

The South Florida Avenue MESSENGER

A Friendly Church With a Vital Message Proclaiming the Unsearchable Riches of the Lord Jesus.
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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.

HOME OF

Florida School of Preaching

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.

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IN
SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY

Sundays @ 8:30 a.m. Check local listings

The Moral Attributes of God

Brian R. Kenyon

The "attributes" of God refer to the objective qualities that inhere in the essence of God. They denote the characteristics and way in which God exists and operates (Thiessen 123). These attributes can be analyzed under two categories. First, God consists of non-moral attributes. These are those that do not of themselves involve moral qualities, such as omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience. Human beings cannot be like God in these attributes. Second, God consists of moral attributes. These involve moral qualities, such as holiness, love, justice, and many more. To a limited extent, humans can, and must, become like God in these attributes (cf. Lev. 11:44; Mt. 5:48; 2 Pet. 1:4; 1 Jn. 4:9-17). Below, is a sketch of some of God's moral attributes.

Holiness

God is holy (Ps. 99:9; Isa. 6:3; Rev. 4:8). God is absolutely separate from and exalted above all of his creatures. He is equally separate from all moral evil (Jas. 1:13; 1 Jn. 1:5). There is a definite separation between God and sinful humanity (Isa. 59:1-2; Hab. 1:13). People cannot approach God upon their own merits (Ps. 24:3-4). Accountable people do not possess nor can they acquire the sinlessness necessary to access God (Rom. 3:23). Christ, the only mediator, makes such access possible (Rom. 5:1-2; Eph. 2:18; Heb. 10:19-20). God's holiness necessitates atonement. What His holiness demands, His love provided (Jn. 3:16; 1 Pet. 3:18). Thus, mankind must approach God through Christ "with reverence and godly fear" (Heb. 12:28-29). The proper view of God's holiness leads to the proper view of sin (Ps. 97:10; 119:104, 133 cf. Isa. 6:5-7). Humiliation and a contrite heart result from the proper view of God's holiness. Holiness is interwoven with and superimposed on each of God's other attributes. There is eternal conformity of God's being and will. God does not will the good because it is good, for that would imply that good is above God. Neither is the good good because God wills it, for that would imply that good is arbitrary. God's will is the expression of His holy nature. That is, holiness "flows" from God. Although people cannot obtain this holiness in perfection here, they can and must reflect the holiness of God in this life (Lev. 11:44; 2 Cor. 7:1; Heb. 12:10).

Love

God is loving. He always seeks the other's highest good. God loves sinners while hating sin (Jn. 3:16; Ps. 45:7). God's great love is demonstrated through Christ (Rom. 5:8); it is the basis for our love to one another (1 Jn. 4:20-21; 1 Cor. 13); and it will

endure forever (Rom. 8:35-39). The love of God demands our love in return (1 Jn. 4:19). Our love for Him cannot be separated from our obedience to Him (Jn. 14:15, 23; 15:12-14; 1 Jn. 5:3). God's love does not imply approval for everything people do.

Grace & Mercy

God is gracious and merciful (Ps. 86:15; 103:8). Grace and/or mercy is not a matter of debt. God does not "owe" us grace or mercy. If each were of debt, then each, by definition, would be impossible. Grace is goodness extended to the undeserving; favor. Grace is offered to all (Titus 2:11). Grace is the avenue of salvation (Rom. 11:6; Eph. 2:8-9). Faith is the means of accessing grace (Rom. 5:2; Eph. 2:8), and Biblical faith requires obedience (Lk. 6:46; Jas. 2:14-26). Forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ is the greatest demonstration of God's grace (2 Cor. 5:21; 9:15). Mercy is kindness or good will towards the miserable and afflicted, joined with a desire to relieve them (Thayer 203). Mercy is when one does not receive what one deserves, whereas grace is when one receives what one does not deserve. Because of sin, mankind deserves death, but because of God's mercy, mankind does not necessarily have to receive death (Rom. 6:23 cf. Eph. 2:1-4). Because of sin, mankind does not deserve salvation, but because of God's grace, mankind can receive salvation (Eph. 2:5-7). God's mercy is extended to those who reverentially obey Him (Lk. 1:50). God's plan of salvation is an act of mercy (Titus 3:5; 1 Pet. 1:3).

Righteous & Just

God is righteous and just (Deut. 32:4; Neh. 9:33). This two-fold attribute is the virtue that gives each one his or her due (Rom. 2:6-9). It demands reward, which is sometimes called remunerative justice (Deut. 7:12-13; Ps. 58:11; Mt. 25:21; Rom. 2:7), and it demands punishment, which is sometimes called retributive, or punitive, justice (Gen. 2:17; Ezk. 18:4; Rom. 1:32; 2:8-9). Could God be morally perfect without punishing sin or rewarding righteousness? Justice demands the punishment of the transgressor, but it may also accept the substitutional (vicarious) sacrifice of another. Christ died as a substitute for mankind's sin to meet the demands of God's justice (Isa. 53:4-6; 2 Cor. 5:21). Without Christ, we receive our "due," which is spiritual death (Rom. 6:23). Eternal reward is impossible without the cleansing blood of Christ. Full justice will be distributed at the Judgment (Mt. 25:33-46; Jn. 5:29). Therefore, vengeance belongs to God (Rom. 12:19; 2 Thes. 1:7-9). God's vengeance is not retaliatory with the desire to "get even," but is to maintain and/or support what is true and to justify and/or defend what is right against what is wrong (Gilmore 14). God's vengeance, or justice, will be executed without partiality. God does not judge on the basis of external appearance (Acts 10:34-35; Rom. 2:11-12). God will judge according to the deeds that each person has done in this life (2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:13). There is not a contradiction between God's love and mercy and God's justice and wrath (Rom. 11:22). God has provided for both through the blood of Christ (Rom. 3:25-26). The death of Christ met the demands of justice. With the demands of justice met, mercy can be and is offered. Both judgment and mercy are by Christ (Acts 17:31; Jude 21). God is the God of love and wrath (2 Chr. 28:11; Jer. 51:56; Rom. 1:18). The preaching of the Gospel, therefore, is urgent (2 Cor. 5:11; Heb. 10:31)!

True

God is true (Jn. 17:3; Rom. 3:4; 1 Thes. 1:9; 1 Jn. 5:20). God's knowledge, declarations, and representations always conform to reality. God is the foundation of all knowledge. He is truth personified (Rev. 3:14; 19:11). His word is truth (Jn. 17:17). He is the truth (Jn. 14:6). The truthfulness of God is based upon His will and His nature. It is impossible for God to lie (Heb. 6:18). All who oppose or differ with God are liars (Rom. 3:4; 1 Jn. 1:8, 10; 2:4, 22; 4:20). Since there is none greater by which to assure truth, God swore by Himself (Gen. 22:15-18 cf. Heb. 6:13-18). We can rest assured that God will always fulfill all of His promises (Deut. 7:9).

Conclusion

Given the essence and attributes of the Godhead, none is greater than God (2 Sam. 7:22; Ps. 48:1)! God is supreme above all else (Gen. 14:18; Ex. 8:10; 9:14). Because of this, God has every right to direct our lives. We are His creation and must submit to Him (cf. Rom. 1:25; Acts 17:24-25). Our allegiance must be to God (Ex. 20:3, 5; Mt. 22:37-38), for He will not share first place (Mt. 6:24). God must be the object we seek more than anything in this life (Mt. 6:33).

(Works Cited are on bottom of page 4)

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Avery Grimes and Ron Ford were not feeling well this week. Also keep Jim Turner, Ginny Hamby, Jacqueline Dopwell, Kenny French, JoAnn Hobbback, Bill Long, Sharon Mathis Washington, Elizabeth Tubbs and Margaret Coone in prayer.

Relatives: Tonya Mathis, Dee Moore, Margie Bolding, Sarah Blevins, Willie Williams, Owen Lewis, Dayne Romine and Bobby Cole.

Shut In Members: Virginia Plumlee, Dick & Joyce Burbage, Don Starks, Sharon Edler and Duane Nelson.

Others: Joyce Stearsman, Chrissi Fuesner, Kim Gustafson, Leah Carroll, Carmen Carro and Jack Pinkert, the preacher at Midway Church of Christ in Bradenton and a F.S.O.P. graduate, who was diagnosed with throat cancer.

Upcoming Events

February 4th: Ladies Day at Sebring Parkway Church of Christ.

February 5th: Don Iverson, the missionary from India that we support, will be speaking Sunday evening.

February 5th: Fellowship In Service after evening services.

February 12th: Please let our youth honor you in "A Seussical Sweet Treat," for the young at heart, older members at 4:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall. Please R.S.V.P. on the list in the foyer.

February 18th: Youth Seminar at the Orange Street Church of Christ in Auburndale. Lunch will be provided so please R.S.V.P. to 863-967-1757

Sympathy

Vicky Hightower, the wife of Terry Hightower, passed away Wednesday Jan. 25th. Please keep the Hightower family in prayer.

Response

Congratulations to Mark Barber who was baptized into Christ on Thursday Jan. 26th and Rose Brooks on Tuesday Jan. 31st. Please let us encourage and welcome them into our family.

Visitors

Virginia Rupert, Christy Wright and Sadie Cortijo.

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

February

David Anderson **Table** David Williams
Paul Romine **Assist** Robert Cooper

Sunday, February 5, 2017

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Frank Hamby
Prayer..... Tucker Sweeney

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... Kenny French
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Matt Willcot
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Tim Croson

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Kyle Williams
Opening Prayer Kyle Bingle
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Greeters..... The Paulins
Att. Cards..... Willcut boys
Closing Prayer Charles Paulin
Open & Close Building..... Bobby Sheumaker

Wed. February 8, 2017

Song Leader Ken Walker
Opening Prayer David Williams
Closing Prayer Paul Romine

Please meet in the library. If you cannot serve, please call Chuck Wyatt so he can get a replacement - 859-5231 or 602-9005

Sunday, February 12, 2017

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Stacey Paulin
Prayer..... David Anderson

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... Kenny French
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Jimmy Sweeney
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer C.J. Grimes

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Kyle Williams
Opening Prayer Steve Hunley
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Greeters..... Debra and Melissa
Att. Cards..... Paul and Sebastian
Closing Prayer..... Jeff Bingle
Open & Close Building..... Bobby Sheumaker

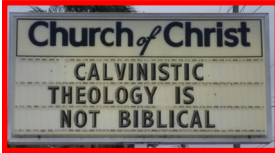
Wed. February 15, 2017

Song Leader Steve Hunley
Opening Prayer Phil Fife
Closing Prayer Ken Walker

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Jan. 08.....	\$4,834.30
Jan. 15	\$5,002.50
Jan. 22.....	\$4,759.20
Jan. 29.....	\$5,875.61
Contribution Average	\$5,233.89
2016 Weekly Budget	\$4,422.60

Calvinism (part 2) "Total Hereditary Depravity"



As mentioned in the last week's bulletin, we will briefly examine the points of Calvinism that are conveniently remembered by the acrostic, T-U-L-I-P. The "T" stands for "Total Hereditary Depravity," also known as "original sin." Calvinism teaches that the "sin of Adam" resulted in the total corruption, or depravity, of mankind (i.e., "the Fall"). It says that through Adam's sin, all humanity lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation. According to them, all men and women are born dead in sin and not able to do anything to prepare themselves for salvation. Perhaps the most popular passage they use is Psalm 51:5, "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me." These words, if they are to be harmonized with the total teaching of the Bible, must be considered as a hyperbolic expression. That is, David was emphasizing that he was born into a world where sin was everywhere! He later became guilty of great sins (cf. 2 Samuel 11:1-27). These exaggerated words are quite natural when considered properly. Also twisted by Calvinists is Ephesians 2:1-3. It is a fact that when we sin we die spiritually, but it is not a fact that when Adam sinned we died spiritually. Sin separates from God (Isa. 59:1-2), but it is neither moral nor just to punish the child for the sins of the parent (Ezekiel 18:20). We die spiritually when we sin (Romans 5:12). "Total Hereditary Depravity" is not true. Sin is something we do (1 John 3:4), not something we inherit! God gave us our spirits (Zechariah 12:1; Hebrews 12:9). The righteous God does not give a sinful spirit (Ecclesiastes 7:29). Children are held up (*continued below*)



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The End of Your Search for a Friendly Church . . .



Christ on Jan. 26 and Rose on Jan. 31. To God be all the glory!

We rejoice with the angels that two souls were "delivered from the power of darkness." Mark was baptized into

(*continued from above*) as examples (Matthew 18:3), partly because they are morally and spiritually sinless (Deuteronomy 1:39; Isaiah 7:15-16; Romans 9:11). All humans are born with no guilt of sin, from Adam or anyone else! We sin when we transgress God's law (1 John 3:4), practice unrighteousness (1 John 5:17), fail to do the good we know (James 4:17), and violate our conscience (Romans 14:23). Thankfully, God gives us the remedy of sin through the blood of Christ and obedience to His Gospel (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38). Have we been baptized into Christ? ❤️ Brian

Works Cited (continued from page 2)

Gilmore, Ralph. *Theology: The Nature of God*. Henderson, TN: Freed-Hardeman University, 1993.
 Thayer, Joseph Henry. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*. 1889. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1977.
 Thiessen, Henry C. *Lectures in Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1949.



YES Weekend
Feb. 24-26, 2017
 See Brian if you would like to attend this uplifting event!