



South Florida Ave. church of Christ 1807 S. Florida Ave., Lakeland, FL 33803 Vol. 73 No. 14 ----- April 7, 2020

ELDERS

David Anderson
Kenny French
Brian Kenyon
Bobby Sheumaker

DEACONS

Tyler Anderson
Jason Hendrix
John McShane
Stacey Paulin
Jimmy Sweeney

MINISTER

Hiram Kemp

ASSOCIATE MINISTER

Vince Daugherty

SECRETARY

Dee Parramore

OFFICE PHONE

(863) 682-4702

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

EMAIL

SFA.church@gmail.com

WEB PAGE

southfloridaavenuechurchofchrist.com

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SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist

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.

Are We Too Attached to This Life?

Brian R. Kenyon

Fear of death. That is the bottom line. Whether people are afraid of their own death or the death of their loved ones, fear of death is the main reason why this virus has shut down America and much of the world. It is not really about sickness (which happens all the time) or politics (though plenty are seizing the “opportunity”); it is ultimately about the fear of death. Threats on life such as this are great times for us to reflect on our level of attachment to this life.

Human Life Is Valuable

There is no doubt that human life is inherently more valuable than any other life (cf. Gen. 1 :26-27). This is why intentionally taking innocent human life is always sinful. This is also why only Jesus’ blood was sufficient (cf. Lev. 17:11; Heb. 9:24-26; Rev. 1:5). Even Jesus knew the value of human life, including His own. Part of Him did not want to physically suffer. He prayed, “O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me” (Mt. 26:39, 42, 44). “This cup” refers to the suffering Jesus knew He would have to endure (cf. Mt. 20:22). Thankfully, He desired to do His Father’s will above all else, “nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will!” Thus, He joyfully “endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb. 12:2)! If Jesus saw the value in preserving physical life, then so should we! We must take every reasonable precaution during this pandemic to protect ourselves and those around us. However, are some, who should be the stalwarts of courage, crouching in panic, covering their light to the world?

Human Life Is Temporary

People living today benefit greatly from medical advancements. Illnesses that routinely ended human life a century or so ago are almost forgotten. The lack of news stories about AIDS testifies to this generation. People are no longer dying en mass, because of the development of effective medications. We should be thankful to live at such a time as this. However, even with all these advancements, physical existence is still determined by God to be temporary. No one will live forever in this body (Heb. 9:27). Yes, the human spirit is immortal (Eccl. 12:7), but concerning the flesh, “The days of our lives are seventy years; And if by reason of strength they are eighty years ... For it is soon cut off, and we fly away” (Ps. 90:10). Therefore, if we think we can avoid physical death, we are mistaken. If COVID-19 does not take us out, something else will. This, of course, is not to say we should live recklessly. Rather, it should cause us, first and foremost, to realize our mortality and seek God through Jesus while He may be found (Acts 17:26-28 cf. Ps. 19:1-6; Rom. 1:20). Are people who call themselves Christians really Christians as the New Testament teaches? Are some New Testament Christians presently more focused on this life than on the life to come (cf. 1 Cor. 4:16-5:7)? What we focus on will control our life (cf. Pr. 23:7; Rom. 8:5-8; Col. 3:1-2)!

Human Life Is Fearless in Christ

One of the beautiful blessings through Christ's sacrifice is that Christians have no reason to fear death. The Hebrews writer declared, "Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. ¹⁶For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham" (Heb. 2:14-16). This passage teaches the "fear of death," not death itself, is that from which Christians are delivered. "Release [deliver, KJV]" means to set free, perhaps comparable to being released from a lasso (cf. Lk. 12:58; Acts 19:12). Fear enslaves (cf. Rom. 8:15, 21; Gal. 5:1). Those who refuse God's gift of deliverance are still enslaved to the fear of death. Whether a person is a Christian, death occurs. However, Christians need not fear it for at least three reasons: (1) Christ came to destroy the works of the devil (1 Jn. 3:8); Christ's resurrection makes death powerless (1 Cor. 15:26, 55); and (3) Christ has complete authority over death (Rev. 1:18).

Jesus' death and thus the delivery from the fear of death applies only to "the seed of Abraham," which are those whose faith is like Abraham's (Jn. 8:39 cf. Gal. 3:26-29). Although the spiritual world was made aware of Jesus' death and its implications (Eph. 3:10; 1 Tim. 3:16; 1 Pet. 3:18-22), Jesus did not die for angels. If a person is not the "seed of Abraham," then he or she

has every reason to fear death. People become the spiritual seed of Abraham when they obey the Gospel (i.e., believe that Jesus is the Christ, Jn. 8:24; repent of their sin, Acts 17:31; confess their faith in Jesus, Rom. 10:9-10; and are baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of sins, Acts 2:38, which puts them in Christ, Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:27-28). Have we obeyed the Gospel? Do we have fearlessness in the face of death, knowing that Christ will see us through (cf. Mt. 10:28; Rev. 2:10)?

Concluding Applications

Let us consider these attachment-to-this-life questions. First, how much time are we spending in the Gospel's good news compared to the world's virus news? We must continually "be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Rom. 12:2). If we are now "news junkies," we may be too attached to this life. Second, how much are we trusting in men compared to the promises of God? Are we allowing experts to persuade us to lose of confidence in God? Long ago, Jeremiah said, "Cursed is the man who trusts in man And makes flesh his strength, Whose heart departs from the LORD" (Jer. 17:5). God promised, "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Heb. 13:5). If we are feeling abandoned by God, we may be too attached to this life. Third, are we feeling more enlightened by Dr. Fauci than by the God-breathed Scriptures? Yes, there is much to learn from medical personnel at times like these, but are we more enamored with the science of the spreading virus than the Savior of the transforming Gospel? If our spiritual growth is on hold because of this virus, we may be too attached to this life. Let us be strong and courageous in the Lord!

YOUTH GROUP SECTION

Matthew 19:13-14 -- Then little children were brought to Him that He might put His hands on them and pray, but the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, "Let the children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

In Jesus' day, children were overlooked, and sometimes it can happen today. One blessing South Florida Ave. church of Christ wants to offer specifically to **you** is access to stay connected to Jesus even when we have to be apart. We are opening a brand new feature to our website specifically for our youth group. Content, videos, and devotionals specifically with **you** in mind.

Ask your parents for the password to log in & find activity sheets, lessons, and encouraging messages. Matthew 6:33 says, "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness". If we will put God first and honor Him, we can trust that He will take care of the rest. You cannot spell youth without "U".

Log in with your family and tell us what you think.

Senior Saints Section

For those of us between 65 and death, pain and discomfort go hand in hand with getting older.

Try not to dwell on them but accept them as a part of the cycle of life that we are all going through.

Try to minimize them in your mind. They are not who you are, they are something that life has handed you. If they become your entire focus, you lose sight of the person you use to be.

Remember that the apostle Paul lived with his thorn in his side but did not let it dictate how he lived his life.

James 5:10 reads, "Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering, affliction and of patience."

Stay well and healthy. If any need arises, you can contact me.

John McShane, Fellowship Deacon

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Our Members:

PRAYER LIST

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

Ginny Hamby; Carlene Long; Stacey Paulin; Bobby Simpson; Melody Baxter; Carol Pace; Cierra Edwards; Margaret Coone; Ellen Shearer; Bob Pratt; Ray Nashick; Ron & Judy Ford; Chuck & Evelyn Wyatt; Debbie Bush; Geny Johnson; Brian Smith; Sharon Washington; Bernetta Green (hip pain); Annette Phillip.

April
Designated Elder - David Anderson

Sunday, April 12 2020

Sermon Hiram Kemp
"Jesus Is (John 8:25)"
6:00 P.M.
Sermon Hiram Kemp
"Three Personalities in 3 John"

All worship assignments are postponed.
Live stream will continue until further notice.
Please **do not** come to the building
for worship service.

COVID 19 NOTICE

Since March 22, we have not assembled for Bible classes or worship service at the church building. However, we are still worshipping our Lord on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). As scheduled, we are live-streaming the entire worship service. You are able to access this on our website and/or YouTube channel.

As commanded, we will still worship together, but it will be from home. We trust you will participate either by yourself or with a small group. A handful of our men will lead worship: prayers, songs, sermons, Lord's supper. If you need communion, come by the office or it can be brought to you before Sunday. For the contribution, you may bring it or mail it to the office.

Auditorium Bible classes for both Wednesdays and Sunday mornings will be live streamed, also. Hiram and Vince will also be recording video devotionals during the week. These can also be accessed on our website.

This is a very unusual situation we are facing. We appreciate your cooperation. The safety of our members is very important. The worship of our Lord is of utmost importance. This is a temporary alternative to worshipping. This will not be a permanent situation. The Lord will see us through this confusion.

We covet your prayers,
David Anderson Kenny French
Brian Kenyon Bobby Sheumaker
- Elders -

Others: George French (Kenny & Reba's son, pancreatic cancer); Roselyn Roberts (friend of Darlene Thompson); Daniel Styer (Rene' Bingle's friend's son, neck cancer); Thelma Rachford (Dottie Fife's sister); Alicia Zamot (Jagie's aunt); Keith Cozort (former member); Chip Bolding; Tony Seibert; Neil Entwistle Sr.; Tanya Irizarry; Trevor & Sandy Hutchins; Derick Jordan; student of Jimmy Sweeney (brain tumor); Keijuan Callaway (Sharon Washington's son); Mary Ankroum (knee surgery); Bruce Coleman; Patricia Hewitt (chemo).

REMEMBER OUR SHUT-INS

Faith West Carol Eason
Joyce Burbage Cheryl Barker
Ellen Shearer Chuck & Evelyn Wyatt

RESPONSES

Tucker Sweeney for requests prayers to grow stronger and continue developing as a Christian, and to keep walking in the light.

WITH SYMPATHY

It is with sadness that we inform you that Virginia Plumlee has passed away. Her family will have a memorial service after the threat of the virus passes.

We are also saddened to announce that Shirley Crocker, a former member, has passed away on April 5, 2020.

Gordon Methvin, former chairman of the FSOP board of directors, passed away on Monday, April 6, 2020

Karen Davis, Brian Kenyon's mother-in-law (Amber's mom), died on Monday, April 6, 2020.



NEW ADDRESS

Casey Paulin & Kyle Bingle
1388 County Road 34
Florence, AL 35634



Communion to Shut-Ins

THIS WORK HAS BEEN POSTPONED. PLEASE REMEMBER OUR SHUT-INS IN YOUR PRAYERS:

Faith West Ellen Shearer Joyce Burbage
Carol Eason Cheryl Barker

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Mar. 22	\$4,300.00
Mar. 29	\$4,975.00
Apr. 5	\$6,647.00
Contribution Average	\$6,923.46

APRIL

- 4/11 - Youth group activity - **cancelled**
- 4/18 - Men's breakfast, Eagle Lake - **cancelled**
- 4/19 - Youth group's Stacked Sunday **cancelled**
- 4/21 - FSOP Ladies' class, 7:00 pm,
Live stream on the Facebook group,
"FSOP Ladies Class"

All updates to these events will appear here.

May

- 5/10 - FSOP graduation
- 5/10 - **MOTHER'S DAY**
- 5/16 - Men's breakfast: North Lakeland
- 5/17 - Youth Group Stacked Sunday
- 5/25 - Memorial Day
- 5/30 - Youth Group Fun Activity

All updates to these events will appear here.

HUMOROUS THINGS IN SCRIPTURE

Abraham and Sarah laughed at the thought of having a child in old age (Gen. 17:17, 18:12)

God gave Abraham and Sarah a son named Isaac-
Isaac means laughter (Gen. 21:5-6)

The Lord laughs at the plans of the nations (Psa. 2:4)

The Lord laughs at the wicked (Psa. 37:13)

When the Lord restores his people, their mouths are filled with songs and laughter (Psa.126:1-2)

Wisdom laughs at those who face calamity after refusing to seek her (Prov. 1:24-27)

There is a time to laugh (Eccl. 3:4)

People laughed at Jesus, but he had the "last laugh" (Mark 5:40-43)

Those who weep now will laugh later (Luke 6:21)



We invite you to worship our Lord with us
During this unusual time, you can worship via our YouTube channel where our service will be live streamed.

You can enjoy our Bible class at 9:30 am
then morning service which begins at 10:30 am.
We come together in the evening to worship again at 6:00 pm.

www.SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com

Email us: SFA.church@gmail.com

Find us on social media



South Florida Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST

1807 South Florida Avenue
Lakeland, FL 33803-2653

Return Service Requested

