

The South Florida Avenue **MESSENGER**



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

The Messenger is published weekly by the South Florida Ave. Church of Christ meeting at 1807 South Florida Ave - Lakeland, FL 33803 Vol. 69 No.6 02-09-16

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SUNDAY SERVICES

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

WEDNESDAY

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

HOME OF

Florida School of Preaching

MISSION FIELDS

Dub Hill.....Russia
Don Iverson.....India
Randy Judd.....Malawi, Africa
Graham McDonald.....Scotland
J. Paguaga.....Honduras, C.A.
Joey Treat.....Pacific Islands
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SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY

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

Empty Houses

T. Pierce Brown

In Matthew 12:43-45, Jesus gives a parable that was directed toward that wicked generation. However, like most teachings of Jesus, there are principles that apply to any generation or person. The principle we want to emphasize now is one of particular value to new converts and elders. The passage reads like this: "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation."

When we have a baptism, we presume there has been a conversion and "the unclean spirit is gone out of the man." We rejoice that the "old house" is "empty, swept and garnished." We need to understand that getting rid of the old thoughts and sinful activities is only the beginning of the task.

When our father bought an old farm that was covered with rocks, trees, briers and weeds, we spent many hours loading rocks into a wagon and many more with a grubbing hoe and axe clearing the ground. But even as little boys, we noticed a very simple thing. Having done all those things, unless we planted a crop and kept other activities going on to keep it healthy and productive, a new crop of weeds and briers always came back.

The lesson is so plain and simple it cannot be missed, but is too often ignored in our spiritual lives. If the leaders of the congregation do not provide wholesome and profitable activities for new converts, the converts should provide it for themselves. But to expect this to happen is about like expecting a baby to prepare its own bottle or change its own diaper.

Even when there is a sort of awareness of the importance of that principle, we need to know that a spiritual vacuum cannot be filled simply with fun and games. A spiritual hunger for the bread of life cannot properly be satisfied with junk food. Building a fellowship hall to meet and eat or building a gymnasium to meet and play will not solve the problem. It is true that babies need milk instead of strong meat, but cotton candy and ice cream will not provide the proper nourishment. We also need to realize that babes in Christ do not need to stay babes and simply have milk for several years. May God help us to live and teach so that the last state may not be worse than the first.

What Can Wash Away My Sin?

Emanuel Daugherty

The blood of Christ is the central theme of the Scriptures. It is the scarlet thread running from the beginning of time to the present. Jesus Christ is the “Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Revelation 13:8; 1 Peter 1:18-20). Jesus, when He instituted the Supper in His memory, said, “this is my blood of the New Testament, shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matthew 26:28). In spite of all that the Bible has to say about the blood of Christ and the salvation purchased by it, many reject the need for the blood outright or simply see no necessity for it.

To the modernist, the idea of salvation by blood is repulsive. As an example, Today’s English Version, also known as Good News For Modern Man, in 36 passages translated “blood” out of this version. The Greek word for “blood” is haima. Some other word was substituted in these places, 16 of which directly pertain to the blood of Christ. Here is one example of this anti-blood persuasion. In Colossians 1:14 the KJV reads: “In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.” The TEV reads: “By whom we are set free and our sins are forgiven.” The word “blood,” though in the original text, and essential to the sense of the verse, is left out entirely!

The Jews since the death of Christ on the Cross are depending on the blood of animals for their salvation, not accepting the teaching of the New Testament that “it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins” (Hebrews 10:4). Thus, they reject the efficacy of the saving blood of the Son of God.

Others see no necessity for the cleansing blood of Christ, expressing the idea that as long as they are “good” fathers and mothers, honest in business, good neighbors, etc. they will have nothing to fear at the Judgment, and the blood of Jesus was shed in vain.

Some have taken the opposite extreme saying: “I’m too sinful to ever be saved.” This concept removes the potency of the blood of Christ, making it weak and unable to cover what the individual would conceive of as the really “terrible” sins they commit. Therefore, in response to the question what can wash away my sins, these would reply, “Nothing!”

The thought of salvation from sin by the blood of the Son of God is foreign to the thinking of many. It is repulsive, unnecessary and inadequate.

The Universal Need

“And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world” (1 John 2:2). God, from the beginning of man’s sin, required a blood sacrifice (Genesis 4:4; Hebrews 9:22). The blood of animals was promissory to the shed blood of Christ. Since the blood of animals was not able to purge the conscience (Hebrews 10:1-4), the blood shed by Jesus looks backward as well as forward (Hebrews 9:15). Whereas the Atonement caused Israel to remember sin (Hebrews 10:3), the blood of Christ purges the conscience, enabling one to forget his sin when he has done what is required by the Gospel to remit sins (Acts 2:38, et al).

The redeeming blood of Jesus saves (Ephesians 1:7) and keeps us saved as we faithfully follow Christ (1 John 1:7). Truly, “without the shedding of blood (Jesus’ blood) there is no remission of sins (Matthew 26:28). What a wonderful Savior whose sacrifice of his blood on the cross washes away our sins and was freely offered for all men (John 3:16; Luke 23:45; Hebrews 9:12). What can wash away my sin? Nothing, but the blood of Jesus!

If any are saved, it will be because they have submitted themselves to obey the terms of pardon given in the New Testament to acquire the benefits of the saving blood of Christ. This is where many of our religious neighbors miss the point. They say there are no terms of pardon, that there are no conditions to be met by the sinner. However, if that is true, then how does one reconcile the question of those Jews who crucified Christ with the response of Peter on Pentecost? “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” they asked. When Peter told them to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, was he not giving them conditions that must be met if they would have their sins remitted? These conditions do not mitigate against salvation by the blood, but rather tell us how to contact the cleansing blood. The power is in the blood! Yet, we contact the blood by our obedience to the terms of pardon given in the Gospel. Jesus’ blood was shed in his death (John 19:34); “we are buried with him by baptism into death.” When we come forth from the waters of baptism, we are “raised to walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:3-4). Those who do this meet the terms of pardon given in the Scriptures, are obedient to the Gospel and are washed in his blood (Revelation 1:5b).

“Happy day! Happy day! When Jesus washed my sins away!

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Betty Thornhill is scheduled to be moved to Highland Lake Center on Tuesday. She still can have no visitors at this time due to the infection. Duane Nelson has been admitted to L.R.M.C. with heart and lung problems. Madison Caffee was scheduled to have her tonsils out Monday Feb. 8th. Ron Ford has been home not feeling well. Also keep, Grace McAnally, Sharon Washington, Dolly Martin, Ginny Hamby, Jacquelin Dopwell and Margaret Coone in prayer.

Relatives: Wayne Hendrix, Billy Moore, Debbi Kirkland, (Brenda Mask's sister in law), Warren Lane (friend of Darnell Kirkland), Jeanette Whitehall, (Linda Pennington's aunt) and Alyssa Buckner (friend of the Coopers).

Shut In Members: Virginia Plumlee, Bill Burton, Claud Romine, Dick & Joyce Burbage, Duane Nelson, Betty Thornhill and Sharon Edler.

Others: Chrissi Fuesner and Sandy Given. Please pray for all of these.

Upcoming Events

Feb. 14th-17th: Gospel Meeting at the Sebring Parkway Church of Christ. See the flyer on the bulletin board for more details.

Feb. 14th: Baby Shower for C.J. and Kelcey Grimes after the evening services. They are registered at Buy Buy Baby & Target. Instead of a card please bring a children's book with a message to baby Grimes inside. For any questions see Jessica Anderson or Heather Burns and to donate to a money tree see Rene Bingle.

Feb. 20th: Men's breakfast here at South Florida Ave. at 8:00 a.m.

Feb. 20th: 8th Annual Ladies Day Program at the Hilltop Church of Christ in Winter Haven from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. See the flyer on the bulletin board for more info. There is also a sign up sheet if you plan on going.

Hither Thither and Yon

Pam Share made it back safely from South Africa. So glad to have her back here worshipping with us again.

Visitors

Mr. Jerry Scarbrough, Amanda Patterson, Bob Davis, Brenda Murray, Darnell & Jane Kirkland, Dorothy Webb and Debra Okolichany.

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

February

Bobby Sheumaker **Table** John McShane
Phil Fife..... **Assist** Kyle Williams

Sunday, February 14, 2016

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Stacey Paulin
Prayer..... Bobby Sheumaker

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... David Williams
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Josh Estridge
Sermon..... Bob McAnally
Closing Prayer David Deal

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Paul Romine
Opening Prayer Fred Strickland
Sermon..... Brian Kenyon
Greeters..... David & Tonya Anderson
Att. Cards..... Ian & Sebastian
Closing Prayer Steve Hunley
Open & Close Building..... Bobby Sheumaker

Wed. February 17, 2016

Song Leader Jim Turner
Opening Prayer Fred Strickland
Closing Prayer John McShane

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

Sunday, February 21, 2016

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class David Williams
Prayer..... C.J. Grimes

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... David Williams
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Stacey Paulin
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Antonio Martin

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Paul Romine
Opening Prayer Steve Hunley
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Greeters..... Tyler & Jessica Anderson
Att. Cards..... Sebastian & Antonio
Closing Prayer Frank Hamby
Open & Close Building..... Bobby Sheumaker

Wed. February 24, 2016

Song Leader Ken Walker
Opening Prayer Jim Turner
Closing Prayer Charles Paulin

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Jan. 17.....	\$4,910.30
Jan. 24.....	\$4,418.50
Jan. 31.....	\$5,386.00
Feb. 07.....	\$5,215.60
Contribution Average	\$4,878.40
2015 Weekly Budget	\$4,422.60

THE DANGERS OF ILLICIT SEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS PART 2

People of all ages, especially young people, can get themselves in very difficult situations when it comes to illicit sexual relationships. In few other areas of life can the temptation be so strong and the yielding to it so destructive. The Bible has a lot more to say about this subject than many people may think. It is important to be armed with the knowledge of God in order to avoid foolish mistakes. In last week's article, consideration was given to Proverbs 5:1-6, which depicts wisdom as a father giving his son warning about an "immoral woman." The next segment of that Proverb depicts a father's instruction about the ruin and regret that inevitably follows a relationship with an "immoral woman." Wisdom begins by advising to stay as far away as possible from her. "Therefore hear me now, my children, And do not depart from the words of my mouth. Remove your way far from her, And do not go near the door of her house" (Proverbs 5:7-8). While some like to get as close to sin as possible, wisdom says to stay as far away as possible. The tragedy of a young man getting too close to the "immoral woman's" house is graphically portrayed in Proverbs 7:6-27, especially verses 21-23: "With her enticing speech she caused him to yield, With her flattering lips she seduced him. Immediately he went after her, as an ox goes to the slaughter, Or as a fool to the correction of the stocks, Till an arrow struck his liver. As a bird hastens to the snare, He did not know it would cost his life." We must "keep up our guard" against the power of sexual temptation. One single yielding to this temptation can cause a lifetime of ruin. Let us heed wisdom's warning against this and "Flee [even the temptation of] sexual immorality" (1 Corinthians 6:18)!  Brian



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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sunday, Feb. 21 We will have a L2L scrapbook planning meeting. Young people not involved with the scrapbook should still come. It will be a good time for boys song leading and/or speech practice, We will meet in the fellowship room at 4:00 p.m.

Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith (Heb. 12:2)



The Forrest Park church of Christ in Valdosta will host YES Weekend on Feb. 26-28, See Brian if you want to go so logistics can be worked out.



Our young people and their chaperones are gearing up for a mission trip to Nicaragua June 25 thru July 3. If you want to make a special contribution to this work, please see the elders.

Let us continue to pray for our young people as they prepare for the Lads to Leaders convention in Orlando. What they are doing is not easy but rewarding!



We Appreciate all our young people and adults who took the Bible Bowl test last Sunday. You are an encouragement to us all!