

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.....10:30a
.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.....Rus-
sia

Don Iverson.....
India

Marc Veary.....Malawi,
Africa

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land

J. Paguaga.....Honduras,



SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY

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

Does It Matter What One Believes and Practices in Religion?

Paul Clements

Many believe that all religious people are acceptable to God regardless of their particular belief or religious practice, provided they are honest and sincere. Consequently, we often hear it said, "One faith is as good as another." If this idea is right, then one of two conclusions must necessarily follow; either (1) there is no such thing as falsehood and error in religious matters, or (2) one can believe and practice error and still be acceptable to God.

Surely, no one believes that there is no such thing as error and false teaching in religion. The Bible abounds in warnings against being led into religious error. For example, "beware of false prophets..." (Matthew 7:15), "beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1), "we are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error" (1 John 4:6). If there is no such thing as error in religion, then these passages are meaningless. The very fact that there are many contradictory teachings in religion proves that error exists since truth does not contradict itself.

However, consider the second alternative: one can believe and practice error and be pleasing to God. Do you really think that is reasonable? If the Bible is truth (John 17:17), then teaching what is contrary to the Bible is not truth. Only truth is acceptable to God; only obedience to truth will save (John 8:32; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12; 1 Peter 1:22). These passages nullify the idea that believing and practicing error can be pleasing to God. Jesus confirmed this when He spoke of some who, on the Day of Judgment, will be rejected even though they had done good and were apparently honest and sincere. They will be rejected because they did not do the will of God – even though they may have been genuinely sincere (Matthew 7:21-23).

It does make a difference what one believes and practices in religion. Being honest and sincere is essential. We must honestly and sincerely believe and practice the truth. Yet, the fact that one is sincere will not change error into truth. If a person drinks what looks like a glass of water, but it is, in fact, laced with poison, his sincerity will not change the consequences. We understand this principle in the physical realm, so why do we have difficulty accepting it in the spiritual realm? In Ephesians 4 1-6 Paul said, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all." It does make a difference in which God one believes because there is only one true God. It does make a difference which Lord one accepts and follows because there is only one true Lord, and so forth and so on. May we all understand that it does make a difference what we believe and practice in religion.

Christ's Struggle with the Jews

Gene West

One of the things that modern students of the New Testament have overlooked is the depth and intensity of the struggle that went on between our Lord and His Jewish enemies during His public ministry. If one reads the New Testament without some, at least superficial, knowledge of the prophecies dealing with the coming of Christ and His struggles to bring His kingdom into existence, he is very likely to overlook the stressful relationship that existed between Christ and His countrymen. This is one of the things that Christians need to understand in order to interpret properly the New Testament with regard to the great sacrifice that Christ made on the cross for the redemption of mankind. Glossing over the struggles between Christ and His enemies causes us to fail to stop and consider all the suffering that Christ endured at their hands from the time He was baptized by John in the wilderness of Jordan until He was finally nailed to the cross of Calvary.

While it would be greatly beneficial to consider all these struggles, a number of which are dealt with in some detail in the Book of John, in a space as limited as ours, we cannot do that. Therefore, we wish to give a cursory glance to just one instance. In Mark 3:20-30, after Jesus had performed several of His mighty miracles, the scribes who had come from Jerusalem made a serious accusation against our Lord. They did not deny that He performed miracles, but they said, "He has Beelzebub, and By the ruler of demons He casts out demons." Jesus then disputed with them, showing this could not be the case, for if it were, you would have Satan casting out his own demons, and that simply would not do. Then in verses 28-30, Jesus spoke of what we usually call the "unpardonable sin," that had been committed by these people in that they had blasphemed against the Holy Spirit. As a result of their blasphemy against the Spirit, they would never have forgiveness. He said this was the case "because they said, He has an unclean spirit." We are told the word "said" in verse 30 is in the imperfect tense, and it indicates that these people made this charge against Jesus not just once, as one might think from a cursory reading of the Gospel records, but the imperfect tense indicates that they were persistent in making this malicious charge. In other words, it was a charge they had made in the past and were persistently making until that time, and probably did in the future as well. So, the false charge was made again and again—possibly every time Jesus performed a miracle, or at least a miracle that involved the casting out of demons.

As brother Wayne Jackson pointed out in an excellent article on another subject, the sin these people committed in making this false charge against Jesus "...was not a mere impulsive exclamation that denigrated the Holy Spirit..." (Christian Courier, August, 2005, Vol. XLI, Number 4, p. 13), but a persistent allegation they made against the Lord. Though the writers of the Gospel records mention only one instance, the grammar of the original language tells us that it was their usual explanation of the power by which Jesus cast out demons and performed other miracles. Brother Jackson, in the same article, pointed out that in Matthew 12:34, Jesus said, "Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks"(Matthew 12:34 NKJV). He also pointed out that there are three words in this statement that are in the present active indicative. The words "being evil" means that being evil was a matter of course for them; they kept on being evil; they did not stop being evil; they were always evil. The third word is "speaks," which is likewise in present form and means they had spoken, were speaking and would speak evil from the abundance of their hearts. They kept on speaking evil against the Lord. Consequently, this was not something that was done on one or two occasions, but something they did constantly. Every time they spoke of Christ and His work on this earth, they spoke evil of it, for that was what always came from their mouths. We need to be fully aware of the fact that there was probably not a day, when Jesus was in contact with the Jews at large, that He was not hurtfully criticized by them. No wonder He sought the solitude of the mountains from time to time!

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Betty Thornhill, Janet Crosby, Grace McAnally, Ron Ford, Dolly Martin, Elizabeth Tubbs, Jacquelin Dopwell, JoAnn Hoback, Ginny Hamby, and Margaret Coone Please continue to keep all these 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. 26th-28th: Scrap the Weekend at the Central Florida Bible Camp. The flyer is on the bulletin board for more details.

Feb. 26th-28th: YES weekend at the Forrest Park Church of Christ in Valdosta, GA. See Brian if you plan on going.

March 4th-5th: Men's Retreat at the Central Florida Bible Camp.

March 5th: Ladies Brunch at the Haines City Church of Christ at 9:00 a.m. See the flyer for more info.

March 6th: Fellowship In-Service after evening services. Please bring finger foods.

March 15th: Florida School of Preaching Ladies Class at 7:00 p.m.

Sympathy

Kenneth Barnett, father of Denise Phillips, passed away on Friday, February 19th. Please keep Denise and her family in our prayers during this difficult time.

Needing Help

Kathy Bitting-Peel, a former member, has been battling Lupus for quite some time and it has gotten worse. If anyone would like to donate to assist this family please see the elders.

Visitors

Ron Brooks, Darrell & Barbara Ellerbe, Louise Stewart, Kyle Coe, Dick & Marge Mason, Ray & Dee Wilt and Tania Portelles-Driggs

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

March

C.J. Grimes..... **Table** David Williams
Antonio Martin..... **Assist** Tucker Sweeney

Sunday, February 28, 2016

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Kyle Williams
Prayer..... Frank Hamby

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... David Williams
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Tucker Sweeney
Sermon..... Bob McAnally
Closing Prayer Kenny French

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Paul Romine
Opening Prayer C.J. Grimes
Sermon..... Brian Kenyon
Greeters..... The Bingles
Att. Cards..... Antonio & Quadarius
Closing Prayer John McShane
Open & Close Building..... Bobby Sheumaker

Wed. March 2, 2016

Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Charles Paulin
Closing Prayer Steve Hunley

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

Sunday, March 6, 2016

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Jim Turner
Prayer..... David Williams

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... Frank Hamby
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Bobby Sheumaker
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer David Anderson

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Stacey Paulin
Opening Prayer Jeff Bingle
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Greeters..... The Stricklands
Att. Cards..... Ian & Paul
Closing Prayer Steve Hunley
Open & Close Building..... Fred Strickland

Wed. March 9, 2016

Song Leader Ken Walker
Opening Prayer Frank Hamby
Closing Prayer John McShane

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Jan. 31..... **\$5,386.00**
Feb. 07..... **\$5,215.60**
Feb. 14..... **\$5,077.00**
Feb. 21..... **\$5,631.00**
Contribution Average..... **\$4,997.30**
2016 Weekly Budget..... **\$4,422.60**

THE TOTAL JOY OF GOD-APPROVED SEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS

As discussed in the last few bulletin articles, most of Proverbs 5 deals with the wrong kind of sexual relationships. Wisdom is depicted as a father warning his son to stay as far away as possible from the “immoral woman,” and it gives the serious consequences that result in engaging in such a relationship. However, the section dealing with sexual relationships in Proverbs 5 ends on a good note: a father instructing his son on the joy that results from a God-authorized marriage. First, the father advises his son to only partake of his Scriptural wife: “Drink water from your own cistern, And running water from your own well. ¹⁶Should your fountains be dispersed abroad, Streams of water in the streets? ¹⁷Let them be only your own, And not for strangers with you. ¹⁸Let your fountain be blessed, And rejoice with the wife of your youth” (Proverbs 5:15-18). Water imagery is very appropriate to a agriculturally based society such as ancient Israel. The images of a cistern, well, or fountain can refer to a wife



because she, like water, satisfies desire (cf. Song of Solomon 4:15). The “wife of your youth” refers to a man’s original, God-authorized, wife. It is not so much a reference to age as it is to a legitimate spouse (cf. Malachi 2:14-15). The “fountain” being “blessed” indicates that God-approved “sexual delight” in marriage is God-given (cf. Gen. 2:18-25). Second, the father advises his son to be blissfully satisfied with his Scriptural wife: “As a loving deer and a graceful doe, Let her breasts satisfy you at all times; And always be enraptured with her love” (Proverbs 5:19). The word translated “enraptured [ravished, KJV; exhilarated, NAS; intoxicated, ESV]” means extremely satisfied. Since God has provided for sexual *(continued below)*



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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thursday, March 3 and **Thursday and Friday, March 10-11** We will work on our scrapbook. Meet in the fellowship room @ 6 p.m.

Sunday, March 13 We will have our next L2L day. All our young people who are going to Orlando should attend. We will finalize everything for the big meeting! We will meet in the fellowship room. Stay tuned for the time.

Melvin Otey **Gospel Meeting** March 20-23



We rejoice with **Ron Brooks** who was recently baptized into Christ at the Sixth Street building. He is a frequent visitor brought by Janet Crosby.

(continued from above) satisfaction in the Scriptural marriage relationship, why would anyone want to pursue the deceptively destructive delights of an “immoral woman”? While this passage is written from the perspective of a husband and his wife, the principles are the same for a wife and her husband. No matter what our gender, God has provided marriage to fulfill the sexual relationship. If it’s not too late, let us save ourselves for the “spouse of our youth,” and not squander our virginity on the fleeting pleasures of an “immoral partner”! If it is too late, repent. God will forgive. ❤️ *Brian*



When most get this bulletin, our young people and their chaperones will be in Valdosta for this event. We appreciate our elders and your support of our youth group!