

# 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. 71 No. 11 03-13-18

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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  
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.

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IN  
**SEARCH**  
OF THE LORD'S WAY

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

## Three Signs You Are a People Pleaser & How to Fix It

Hiram Kemp

We all care what other people think about us. We want to be liked, or at least appreciated. There is nothing wrong with wanting people to like us or caring about what others think as long as we keep it in proper perspective. We want people to like our status, our pictures, and our choices. Yet, we need to be careful that an over-obsession with the opinions of others doesn't cripple us from being who God wants us to be. Sometimes when we do what God wants us to do, people will be pleased as well (Mt. 22:37-40). However, sometimes when we do God's will, people will dislike us because of it (Jn. 6:32).

Are you someone that compromises your commitment to God in order to be on everyone else's good side all the time? Would you be willing to shy away from your affiliation with the Lord if it meant that no one else would ever be upset with you or think of you differently? No Christian would admit to denying the Lord or placing man's view above God's, but we might do so unknowingly. Here are three signs that our desire to please men may have come at too high a price.

### Everybody Likes You

Woe to you, when all people speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets. (Luke 6:26)

Christians should not go out and purposely make enemies, but we should still expect to have a few. Jesus told his disciples that they should be concerned that they are resembling the behavior of the false prophets when everyone spoke well of them. Society says that the man who never made an enemy is a great peacemaker, Jesus says such a person is like a false prophet: a coward.

If we live the life God wants us to live, we will be persecuted (2 Tim. 3:12). I know there are some Christians who are being persecuted, and it has nothing to do with their relationship with God, but godly Christians will experience persecution. We may be toeing the line of being a pleaser of men if everyone is always in our corner.

Jesus was the most loving man to ever live, and people did not like him all the time. Should we expect different treatment? Winston Churchill is credited with saying, "If you don't have any enemies in life, you have never stood up for anything." Don't be obnoxious and make unnecessary enemies, but don't shy away from speaking a controversial truth, correcting error lovingly, (continued on page 2)

and opposing false ideologies. In these areas, we must be able to handle someone being upset with us. If we feel like we have to have the approval of everyone in the world, we will soon lose the approval of the only One that matters (Mt. 10:28).

## You Are Afraid to Say What You Believe

Nevertheless, many even of the authorities believed in him, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it so that they would not be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God. (John 12:42-43)

A lot of people believed in Jesus. The evidence that he is the Christ could not be denied by honest onlookers in the first century. However, everyone was not willing to confess their belief in Jesus. Some Jewish authorities cared so much for the approval of the Pharisees that they would not confess Jesus.

Jesus said anyone who refuses to acknowledge him before men will not be acknowledged before the Heavenly Father (Mt. 10:32-33). What a shame to be a closet disciple of Jesus and be dismissed at the judgment. It would be better to be put out of the synagogue than to be put out of the presence of God. Much like the authorities in Jesus' day, some are more concerned with what others think than what God says.

Are you silent around your family about your faith because they believe false things, but you would rather not offend? When you're at work, do you refrain from mentioning Jesus and what his word says about certain things so that you are not treated like an outcast? Every one of us must decide whether we will speak up for God or be ashamed of him. What we say shows what we believe and our silence is oftentimes evidence that we are not really convicted about our beliefs (2 Cor. 4:13).

While we need to use tact and wisdom when engaging others (and sometimes silence is necessary), it should never be motivated by fear of others or trying to please them at the expense of our loyalty to God. Even one of Jesus' closest disciples, Peter, was tripped up with denying Jesus in order not to be looked down upon by the crowd (Lk. 22:54-62). We should examine ourselves and be on guard.

## You Are Obsessed with What Others Think

For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ. (Galatians 1:10)

The person who does not care at all what others think is usually a reckless and heartless individual filled with pride. Being concerned with the thoughts and feelings of others is not a bad thing. However, if we obsess over what men think, it will stop us from being the servants of Christ that we should be. Paul could have remained a persecutor of the church, enjoying the praise of men and the prestige of Judaism, but he would have to stop being a servant of Christ. Paul stopped caring what the Jewish leaders thought of his decision and followed the one who died for him (Gal. 2:20).

The more we grow as Christians, the less popular our decisions will be with the world around us, even among some Christians. We must not obsess over the approval of people that will be standing in line at the judgment with us. Instead, focus on pleasing the one who will be doing the judging (Jn. 12:48).

If we find ourself constantly second-guessing our choices to do the right thing or say something godly because we think the world is watching, we have taken "people pleasing" to a dangerous extreme. We cannot control anyone's opinions of us. We simply must shine our light and be content with that.

## Fixing the Problem

In a world where the cameras are constantly on us and everyone is so easily offended, how do we resist the desire to be people pleasers? We should focus on pleasing God above all else. If we please God, we will treat men right (Mic. 6:8). While doing things God's way, people will not always appreciate it, but our conscience will be clear (Gal. 4:16). We should strive to love people and not just to be liked. Love is stronger than like. Like is superficial, love is genuine and will last long after the like phase is over. If people know we love them, they will listen, whether they like us or not.

Lastly, accept that we cannot make everyone happy. Everyone will not like us all of the time, and that has to be alright with us. Jesus was praised by the multitudes at times, and then on other occasions, *(continued on page 4)*

# SFA FAMILY MATTERS

## Prayer List

**Our Members:** Vicki Rapley was admitted into L.R.M.C this last week.

Also remember in prayer Bill Long, Faith West, Ginny Hamby, Jim Turner, Brenda Mask, Wanda Bruno, Margaret Coone and Carol Eason.

**Shut In Members:** Virginia Plumlee, Dick & Joyce Burbage, Don Starks, Evelyn Wyatt and Sharon Edler.

**Others:** Lynn Stevens, Bob McAnally, Rea Rice, Jerry Cole, Lydia Irizarry, Bert & Gloria Allen (winter visitors), Doris Smith, Nellie Anderson and Joyce Stearsman.

## Upcoming Events

**Tuesday March 13th:** F.S.O.P. Ladies class at 7:00 p.m.

**Saturday March 17th:** Semi-Annual Picnic and Sing at Mary Holland Park in Bartow at 12:00 noon, hosted by N. Jackson Ave. C of C.

**Tuesday March 20th:** Senior Saints will meet at 10:00 a.m. The Lakeland Police Dept. Crime Prevention team will address them about "Stolen Identity." Coffee and doughnuts at 9:30. All are invited. Please bring a friend.

**Sunday March 25th: Special Worship Schedule:** There will be a fellowship meal after our morning services and then will we go into our second worship service for the day.

**Sunday April 1st:** Fellowship in Service after evening services.

**Saturday April 7th:** Ladies Brunch here at S.F.A. at 9:00 a.m.

**Saturday April 7th:** Annual Easter Egg Hunt at the Bingle's at 4:00 p.m.

## Thank You

Thank you for the visits, calls and prayers while I was in the hospital. David Deal

## Question & Answer Service

Just a reminder that this Sunday evening is our Question and Answer Service. Hiram still has room for a few more Bible related questions.

## Visitors

Mr. & Mrs. Darnell Kirkland, George & Marion Beals, Jim Larsen, Heather and Aneesa McLaurin, Bitsy Thomas, Irwin & Lisa Thomas and Isaiah and Susan Stearsman, Luke and Zach.

## Special Worship Schedule

Every last Sunday of the month, starting on **Sunday, March 25th**, we will have morning worship, then a fellowship meal and go right into our second worship service. At the fellowship meal, we will celebrate Birthdays and Anniversaries for the month. Also, in conjunction with our second service, we will have a brief singing service to learn new songs, instead of having it on the first Wednesday night of the month.



### " Fellowship Meal "



## SCHEDULED TO SERVE

### March

C.J. Grimes..... **Table** ..... John McShane  
Bobby Sheumaker ..... **Assist** ..... Tucker Sweeney

**Sunday, March 18, 2018**  
9:30 A.M.

**Song at Bible Class**..... Jim Turner  
**Prayer**..... Kenny French

10:30 A.M.

**Announcements** ..... Matt Willcut  
**Song Leader**..... Jason Hendrix  
**Opening Prayer**..... Paul Romine  
**Sermon**..... Hiram Kemp  
**Closing Prayer**..... Tyler Anderson  
**Sound Booth**..... Tucker Sweeney

6:00 P.M.

**Song Leader**..... Stacey Paulin  
**Opening Prayer**..... Fred Strickland  
**Sermon**..... Hiram Kemp  
**Closing Prayer**..... David Deal  
**Sound Booth**..... Tucker Sweeney  
**Greeters**..... Fifes  
**Att. Cards**..... Antonio/Paul  
**Open & Close Building** ..... David Anderson

**Wednesday, March 21, 2018**

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

*Please meet in the library. If you cannot serve, please call Stacey Paulin so he can get a replacement - (863) 838-8911*

**Sunday, March 25, 2018**  
9:30 A.M.

**Song at Bible Class**..... Ken Walker  
**Prayer** ..... C.J. Grimes

10:30 A.M.

**Announcements** ..... Matt Willcut  
**Song Leader**..... Jason Hendrix  
**Opening Prayer**..... Ken Walker  
**Sermon**..... Hiram Kemp  
**Closing Prayer**..... Tucker Sweeney  
**Sound Booth**..... C.J. Grimes

6:00 P.M.

**Song Leader**..... Stacey Paulin  
**Opening Prayer**..... Charles Paulin  
**Sermon**..... Hiram Kemp  
**Closing Prayer**..... Jimmy Sweeney  
**Sound Booth**..... Paul Sweeney  
**Greeters** ..... Darlene/Brenda  
**Att. Cards**..... Paul/Sawyer  
**Open & Close Building** ..... David Anderson

**Wednesday, March 28, 2018**

**Song Leader**..... Bill Long  
**Opening Prayer**..... Jeff Bingle  
**Closing Prayer**..... Tucker Sweeney

## ~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

<b>Feb. 18</b> .....	<b>\$5,657.69</b>
<b>Feb. 25</b> .....	<b>\$6,080.68</b>
<b>March 4</b> .....	<b>\$6,487.13</b>
<b>March 11</b> .....	<b>\$6,227.23</b>
<b>Contribution Average</b> .....	<b>\$5,796.36</b>
<b>2018 Weekly Budget</b> .....	<b>\$4,887.98</b>

## Three Signs You Are a People Pleaser & How to Fix It (continued from page 2)

they wanted to stone him and cried out for his execution (Jn. 19:4-6). If we are going to be like Jesus, we must accept that we cannot please everyone and stay in a right relationship with God. We must be kind and treat people right, but we must not make the opinions of others the lord of our lives.

blind man where all that “bling, bling”? Whatever the reason, the preacher thought, “Wow! All that sparkle, and he can’t even see himself.” There is a greater spiritual lesson to this scene. Sometimes, a Christian can act in such ways that others legitimately wonder, “Does he actually realize what he’s doing and how counterproductive that is to what he claims?” For example, do Christians who promote or defend immodesty, homosexual practice, or other acts of immorality, whether on Facebook or face to face, actually realize how they look to God and worldly people? Do Christians who forsake assembling with the local church because they are too involved with recreation not realize they are idolizing passing pleasures of this world in place of the (continued below)

## Can We See Who We Really Are?

A preacher was recently going through airport security when he saw an unusual sight. At the point where boarding pass holders must empty their pockets and send carry-ons to be checked, a blind man, being guided by his friend or relative, was removing large gold chains and charms from around his neck and placing them in the bin to send through the x-ray machine. Why would a



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Return Service Requested

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



**Convention is fast approaching. We are thankful for all those helping. Please pray for and encourage our young people!**

### Let's Welcome New Members & Visitors!

Church growth brings on new challenges. Let's make extra effort to cultivate a welcoming atmosphere that encourages new members in Christ and leads more precious souls to Him!



**The Time Is Drawing Near! If you are interested in going on the YES II mission trip to Boquete, Panama, June 1-9, 2018, please see Brian and/or register by March 25. We need to purchase plane tickets soon!**

(continued from above) eternal satisfaction of spiritual enrichment? Do Christians whose actions show they love this world more than God not realize the jeopardy in which they place their souls and the harm their influence brings on the local church? The only true way to see ourselves as we really are is to look into the mirror of God's word. "For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does" (Jas. 1:23-25). May each of us constantly examine ourselves in God's word, not compare ourselves with others (2 Cor. 10:12-18). The more we see ourselves as God sees us, the better we can adjust to be more like Jesus! ❤️ Brian