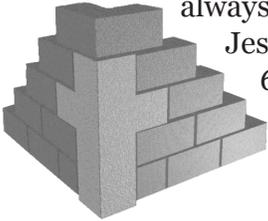


“Those Things Most Surely Believed Among Us”

Luke opened his account of the Gospel acknowledging that many had set forth a “declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us” (Luke 1:1, KJV). The title above was also the theme of our recent Gospel meeting with Jay Lockhart. Sometimes we think that fundamentals are just for young people’s Bible classes. However, to a person who claims to be a Christian, basic truths of God’s word should always be in style. God’s prophet once said, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you . . . Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children” (Hosea 4:6). We must never forget the basic truths presented in our Gospel meeting. The majesty of God, the worship of the church, the identity of Christ, the words of the Holy Spirit, the church of the New Testament, and the meaning of the cross must always be kept in mind, not by thought only but also by putting the principles involved into practice.



Jesus asked, “But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do the things which I say?” (Luke 6:46). All of us must determine that we will faithfully live God’s word, no matter how our peers may react. We must also “walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. 4:1-3).  Brian



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



April 13 will be our final L2L Sunday before the big meeting in Orlando! We will hone our skills in the events taking place there (speech, song leading, etc.), as well as wrap up any lingering projects! **Weekend, April 18-20** is the “big meeting” (aka L2L Convention). Our young people and their adult mentors have worked very hard. We appreciate all who have helped and continue to do so. **Sunday, April 27** will be the L2L banquet after morning services honoring our participants. Stay tuned for announcements as to the time and place.

Weeki Wachee Spring Youth Retreat

May 2-4 @ Weeki Wachee Christian Camp

7360 Erin Rd, Springhill, FL 34607

“Looking from the Shore”

What can we learn from Noah and the flood, the crossing of the Red Sea, the cleansing of Naaman, stilling the Sea of Galilee, and the baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch?

Save the Date
VBS
June 22-26

We will have a VBS meeting in the near future. Plan now to attend and help if you can.



The word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (Heb. 4:12).

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. 67 No. 14 -4- 8-14

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.
Joey Treat.....Pacific Islands
Ted Wheeler.....Ghana, W.A.

EMAIL

SFA.church@gmail.com

WEB PAGES

www.southfloridaavenuechurchofchrist.com
www.sfacc.net

What Really Counts?

David A. Sargent

Soon after Angi and David's sixth wedding anniversary, the couple's home burned to the ground. Angi's first act, when they were allowed to hunt through the blackened remains, was to search for their photo albums. When she went to tell David that the pictures had indeed survived, she found him carefully placing in a box some charred, folded pieces of paper—their courtship love letters.

"As I watched David kneeling there in the ashes," she says, "I was overcome with the certainty that we were meant for each other. There, in the face of our greatest tragedy, our first thoughts were not of our material loss but of the potential loss of these precious parts of our life together. As I knelt to help him with the letters, I was certain that we hadn't lost anything that mattered after all."

"Everything that can be counted does not necessarily count; everything that counts cannot necessarily be counted" (Albert Einstein). So what counts? What matters most? In one word: *relationships*. In three words: *friends, family and faith*.

In Philippians 3, the Apostle Paul enumerates many of the accomplishments that he attained as a Jew (vs. 4-7). However, at the end of the list he wrote: "*But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ*" (v. 7). Then he explained his new priority:

"Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith." (Philippians 3:8-9)

The apostle Paul teaches us that in the end, what matters most is one's relationship with God through Christ.

Sin separates us from God (Isaiah 59:1-2) and from all that is good, right and eternal. Yet, God loved us so much that He gave His Son to die on the cross for our sins, so that we might be reconciled to Him and live eternally with Him in heaven (Romans 5:6-10). We can be reconciled to God in Christ through: faith (Acts 16:30-31), turning from our sins in repentance (2 Corinthians 7:9-10), confessing Jesus before men (Romans 10:9-10) and being baptized (immersed) into Christ for the forgiveness of our sins (Acts 2:38).

Life's true meaning is discovered when we focus upon what truly counts: friends, family, and especially our relationship with the Father. What counts in your life?

Better Homes and Congregations

Robert Johnson

A recent study by the Family Research Council offers encouragement for both the home and the faith. Doctors Nicholas Zill and Phillip Fletcher found a “startling discrepancy between children who live with both biological parents and attend religious services weekly, and those from broken homes who worship less frequently.” Using data from the National Survey of Children’s Health, they found “students from intact, churchgoing families are five times less likely to repeat a grade. Less than 21% of these parents were contacted by their school for behavior or achievement problems, compared to 53% whose children were not living with both parents and not attending services regularly. The more frequently a family worships together, it seems, the less anxious moms and dads are about their children’s school performance.”

Even more surprising is that these differences held true even after considering family income and poverty, parent’s education level, race and ethnicity. As the report stated, “Children thrive, the family bond strengthens, school success skyrockets, and the nation reaps the reward.” Church and family seem to be the “perfect prescription” for many social problems faced in our nation today.

This data just confirms what so many of us realize about the importance of both the home and the Lord’s church. We are created by God, and He knows best what it takes for us to live an abundant life here and now. Solomon advises us, *“Buy truth, and do not sell it, get wisdom and instruction and understanding”* (Proverbs 23:23). The importance of a complete education, both spiritually and otherwise, cannot be overstated. Just as important as this is the role the church is to play in our lives. We find worth and value, individually and as family units, by being active in the work of the church. It enables us to grow in the image of Christ (Ephesians 4:15-16), and live more as God intends, which is the best life to live. The value of worship, and worshipping together as a family, is inestimable as well. No wonder the Hebrew writer encouraged his readers, and us, *“Not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near”* (Hebrews 10:25).

Unfortunately, most of the world, and even many in the Lord’s church, do not understand this very basic principle. To ignore God and the importance of the home has brought so much hurt to so many people. Yet, Satan has deceived the world into thinking all the evil around us, which afflicts us individually, as families and as a society, has nothing to do with sin that is so prevalent. *“In whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God”* (2 Corinthians 4:4).

If a change for the better is to happen, it will happen with those in the body of Christ truly being light and salt (Matthew 5:13-16). If the world does not see a difference in us from it, then what is there to attract them to the Gospel, and the blessed life it provides? Commit yourself to being a strong, integral part of your family, fulfilling the God-given role you have. Commit yourself to being a strong, integral part of the church, using your God-given talents to serve. It can make a difference, not just for you, and your family and the body of Christ, but perhaps your part of the world. *“Prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world”* (Philippians 2:15).

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Phil Fife is scheduled for knee surgery April 10th. Jim Turner, Jacquelin Dopwell, Sam Bolding, Duane Nelson, Bill Burton, Ann Howard, JoAnn Hoback, Margaret Coone & Sharon Washington.

Relatives: Valerie Rodriguez (cousin of Jagie Kenyon) will begin radiation treatment for Thyroid cancer Friday. Gary Thrower, Danny Stephens & Lewis Tillis.

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

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

Upcoming Events

Apr. 5th: - Ladies Brunch at N. Jackson Ave. in Bartow at 9:00 am. All ladies are invited.

Apr. 6th: - Our Ladies Day planning meeting will be in the auditorium at 5:00 pm.

Apr. 6th: - Fellowship in Service after our evening worship service. Bring finger foods to enjoy as we write cards to the sick, and to those who need encouraging.

Apr. 12th: - There will be an **Egg Hunt** at the Bingle's house beginning at 10:00 am.

Apr. 18th: -20th: - Lads to Leaders Convention in Orlando.

May 3rd: - "Ladies Day" at South Florida Avenue Church of Christ in Lakeland,

Visitors

Joe Anderson, Lawunda Blake, Myisha & Jamya. Adam Black, Alicia Smith & Latraile, Mr. & Mrs. Chad Tagtow, Anna, Amelia & Micah. Edith Byrd, Arsenio Woodard & daughter.

New Mailing Address

Wanda Bruno: 6029 Christina Dr. E. Lakeland, FL 33813.

- SELECTION OF DIRECTORS -

To comply with state regulations, an annual meeting and selection of directors must be conducted each year. This will be done immediately following the morning worship service April 6, 2014. The following nominations have been made: David Anderson (Chairman); George French (Vice-Chairman); Charles Paulin (Treasurer); Bobby Sheumaker (Secretary). Nominations may be made from the floor at the meeting. However, the nominees willingness to accept must be presented to the chairman prior to the meeting.

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

April

Josh Estridge **Table** Kenny French
Charles Paulin **Assist** Bobby Sheumaker

April 6, 2014
9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Kyle Williams
Prayer David Anderson

10:30 A.M.

Announcements Jimmy Sweeney
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Jeremy Padilla
Closing Prayer Tyler Anderson

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Paul Romine
Opening Prayer John McShane
Closing Prayer David Anderson
Greeters The Hendrix Family
Att. Cards Paul Sweeney & Ian Enamorado
Open & Close Building David Anderson

Wed. April 9, 2014

Song Leader Steve Hunley
Opening Prayer C. J. Grimes
Closing Prayer Steve Hunley

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

Sunday, April 13, 2014

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Antonio Martin
Prayer Kenny French

10:30 A.M.

Announcements Stacey Paulin
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Charles Paulin
Closing Prayer Brian Kenyon

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Paul Romine
Opening Prayer Stacey Paulin
Closing Prayer Kenny French
Greeters The Kenyon Family
Att. Cards Ian Enamorado & Sebastian Rapley
Open & Close Building David Anderson

Wed. April 16, 2014

Song Leader Jeremy Padilla
Opening Prayer Frank Hamby
Closing Prayer Stacey Paulin

~ HOW WE ARE GIVING ~

Mar. 09 \$4,620.31
Mar. 16 \$4,681.00
Mar. 23 \$4,277.00
Mar. 30 \$5,104.25
Contribution Average \$4,548.93
2014 Weekly Budget \$4,256.38