

# 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. 12 03-20-18

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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

## The Blessed Person

Brian R. Kenyon

Psalm 1 is one of the most recognizable psalms! In many ways it could be considered an introduction to the entire God-inspired collection. One thing, for sure, is that it shows two distinct classes of humanity in relation to each class' ultimate fate. The psalm starts out with the phrase, "Blessed is the man," which is a spirited declaration of blessedness that could be expressed, "Oh, the blessedness of the man!" The "blessed man" about to be described is a rare jewel compared to the masses of the general population. Only one class of people is given this designation of blessedness, both now and in eternity. Interestingly, this psalm was alluded to by Jeremiah when describing the apostate people of Judah and the consequent doom coming upon them (Jer. 17:5-8). If only they had applied this psalm! Let us note three truths about the person who is blessed according to this psalm.

## Recognizes the Danger of Sin

**Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful. (Ps. 1:1)**

In recognizing the danger of sin, a person must be aware of the deceptive nature in which it traps — by subtle degrees. The "blessed" person "does not walk" in the plans or ideas of the ungodly because he knows their schemes lead to destruction (Isa. 57:20-21; Jer 7:24). He does not "stand in the path of sinners." He does not "sit in the seat of the scornful." The "scornful [scoffers, ESV]" refer to those who mock, or those who make divine truth and holiness a subject of derision (cf. 2 Pet. 3:3-4). Scoffers are enemies of truth (Pr. 22:10; 29:8). There are differences in degrees in both the action and the type of people with whom the blessed person refuses to associate. Three degrees in action are: (1) "walks," which figuratively means agreeing with, or at least, entertaining the ungodly's ideas; (2) "stands," which indicates fixing one's character upon that of sinners; and (3) "sits," which means to become wholly a part of the scornful's world. Three degrees in types of people are: (1) "ungodly [wicked, ASV]," those who may or may not be fixed in their position of irreverence toward God; (2) "sinners," who habitually continue in transgression; and (3) "scornful [scoffers, ESV]," who not only continue in sin but are proud of it, mocking anyone who, in their mind, would be "addicted to religion."

It is impossible to end up sitting with the scornful without first heeding the counsel of the ungodly and then stopping to associate with sinners! God's people today must keep progressing along the way that leads to eternal *(continued on page 2)*

life (Mt. 7:14)! They cannot stop the pursuit of Christ to dabble in the world! Yet, for some reason, God's people sometimes think there are no consequences in attempting to split time between Christ and the world. "No one can serve two masters" (Mt. 6:24)! Let's be people blessed and keep ourselves from digressions!

## Stabilizes Himself with God's Word

**But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. <sup>3</sup>He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper. <sup>4</sup>The ungodly are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind drives away. (Ps. 1:2-4)**

The person who is blessed takes "delight in the law of the LORD"! When a person is said to "delight" in something, it means he enjoys the activity so much that it becomes his preferred business or occupation. The chief interest of the blessed person is to fulfil the law of God (Ps. 19:7-10; Josh. 1:8)! Furthermore, the blessed person is likened to a well-watered tree. "Planted" indicates a deliberate nourishing and strengthening, not something growing wild. This is a person who has been carefully cultivated by God's word. This is a picture of stability and prosperity!

This deliberately planted person is unlike the ungodly, who are led by the counsel of the wicked, involve themselves in the way of sinners, and become comfortable in the seat of the scornful. The wicked are like chaff which is blown away. They are without root below or fruit above. They have no delight in God's law. They may prosper for a while, but at the first indication of drought, they shrivel up (cf. Mt. 13:4-5). To use another, well-known comparison, when faced with storms of judgment, "the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall" (Mt. 7:27)! Let's be deliberate in cultivating God's word in our lives (cf. 2 Tim. 2:15)!

## Finds God's Approval

**Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. <sup>6</sup>For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, But the way of the ungodly shall perish. (Ps. 1:5-6)**

The wicked cannot endure the judgments of God (Ps. 37:9,13,15,17,35-36). Though in the eyes of men, a person may seem to belong to the "congregation" of the Lord, God knows better. He cannot be deceived (cf. Gal. 6:7). Paul said on one occasion, "For they are not all Israel who are of Israel" (Rom. 9:6). The apostle also wrote, "Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His"" (2 Tim. 2:19a). The Lord "knows" those who truly belong to Him! In Psalm 1:6, the word "knows" means more than mere intellectual knowledge. It also carries the idea of approval, carrying through (Ps. 31:7), and identifying with (cf. Pr. 3:5-6). The way of the righteous is the only way that leads to eternal life. People belonging to God must depart from iniquity (2 Tim 2:19b). "The LORD knows the days of the upright, And their inheritance shall be forever" (Ps. 37:18). The way of the wicked will always end in eternal separation from God (Mt. 7:23).

The only way to endure the judgments of God is to be in harmony with His will. Today, that means to be a faithful Christian! Paul wrote, "For you died [referring to baptism, Col. 2:12], and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory" (Col. 3:3-4). When the Christian keeps focused on "things which are above" (Col. 3:1-2), God will look upon him through the cleansing blood of His Son!

## Conclusion

What a contrast between "blessed" (Ps. 1:1) and "perish" (Ps. 1:6). The "blessed" person recognizes the danger of sin, is stabilized with the word of God, and is approved of the Lord. The ungodly are as weak as wind driven chaff, are unable to stand in God's judgment, and are destined for destruction ... unless they repent! Into which category of people do we find ourselves? Are we among the blessed or are we among those whom the Lord disapproves? May we always delight in God's ways! ♥ *Brian*

### Don't Forget!

**This Sunday, March 25**

will be our monthly fellowship meal immediately followed by our afternoon sing & worship service!



Fellowship Meal



# SFA FAMILY MATTERS

## Prayer List

**Our Members:** Becky Sheumaker was home sick Sunday. Vicki Rapley is home recovering well from surgery. 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:** Parker Hodson (Vicky Rapley's son-in-law) having open-heart surgery this week. Lynn Stevens, Bob McAnally, Rea Rice, Lydia Irizarry, Bert & Gloria Allen, Doris Smith, Nellie Anderson and Joyce Stearsman.

## Upcoming Events

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

**Sunday, March 25th:** Lads to Leaders will meet in the afternoon.

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

**Saturday, April 7th:** Ladies Brunch here at SFA at 9:00 am. \*Please note: all SFA ladies are asked to stay immediately following our brunch to begin planning for our October Ladies Day event.

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

## Sympathy

Our sympathy is extended to Jeanelle Thrower in the passing of her sister-in-law Joan Shanes on March 7, 2018, in Tennessee.

Our sympathy is extended to Dennis Stultz in the passing of his wife, Virginia Stultz, last week. She was the daughter-in-law of Gentry Stultz, a former preacher for this congregation.

## Thank You Notes

Please see the bulletin board in the foyer to read thank you notes from Jeanelle Thrower for your support after the passing of her sister-in-law; Jim & Wanda Turner for your concern when Wanda was sick; and the Green and Coleman family for your concern during Bernetta's surgery.

## Our Growing Family

Join us in welcoming Bitsy Thomas, Teresa Reeves and Kaylen to our church family. They placed membership with us this passed Sunday.

## Visitors

Monja Anderson, George & Marion Beals, Kimberly Borders, J'Darrius Cobbett, Tiffany Hash, Megan, and Samuel, Mr. & Mrs. Richard Meadows, and Mary Moore.

## Monthly Fellowship Teams

Teams have been created to help with setup and cleanup for our monthly fellowship meals. Find your team leader based on the first letter of your last name. Please see your team leader for details on how you can help.

**A-D** John McShane

**E-K** Jimmy Sweeney

**L-P** Wayne Shearer

**R-Z** David Williams

## SCHEDULED TO SERVE

### March

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

**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

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

**Sunday, April 1, 2018**  
9:30 A.M.

**Song at Bible Class**..... Tucker Sweeney  
**Prayer** ..... Ken Walker

10:30 A.M.

**Announcements** ..... Jimmy Sweeney  
**Song Leader**..... Jason Hendrix  
**Opening Prayer**..... Bobby Sheumaker  
**Sermon**..... Hiram Kemp  
**Closing Prayer**..... Tim Croson  
**Sound Booth**..... Tucker Sweeney

6:00 P.M.

**Song Leader**..... Dave Williams  
**Opening Prayer**..... Kyle Bingle  
**Sermon**..... Hiram Kemp  
**Closing Prayer**..... Jeff Bingle  
**Sound Booth**..... Paul Sweeney  
**Greeters** ..... Longfellow  
**Att. Cards**..... Willcut Boys  
**Open & Close Building** ..... David Anderson

**Wednesday, April 4, 2018**

**Song Leader**..... Jason Hendrix  
**Opening Prayer**..... Kenny French  
**Closing Prayer**..... Bobby Sheumaker

## ~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Feb. 25.....	\$6,080.68
March 4.....	\$6,487.13
March 11.....	\$6,227.23
March 18.....	\$5,485.96
<b>Contribution Average</b> .....	<b>\$5,807.31</b>
<b>2018 Weekly Budget</b> .....	<b>\$4,887.98</b>

# No Need for a Creed

A classic definition of a religious “creed” is a “statement of faith for public use; it contains articles needful for salvation and the theological well being of the church” (Earl Cairns, *Christianity Through the Centuries*, 3rd rev. ed. , Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996. 114). Creeds are said to be a summary of the “essential doctrines” of Scripture. Universal creeds made by representatives of the church as it was apostatizing toward Roman Catholicism began to emerge during the segment of church history known as the period of theological controversy (AD 313-451). The Apostle’s Creed is what most point to as the oldest creed in Christendom. This creed, obviously, was not written by the apostles, but was thought to have been produced by the Council of Nicaea (AD 325). It was definitely in use by AD 340. The problem with this, and all man-made creeds, is that fallible human beings become the authority as to what doctrines are “needful for salvation and the theological well being of the church”? Are not all Biblical doctrines, when handled aright (2 Tim. 2:15), needful to honor and glorify God? Paul wrote that “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:16-17)! God never intended for us to pick and choose which doctrines we would live by. Instead, Jesus said that “Man shall ... live by ... every word that proceeds from the mouth of God” (Mt. 4:4). Let’s keep Christianity pure! ❤️ *Brian*



*South Florida Avenue*  
**CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
*1807 South Florida Avenue*  
*Lakeland, FL 33803-2653*

Return Service Requested

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



**The Time Is Drawing Near!** Our young people and their chaperones will be going on the YES II mission trip to Boquete, Panama, June 1-9, 2018, Lord willing. Please keep them in our prayers for safety and success!

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



**The South Florida Avenue congregation has been organized into teams based on the members' last names (see bulletin board).**

**Jimmy's team (last names E-K) will have the honor of clean-up following the March 25 fellowship meal.**

## The Value of God's Word

The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; <sup>8</sup>The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; <sup>9</sup>The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. <sup>10</sup>More to be desired are they than gold, Yea, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. <sup>11</sup>Moreover by them Your servant is warned, And in keeping them there is great reward. (Psalms 19:7-11)