain. He is the very best Captain. He was/is humanity's best hope. It did not seem that way before Jesus' resurrection. For the Jews, they had developed their own ideas of the Messiah, embracing the idea of a warrior king in the form of David yet struggling with the suffering Messiah in passages like Psalm 22 or Isaiah 53. In the book of Hebrews, this is some of the driving force for their spiritual sluggishness. They had once come to believe that Jesus was that fulfillment, the Christ, however, they were constantly surrounded by a Jewish world which rejected Jesus. They were told they were foolish for believing that the Man that hung on a tree could possibly be their Savior.

To human wisdom, one cannot always see the reasons why God did things the way He did them. 1 Corinthians 1:24 says of God's wisdom, "the foolishness of God is wiser than men." When we properly understand the nature of sin and the nature of God, we can come to an understanding of it. It had to be done that way. Consider when Jesus knew when the cross was coming and prayed to God asking if there was any other way to let it pass from Him. When there was no other way given, He said, "not my will but yours" (Luke 22:42.)

However good a man one could find, none were/are/will be perfect. The only One who could overcome sin would have to be God Himself. We know God is a spirit. What help can a spiritual being offer physical man? God overcame this. Hebrews 2:9 states Jesus was, "made a little lower than the angels". God had to come in the flesh for several reasons.

First, Jesus had to suffer not because He was guilty of any wrongdoing but because of humanity's wrongdoing. If God simply pardons sin without compensation, He

cannot be fully just. Sin carries the penalty of death. Hebrews 9:22 states, "almost all things are purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no remission." Therefore, where there was humanity's sin, there was the need for sacrifice. In the Old Testament, the Israelites were to take a pure, first born bull or a goat to sacrifice for sin. Those were simply types of the ultimate sacrifice found in Jesus because Hebrews 10:4 states, For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sins. In 2 Cor. 5:21, Paul says it this way, For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Second, the suffering made Him perfect. Perfection, in this sense, is not that Jesus was somehow morally less than perfect. The perfection under consideration is the experience of going through human life: the experience of the flesh, temptations, feelings of pain, suffering, and death. If He had not, He would have a difficult time of sympathizing with the struggles that come with this life. The scriptures says, "He is able to aid those who are tempted" (Heb. 2:18), and "For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin." (Heb. 4:15-16).

Thirdly, the suffering allowed for the overcoming of death. Hebrews 2:14,15 says, that through death, He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

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Senior Saints

by John McShane

We know that many people in our world have a knack for using words to hide what they are really saying. For instance, I single-handedly managed the successful upgrade and deployment of a new environmental illumination system with zero cost overruns and zero safety incidents. What that really says is that I changed a light bulb. There are many false "preachers" in our world today that use the same type of language to lure people into believing their version of the word of God. As members of the body of Christ, we know where the truth lies and where to find it. The Bible warns us in Matthew 7:15, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." It is usually easy for us to recognize false prophets, but what about those who listen, with little Bible knowledge, to the false prophets? It is our responsibility to get these people to open a Bible and show them where the truth is. In John 14:6 we read, "Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." In John 8:31-32, "To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, 'If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.'" The false prophets seem to be growing in number, leading themselves and their believers into eternal damnation. Our job is to get them back on the narrow road that leads to eternal life.

YOUTH GROUP TRIVIA

WHICH OF THE APOSTLES:
(can you give scripture to your answers?)

- was a fisherman? _____
- was a tax collector? _____
- betrayed Jesus? _____
- denied Jesus? _____
- was the "beloved"? _____

When a great storm threatened their ship, the disciples found Jesus doing what?

(answers in next youth group newsletter)

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." James 5:16

Our Members:

PRAYER LIST

Bob Pratt	Brenda Mask	Carol Edmonson
Chuck Wyatt	Linda McShane	Wayne Shearer
Adeline Hine	Bernetta Green	Ingrid Stewart
Bill & Carlene Long	Bobby Simpson	Melody Baxter
Cieara Edwards	Brian Smith	Geny Johnson
Kathy Nester	Jim Turner	Margaret Coone
Sharon M. Washington	Annette Phillip	George Davis
Joyce Williams	Ron & Judy Ford	Ray Nashick
Antoine & Marcella Swain		

(Please update the office of any changes)

The **EXTENDED FAMILY** and **FRIENDS** prayer requests are emailed every week.

REMEMBER OUR SHUT-INS

Faith West Joyce Burbage Carol Eason
Ellen Shearer Chuck Wyatt

Phone numbers are in the directory. Let's call to let them know we miss them and love them.

UPDATES & PRAYER REQUESTS

Allen & Rachel Grimes are in Oklahoma for a funeral. Please pray for their safe travels back home.

Linda Simpson is doing better and thanks everyone for the prayers.

Our condolences to **Matthew Webb** on the passing of his grandmother.

Jim Edmonson had gone to the hospital for back pain. He is home now and doing better.

LADIES' CLASSES

The Wednesday morning class will resume on
February 3, 2021
at **10:00 a.m.**

Please see Jeanelle or Marion for details.

* * *

The Thursday evening ladies' class is starting the book

Walking to the Promised Land

Class is at 7:00 p.m. in the library.

5TH SUNDAY COLLECTION

The next 5th Sunday collection for the Building Fund will be January 31, 2021.

If you would like to give additional funds at other times of the month, please mail or bring them to the office. Be sure to designate the contribution as part of the Building Fund.

It will be collected by the elders.

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

January

Designated Elder - David Anderson

Wednesday, January 27, 2021

Song Leader/Prayer Tucker Sweeney
Devo David Anderson
Closing Prayer Bobby Sheumaker

Sunday, January 31, 2021

10:30 A.M.

Sermon Hiram Kemp
"Abraham: Faith Tested & Tried"
Genesis 22:1-2

6:00 P.M.

Sermon Hiram Kemp
"What the Book of Job Teaches Us About God"
Job 42:1-6

10:30 A.M.

Open/Close bldg (both services) ... Bobby Sheumaker
Greeters Fife
Song/prayer before class Ian Enamorado
Announcements David Anderson
A.M. Song Leader Vince Daugherty
Scripture reading/Prayer Tyler Anderson
Lord's Table Jimmy Sweeney
Closing Prayer Josh Estridge

6:00 P.M.

Greeters Sweeney
P.M. Song Leader Rick Kenyon
Scripture reading/Prayer Andre Medley
Lord's Table Jimmy Sweeney
Closing Prayer Lou Van Allen

Wednesday, February 3, 2021

Song Leader/prayer Nigel St. Bernard
Devo Paul Sweeney
Closing Prayer Mike Van Allen

ASSEMBLING UPDATE

We still encourage those who do not feel well and those who consider themselves high-risk to stay at home.

To side with caution, we are still requiring masks to be worn upon entering the building as we have since July 2.

We will continue live-streaming the services on YouTube as we have since March 22.
Thank you for your cooperation. - Elders

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Jan. 10	\$7,749.69
Jan. 17	\$7,387.00
Jan. 24	\$7,417.00
Contribution Average	\$7,197.17

Prayer changes us. Or more accurately, God changes us through prayer. Once we open our hearts in need or deep desire and in gratitude and love, we are changed. As a budding rose opens more fully every day, regular and consistent praying opens our hearts more deeply. Then we are able to receive more of God's blessings and power.

There is a common resistance to praying. It takes time. We are busy. Our minds are pulled in a dozen directions. There are tasks to be done, people to see, calls to make. We are so oriented to daily life in this world that it becomes hard to detach even for an hour. I once heard a preacher say, "I pray for an hour a day unless I am exceptionally busy. Then I pray for two hours."

It is hard to be alone in our "prayer closet" (Matthew 6:6). Sometimes we feel we cannot reach God. Or it seems that God is unavailable to us. Yes, prayer is hard work. Yet it is also one of the most gratifying mandates of the Christian life. We must love and then choose with all our heart, with all our mind and with all our soul (Matthew 22:37) to put aside the demands of daily living and go into our prayer closet alone and meet with our Father God.

There are many types of prayer and many purposes for praying. Yet, this time consuming alone time with our Creator God is irreplaceable for us and for Him.

(continued from page 2)

Fourthly, the suffering opened a way for those to come after him. Hebrews 2:10 says, "in bringing many sons to glory." When God came in flesh offering Himself as the perfect sacrifice for sin and overcoming death, He took care of the two problems and needs of mankind. Hebrews 12:2 says Jesus thought of it this way, "for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame." Because of Jesus' accomplishments, we can also go there and be with Him. In John 14:1-4, Jesus promised, "I go to prepare for you a place". Hebrews 6:20 says, "we have a hope, which enters the Presence behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us." The veil referenced here was the veil that separated the holy place from the most holy place, but if you remember what happened when Jesus died, the veil was torn (Matt. 27:51). Thus, it symbolized the separation between holy God and sinful man being torn down. Hebrews 10:19-20 says, "brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh."

Jesus suffered those things for humanity so we might gain because of Him. After He had suffered, He was exalted. Hebrews 2:9 says He was, "crowned with glory" only after going through the suffering. Hebrews 12:2 says Jesus, sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Jesus went through the suffering and through death but is now out on the other side.

Do you see the Captain of our faith? We are promised heaven on the other side of death if we are faithful to Christ. How can we have the assurance of this? We can have the assurance because the Captain has gone ahead of us Himself, and He also opened up the way for us to follow after Him.

www.SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com

Email us: SFA.church@gmail.com

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Find us on Facebook

**South Florida Avenue
CHURCH OF CHRIST**

1807 South Florida Avenue

Lakeland, FL 33803-2653

Return Service Requested

**NOW IT CAME TO PASS
AFTER THESE THINGS THAT
GOD TESTED ABRAHAM,
AND SAID TO HIM,
"ABRAHAM!"
AND HE SAID, "HERE I AM."**

GENESIS 22:1