Have You Been Raised with Christ?

Last Sunday was a day that many "celebrate" as the resurrection of the Lord. While the Bible does not explicitly tell us to celebrate the resurrection of Christ on any particular day, there is nothing inherently wrong with it, if we do not treat it as if it replaces true religion. However, a more important question to ask is, "Have I been raised with Christ?" Paul said, "If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth" (Colossians 3:1-2). Paul's reference to being risen with Christ is baptism. Earlier, the apostle said the Colossians were "buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead" (Colossians 2:12). Baptism is a figurative representation of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (Romans 6:3-4). What Paul, therefore, is saying in Colossians is that those of us who have been baptized into Christ must focus on things that are above, that is, spiritual things, and not on things of a worldly nature. Why is it that so many "Christians" are caught up in such trashy entertainment (i.e., vulgar television programs, music, websites, YouTube videos, etc.) that reflects "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" (1 John 2:16)? Let us not be guilty of having the wrong focus. We will be blessed by looking to things above. "For you died, 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" (Colossians 3:3-4). *Brian*

South Florida Avenue
CHURCH OF CHRIST
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The End of Your Search for a Friendly Church . . .

Sunday, April 27 will be the L2L banquet, honoring our participants. It will be a fellowship-meal style dinner on Sunday after morning worship services. The meal's theme is "Around the World." We would like participants to fix cultural dishes from their part of the world, including good, ole American cuisine. See the sign-up sheet. If questions, please ask Brian or Jagie.

Saturday, May 17 will be our next youth devotional and activity. It will be hosted by the Williams family. Stay tuned for details on time and activity.

VBS is June 22-26

This year's theme: "The Race Is On: Running with Jesus Every Day." Keep alert for ways you can help.

Thank you, SFA church of Christ!

The South Florida Avenue
MESSENGER

A Friendly Church With a Vital Message Proclaiming the Unsearchable Riches of the Lord Jesus.
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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

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Don Iverson.....India
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Christ and Worship

Thomas Baxley

Deuteronomy 6:13 says, "You shall fear only the Lord your God; and you shall worship Him, and swear by His name."

This is the verse Jesus cited when Satan tempted Jesus to worship him. God stated, and Jesus affirmed, that only God is to be worshipped.

As we read through the Bible, we find men attempting to worship angels, but the angels refused it (Revelation 22:8-9).

We also find men trying to worship other men, which was also refused (Acts 10:25; 14:8-18).

Whenever a servant of God is worshipped, either men or angel, they refuse, because only God is to be worshipped.

That being said, what are we to make of the fact of Jesus accepted worship? Hebrews 1:6 quotes from Psalm 148:2 where angels worship Him, and we find several instances where men worshipped Him (Matthew 2:11; 14:33; 28:9, 17; John 9:38).

There can only be one conclusion: Jesus accepts worship because He is God. Otherwise, He contradicts His own words as found in Matthew 4:10 and Luke 4:8. Thomas said it very well when the resurrected Christ appeared to Him in John 20:28, and our cry should be no different!

THE PURPOSE OF BAPTISM

D. Gene West

There is much discussion on this subject, especially between those who have characterized themselves as "change agents," or "progressives" and those of us who, in their estimations, are neither. Some have gone so far as to insist that as long as a person being immersed is aware that he is doing that to please God, his immersion is acceptable in the sight of God. This is not a new discussion among us-it has gone on intermittently for nearly a hundred and fifty years. The question actually comes down to whether or not it is necessary for a person who wishes to be immersed to know why that action is being taken.

The first question that comes to our minds is this: If one wishes to be immersed, but does not know why, and/or has no interest in knowing why, how can he submit to baptism as an act of faith? Can one do a thing by faith ignorantly, since faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17)? If one has heard the Word of God sufficiently to desire immersion, we fail to see how he could possibly do that without knowing why. If he does not, is he ready for that beautiful step? One finds it difficult to understand how anyone could give the Book of Acts even a casual reading and not know the reason for baptism. Surely any person can understand the language of the incomparable apostle Peter who told the converts on Pentecost Day to "repent and let everyone of you be baptized for the remission of sins…" Surely one who is a subject for conversion would have read these memorable words! How is it possible for anyone who is mature enough to put Christ on in baptism miss the point that was made by the inimitable Ananias when he said to Saul of Tarsus, "what are you waiting for, arise, be baptized and wash away your sins calling on the name of the Lord?" Anyone either hearing or reading this language, even for the first time, would thoroughly understand that baptism is for the purpose of washing one's sins away. To be baptized for the remission of sins and to have one's sins washed away in baptism is one and the same thing. It certainly speaks to the purpose of baptism in the clearest and most easily understood terms, does it not? One who has heard enough of the Word of God to understand that God will forgive him of all sin upon the completion of the act of baptism is one who can submit to that baptism by faith. It seems to this student that such minimal knowledge would be the least required to intelligently do what God has commanded.

However, the Bible deepens its view of the purpose of baptism a bit when it speaks of our being baptized into Christ, or our being baptized to put on Christ. In Galatians 3:27, the extraordinary Paul wrote, "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ." From this simple declaration we wish to notice two important matters. (1) When one is baptized he is baptized "into Christ." This sentence as it is literally found in the Textus Receptus is: "For as many of you as into Christ were baptized, in Christ you were clothed." This is a beautiful statement worthy of some consideration. The word "into" in this easily understood sentence comes from a Greek word meaning, "entrance into" (Thayer p. 183). Hence, those who are baptized "into" Christ are granted entrance into him. This presupposes one's accepting all the obligations of being a disciple of the Lord. (2) Paul also said that those who are immersed into Christ are "clothed" in him. That is, he is "put on" like apparel is put on. He is worn by us. This is, of course, metaphorical language which means that after immersion we display the attributes of Christ in our daily lives as we display the literal clothing that we wear on our bodies. We "wear" those qualities named by Peter when he declared, "But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:5-8 NKJV). All these qualities were evident in the life of our Savior, and we demonstrate them in our lives as if we wear them as clothing. While a person newly educated in the Bible may not understand all the finer points we have made today, surely he can understand he is being baptized to be forgiven of sin, which after all is the point, isn't it? Forgiveness of sin is the purpose of baptism!

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Evelyn Wyatt, Jim Turner, Jacquelin Dopwell, Sam Bolding, Duane Nelson, Bill Burton, Ann Howard, JoAnn Hoback, Margaret Coone & Sharon Washington.

Relatives: Valerie Rodriguez, Gary Thrower, Danny Stephens & Lewis Tillis.

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

Others: Diana Rogers (friend of Sharon Egolf) had eye surgery Tuesday. The wife of John Smith (friend of Jeff Bingle) passed away last Saturday. Betty Wetherington, Alison Bridgemohan, Frances Cain, Marilyn Eick, Frank Wood, Christina Fuessner, Bonnie Hendricks & Kathy Peel.

Upcoming Events

Apr. 27th - May 1st: - Gospel meeting at Hilltop church of Christ in Winter Haven.

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

Visitors

Tina Booth, Alexa Barrett & Scarlett, Lori Hair, Jane Jessee, Tiffany Jackson, Rick & Deborah Leonard, Dylan Martin, Linda Pennington, Patrick Skaggs, Bryan Strickland, Kathryn Thompson, Lillian & Alexander Palermo.

Lads To Leaders Program

The congregation is invited to celebrate the accomplishments of the youth in our Lads to Leaders program next Sunday, April 27th after the morning worship service in the fellowship hall. Please bring something for the around the world theme meal. A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in the foyer.

Birth Announcement

Kyle Williams and Alexa Barrett announce the arrival of Scarlett Olivia Williams. She was born April 17th. She weighed 7 lbs & was 19.5 in. long. Grandparents are Dave & Nikki Williams, and the Great-grandmother is Pamela Share.

HEAR OUR RADIO SPOTS

This Week's Message

"A Million Frogs"

1230 or 1430 on radio dial or web page

www.southfloridaavenuechurchofchrist.com

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

April

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

May

Jeremy Padilla ..... **Table** ..... Charles Paulin
David Anderson ..... **Assist** ..... Frank Hamby

Sunday, April 27, 2014

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class ..... Stacey Paulin
Prayer ..... Jeremy Padilla

10:30 A.M.

Announcements ..... Jimmy Sweeney
Song Leader ..... Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer ..... David Williams
Closing Prayer ..... Fred Rapley

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader ..... Paul Romine
Opening Prayer ..... Kyle Williams
Closing Prayer ..... Charles Sanford
Greeters ..... Robert & June Cooper
Att. Cards ..... Quadarius Askew & Paul Sweeney
Open & Close Building ..... David Anderson

Wed. April 30, 2014

Song Leader ..... Antonio Martin
Opening Prayer ..... Tyler Anderson
Closing Prayer ..... Phil Fife

Please meet in the library. If you cannot serve, please call Chuck Wyatt so he can get a replacement - 859-5231

May 4, 2014

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class ..... Ken Walker
Prayer ..... Bob Pratt

10:30 A.M.

Announcements ..... Bobby Sheumaker
Song Leader ..... Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer ..... Jim Turner
Closing Prayer ..... Jimmy Sweeney

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader ..... Paul Romine
Opening Prayer ..... Fred Strickland
Closing Prayer ..... John McShane
Greeters ..... Josh & Marissa Estridge
Att. Cards ..... Ian Enamorado & Paul Sweeney
Open & Close Building ..... Jim Turner

Wed. May 7, 2014

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

~ HOW WE ARE GIVING ~

Mar. 30 ..... $5,104.25
Apr. 06 ..... $3,897.40
Apr. 17 ..... $4,536.80
Apr. 20 ..... $4,628.00
Contribution Average $4,512.39
2014 Weekly Budget $4,256.38