

Be Careful Little Eyes . . .



Jesus taught, "The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. ²³But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Mt. 6:22-23). These verses reinforce the undivided loyalty God wants Christians to have (Mt. 6:19-21, 24). Aside from its literal meaning, "eye" was used to denote moral concepts (Mt. 20:15; Mk. 7:22). Jesus' point was that if the "eye" was properly focused, the whole body would be correctly guided. The "eye" is the point at which light enters, thus allowing the "body" to function. The "single" eye stands for a life totally focused upon God (cf. Col. 3:22b). However, if the "eye" is not properly focused, the "body" is tragically misguided. According to lexicons, "bad [evil, KJV]," in a physical sense means in poor condition, but in a moral sense it means "wicked, evil, bad, base, worthless, vicious, degenerate" (Mt. 12:35a; Lk. 6:45a). Whether physical or ethical, the point is the same: an eye that is not functioning properly cannot bring to the body the benefit of light, and, thus, the whole body will be in darkness. The result is disastrous when what should be light in the body is darkness. Nothing can compensate for the lack of light at the only point in which it can enter! Let us not allow our eyes to see evil things. Let us repent if we have! May the assessment, "How great is that darkness!," never describe our tragedy when we lose focus on God by allowing evil to enter our minds through our eyes. ❤️ Brian



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



Saturday, March 15 There will be a youth devotional and activity at the Kenyons beginning at **6:00 pm**. It will be a mostly outside event, weather permitting. Dress appropriately and bring a chair!

Weekend, April 18-20 is the "big meeting" (aka L2L Convention). Adult chaperons to help keep track of kids would be appreciated. See Brian if you can help.

Sunday, April 27 will be the L2L banquet after morning services honoring our participants. Stay tuned for announcements. As mentioned before, we are thinking of having it at a restaurant.



Great American Cleanup, March 22, 8:30 a.m. at Highland City Elementary. Join

the youth group as we have fun helping beautify the community, being salt and light (Mt. 5:13-16)!



Ladies Day, Saturday, May 3. It's not too early for our young ladies to plan to be involved! Informed ladies can bring souls to Christ (1 Pet. 3:1-6)!

Save the Date VBS June 22-26

THE ORANGE STREET CHURCH OF CHRIST

invites our youth to be a part of their youth's progressive dinner on March 22, beginning at their church building at 3:00 pm. We must provide our own drivers.

The South Florida Avenue MESSENGER

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ELDERS

David Anderson
Kenny French
Bobby Sheumaker

DEACONS

Jeff Bingle
Jimmy Sweeney
Chuck Wyatt

MINISTER

Robert McAnally
(863) 682-3600

ASSOCIATE MINISTER

Brian Kenyon
(863) 944-8565

SECRETARY

Virginia Walker

OFFICE PHONE

(863) 682-4702

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.
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EMAIL

SFA.church@gmail.com

WEB PAGES

www.southfloridaavenuechurchofchrist.com
www.sfacc.net

Am I Good Enough?

An old story is told about three men who meet at the end of a dock on a Florida beach. One was an alcoholic and homeless. The second man was just an average guy. The third man was a fine, honorable man, well respected in the community. Suddenly the alcoholic ran and jumped off the edge of the dock, landing five feet out into the water. The other two men standing on the dock yelled, "What are you trying to do?" The man in the water yelled back, "I'm trying to jump across the Atlantic Ocean!" The second man, the average Joe, said, "Watch me. I can do better than that!" He quickly ran across the dock, jumped and landed 10 feet out into the water, twice as far as the alcoholic. The third man, the outstanding man, laughed and said, "That's nothing. Watch this!" He backs up about 50 feet and made a mad dash across the dock out into the water and landed 20 feet out, twice as far as average Joe, and four times as far as the homeless alcoholic.

If we were to actually see such an attempt, we would think these three men were crazy for attempting to do the impossible – jump across the Atlantic Ocean! However, people trying to earn their own salvation are even more foolish. After sharing the story above, Howell Ferguson provided the following insights: "God can't be approached by man on the basis of man's own moral goodness. Sometimes people are heard to say, "I'm a good person! Won't God accept me and bring me to heaven?" This question shows a woeful lack of understanding of the grave nature of an individual's sin and the absolute holiness of God. If we were so good that we deserved heaven, salvation would be owed as a debt rather than something to be received as a gift of grace (cf. Romans 11:6).

One truth that is made absolutely clear in the Bible is this: 'No, God will not accept me, because I am a good person.' Isaiah wrote, "All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins carry us away" (Isaiah 64:6). A person may look moral when compared with other people, but when compared with Christ, all people fall perilously short. This is why Paul states, "For ALL have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). No matter how moral any person might be, he has fallen short of the perfect mark of God's righteousness. The only way anyone can stand in the presence of a righteous God is to be forgiven and declared righteous by faith in God's work in Christ (Philippians 3:9).

We are only accepted "in the beloved" because we believe and trust in the righteous work that He did (Ephesians 1:6)." To be found "in the beloved" (in Christ), we must place our faith and trust in Him (Acts 16:30-31), turn from our sins in repentance (Acts 17:30-31), confess Jesus before men (Romans 10:9-10) and be baptized (immersed) into Christ for the forgiveness of our sins (Acts 2:38; Galatians 3:27). None of us can be "good enough" to earn our way to heaven. Only through Christ can we enter the heavenly way (see John 14:6). Won't you trust and obey Him today?

--David A. Sargent

Which Road Will We Choose?

Aaron Burch

In Jeremiah 6, God proclaimed the destruction of Jerusalem (1-15). The people of Jeremiah's day had fallen away from God, becoming idolatrous (1:16; 2:9-13; 3:8-10). Despite their wickedness, some hope still remained that they could repent and return to God (3:22; 4:1-4, 14). God implored them to examine their direction, saying, "Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls" (Jeremiah 6:16).

In this verse, God used five commands to show the people their errant path and encourage them to repent and follow His path. God first exhorted the people to stand in the path, to position themselves where they could compare His path with other paths. Six times in chapters 1-6 God depicted their paths: in 2:23, He cited their "way in the valley (i.e., Baal worship); in 2:31-33, the people had taught their evil ways to the wicked; in 2:36 and 3:2, God accused them of vacillating between His path and others; in 3:13, they had "scattered their ways" to serve everyone but God; in 4:18, their paths were bringing punishment.

God next urged them to see or evaluate the path before them. God had warned them not to serve other gods, but the people disregarded His message. They were spiritually blind (5:1) and deaf, closing their ears to His warnings (6:10). Thus, they were also blind to the results of their choices (5:31). However, if they would compare the paths, they could determine the correct one.

They also needed to ask for God's way, which indicates desire and direction. The picture is that of a traveler at a fork in the road who wants to take the best route, so he seeks advice (Clarke 271). The old paths are God's paths, which lead to goodness and God's blessings. For the Israelites, this involved deliverance from their enemies. God had been good to the people in the past (cf. 2:7, 31-32; 5:24), but now they placed their trust in human alliances (i.e., Egypt) rather than in God. Relying on others was a deadly road, not a good path (cf. 2:18, 36-37).

After determining the godly paths, God demanded they walk in them. Walking indicates a lifestyle of following God, but during Jeremiah's day, the people were walking after other gods (cf. 2:23-25). In contrast, by walking in God's path, they would find rest. This final command is the emphasis of God's instruction in this verse; only God's way was blessing and rest. The imperative stresses their personal responsibility to find rest. Their rest depended on their choices and emphasizes the certainty of finding it if they followed God's path.

Like the ancient Israelites, we should compare possible paths, open our eyes and ears to the direction of God's message, consider the end of our course, seek and desire God's way more than any other, abandon all other paths, live as God directs and trust only in God for rest. Are we following our own ways or God's way? May it never be with us like it was for Jeremiah's contemporaries: "We will not walk therein" (Jeremiah 6:16).

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Jim Turner, Ron Ford, Jacquelin Dopwell, Sam Bolding, Artis Bassett, Duane Nelson, Ann Howard, JoAnn Hoback, Margaret Coone & Sharon Washington.

Relatives: Allen Cooper, Gary Thrower, Danny Stephens & Lewis Tillis.

Shut In Members: Artis Bassett, Ann Howard, Virginia Plumlee & Louise Starks.

Others: Alison Bridgemohan, Frances Cain, Marilyn Eick, Frank Woods, Timothy Teel, Ann Caldwell, Michael Ray, Christina Fuessner, Bonnie Hendricks & Kathy Peel.

Upcoming Events

Mar. 15th: Semi Annual Picnic/Sing @ Mary Holland Park, Bartow -- N. Jackson Ave. will host this event.

Mar. 15th: First Ladies Inspiration Day at Skyview Church of Christ, beginning at 8:00 am for breakfast.

Mar. 22nd: - "Great American Clean Up" at Highland City Elementary School. All youth & adults who are able to participate, please let Jagie Kenyon know.

Mar. 23-27th: - Gospel Meeting at 6th Street. **Please check bulletin board for all the above events.**

Mar. 30th - Apr. 2nd: - Gospel Meeting here at So. Florida Avenue, Please make plans to attend every service. Jay Lockhart will be the speaker.

Visitors

Adam Black, Tanger Castillo, Michael Fleet, Patricia Haynes, Steve Isaac, David & Edna Kelly, Allyson Kennedy, Darnell & Jane Kirkland, Miriam Small, Alicia Smith & Latrale.

Sympathy

To Amanda Thrower at the passing of her grandfather, Mark Turner last week.

Hither, Thither and Yon

Becky Sheumaker has traveled to Tennessee to visit her family.

Welcome Back

To Pam Share who has returned from So. Africa.

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

March

Paul Romine Table David Anderson
Kenny French Assist..... Jeremy Padilla

Sunday, March 16, 2014

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Brian Kenyon
Prayer..... Ken Walker

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... Stacey Paulin
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Paul Romine
Closing Prayer Antonio Martin

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader David Williams
Opening Prayer Jason Hendrix
Closing Prayer Jeff Bingle
Greeters The Bingle Family
Att. Cards..... Ian Enamorado & Sebastian Rapley
Open & Close Building..... Fred Strickland

Wed. March 19, 2014

Song Leader Antonio Martin
Opening Prayer Jeff Bingle
Closing Prayer Kyle Bingle

Please meet in the library. If you cannot serve, please call Jason Hendrix, so he can get a replacement - 537-0857

March 23, 2014

9:30 A.M.

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

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... Stacey Paulin
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Bobby Sheumaker
Closing Prayer Frank Hamby

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader David Williams
Opening Prayer Steve Hunley
Closing Prayer Josh Estridge
Greeters The Williams Family
Att. Cards..... Qaudarius Askew & Sebastian Rapley
Open & Close Building..... Fred Strickland

Wed. March 26, 2014

Song Leader Kyle Bingle
Opening Prayer Tyler Anderson
Closing Prayer Phil Fife

~ HOW WE ARE GIVING ~

Feb. 16	\$4,432.00
Feb. 23	\$3,990.00
Mar. 02	\$6,416.00
Mar. 09	\$4,620.31
Contribution Average.....	\$4,507.38
2014 Weekly Budget.....	\$4,256.38

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This Week's Message
"Our Priorities"

1230 or 1430 on radio dial or web page

www.southfloridaavenuechurchofchrist.com

