

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.....9:30 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

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

Am I Good Enough?

An old story is told about three men who meet at the end of a dock on a Florida beach. One was an alcoholic and homeless. The second man was just an average guy. The third man was a fine, honorable man, well respected in the community. Suddenly the alcoholic ran and jumped off the edge of the dock, landing five feet out into the water. The other two men standing on the dock yelled, "What are you trying to do?" The man in the water yelled back, "I'm trying to jump across the Atlantic Ocean!" The second man, the average Joe, said, "Watch me. I can do better than that!" He quickly ran across the dock, jumped and landed 10 feet out into the water, twice as far as the alcoholic. The third man, the outstanding man, laughed and said, "That's nothing. Watch this!" He backs up about 50 feet and made a mad dash across the dock out into the water and landed 20 feet out, twice as far as average Joe, and four times as far as the homeless alcoholic.

If we were to actually see such an attempt, we would think these three men were crazy for attempting to do the impossible – jump across the Atlantic Ocean! However, people trying to earn their own salvation are even more foolish. After sharing the story above, Howell Ferguson provided the following insights: "God can't be approached by man on the basis of man's own moral goodness. Sometimes people are heard to say, "I'm a good person! Won't God accept me and bring me to heaven?" This question shows a woeful lack of understanding of the grave nature of an individual's sin and the absolute holiness of God. If we were so good that we deserved heaven, salvation would be owed as a debt rather than something to be received as a gift of grace (cf. Romans 11:6).

One truth that is made absolutely clear in the Bible is this: 'No, God will not accept me, because I am a good person.' Isaiah wrote, "All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins carry us away" (Isaiah 64:6). A person may look moral when compared with other people, but when compared with Christ, all people fall perilously short. This is why Paul states, "For ALL have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). No matter how moral any person might be, he has fallen short of the perfect mark of God's righteousness. The only way anyone can stand in the presence of a righteous God is to be forgiven and declared righteous by faith in God's work in Christ (Philippians 3:9).

We are only accepted "in the beloved" because we believe and trust in the righteous work that He did (Ephesians 1:6)." To be found "in the beloved" (in Christ), we must place our faith and trust in Him (Acts 16:30-31), turn from our sins in repentance (Acts 17:30-31), confess Jesus before men (Romans 10:9-10) and be baptized (immersed) into Christ for the forgiveness of our sins (Acts 2:38; Galatians 3:27). None of us can be "good enough" to earn our way to heaven. Only through Christ can we enter the heavenly way (see John 14:6). Won't you trust and obey Him today?

--David A. Sargent

Which Road Will We Choose?

Aaron Burch

In Jeremiah 6, God proclaimed the destruction of Jerusalem (1-15). The people of Jeremiah's day had fallen away from God, becoming idolatrous (1:16; 2:9-13; 3:8-10). Despite their wickedness, some hope still remained that they could repent and return to God (3:22; 4:1-4, 14). God implored them to examine their direction, saying, "Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls" (Jeremiah 6:16).

In this verse, God used five commands to show the people their errant path and encourage them to repent and follow His path. God first exhorted the people to stand in the path, to position themselves where they could compare His path with other paths. Six times in chapters 1-6 God depicted their paths: in 2:23, He cited their "way in the valley (i.e., Baal worship); in 2:31-33, the people had taught their evil ways to the wicked; in 2:36 and 3:2, God accused them of vacillating between His path and others; in 3:13, they had "scattered their ways" to serve everyone but God; in 4:18, their paths were bringing punishment.

God next urged them to see or evaluate the path before them. God had warned them not to serve other gods, but the people disregarded His message. They were spiritually blind (5:1) and deaf, closing their ears to His warnings (6:10). Thus, they were also blind to the results of their choices (5:31). However, if they would compare the paths, they could determine the correct one.

They also needed to ask for God's way, which indicates desire and direction. The picture is that of a traveler at a fork in the road who wants to take the best route, so he seeks advice (Clarke 271). The old paths are God's paths, which lead to goodness and God's blessings. For the Israelites, this involved deliverance from their enemies. God had been good to the people in the past (cf. 2:7, 31-32; 5:24), but now they placed their trust in human alliances (i.e., Egypt) rather than in God. Relying on others was a deadly road, not a good path (cf. 2:18, 36-37).

After determining the godly paths, God demanded they walk in them. Walking indicates a lifestyle of following God, but during Jeremiah's day, the people were walking after other gods (cf. 2:23-25). In contrast, by walking in God's path, they would find rest. This final command is the emphasis of God's instruction in this verse; only God's way was blessing and rest. The imperative stresses their personal responsibility to find rest. Their rest depended on their choices and emphasizes the certainty of finding it if they followed God's path.

Like the ancient Israelites, we should compare possible paths, open our eyes and ears to the direction of God's message, consider the end of our course, seek and desire God's way more than any other, abandon all other paths, live as God directs and trust only in God for rest. Are we following our own ways or God's way? May it never be with us like it was for Jeremiah's contemporaries: "We will not walk therein" (Jeremiah 6:16).

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Please keep Jim Turner, JoAnn Hoback, Evelyn Wyatt, Taleah Anderson, Jacqueline Dopwell, Janet Crosby, Elizabeth Tubbs, Dorothy Trice, Debbie Horsley and Margaret Coone in prayer

Relatives: Randy Stevens, (Grace McAnally's son), Wayne Hendrix, Dee Moore, Alyssa Buckner and Harold Rister.

Shut In Members: Virginia Plumlee, Bill Burton, Ann Howard, Dick & Joyce Burbage, Duane Nelson and Sharon Edler.

Others: Jackie Stearsman, Chrissi Fuesner, Jim Egolf, Nancy Griffith, Thelma Alesion and Janet Romberger, (family member of Josh Estridge), who is going through some tests for cancer. Keep all of these in your prayers.

Upcoming Events

May 1st: Fellowship In Service here after evening services. This fellowship will also be used as a going away party for Heather Burns. She will be graduating from Florida Southern and returning home. Please bring finger foods.

May 7th: Ladies Brunch at North Jackson Ave. Church of Christ in Bartow starting at 9:00 a.m. Please see the flyer on the bulletin board for more details.

May 14th: Ladies Day at the Pinellas Park Church of Christ. Starts at 9:30 followed by lunch at 12:30. The flyer is on the bulletin board for more info.

Hither, Thither and Yon

Great to have Pam Share back at worship with us Sunday after visiting with family.

New Phone Number

Bob & Grace McAnally have a new phone number 863-606-5664.

Thank You

Dear Church, Thank you for your enthusiasm, your inspiration and encouragement during my trial of faith. Your belief is shown in your love, with calls, cards and prayers. Your fellowship is wonderful. Please may we never take it for granted.

Thinking of you, Jim & Wanda Turner and family.

Visitors

Tania Portelles-Driggs, Ted & Debra Okolichany, Shannon Glover, George & Ann French, Kyle & Shayna Lee and Kyle II and Roy Calhoun and family.

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

May

Frank Hamby **Table** Fred Strickland
Jim Turner **Assist** Bobby Simpson

Sunday, May 1, 2016

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Frank Hamby
Prayer Tucker Sweeney

10:30 A.M.

Announcements Bobby Sheumaker
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer David Williams
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Tim Croson

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Kyle Williams
Opening Prayer Kyle Bingle
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Greeters The Frenchs
Att. Cards Ian & Quadarius
Closing Prayer Charles Paulin
Open & Close Building Jim Turner

Wed. May 4, 2016

Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer David Anderson
Closing Prayer Kenny French

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

Sunday, May 8, 2016

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Stacey Paulin
Prayer David Anderson

10:30 A.M.

Announcements Bobby Sheumaker
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Jimmy Sweeney
Sermon Bob McAnally
Closing Prayer C.J. Grimes

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Kyle Williams
Opening Prayer Steve Hunley
Sermon Brian Kenyon
Greeters The Williams
Att. Cards Paul and Sebastian
Closing Prayer Jeff Bingle
Open & Close Building Jim Turner

Wed. May 11, 2016

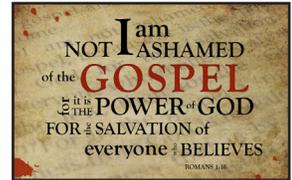
Song Leader Ken Walker
Opening Prayer David Williams
Closing Prayer Paul Romine

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Apr. 03 \$4,771.00
Apr. 10 \$4,550.54
Apr. 17 \$4,180.90
Apr. 24 \$5,569.00
Contribution Average \$5,062.77
2016 Weekly Budget \$4,422.60

Paul's Declaration About the Gospel (PART 3)

After declaring the Gospel as God's power to save, Paul wrote, "For in it [the Gospel] the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, 'The just shall live by faith'" (Romans 1:17). In other words, the Gospel is God's righteousness revealed. Faith is the beginning and end of the righteousness that is revealed in the Gospel. "Righteousness" has various meanings. It is defined in lexicons as what God requires; what is right, righteousness, uprightness, justice; God's putting man in a right relationship with Himself; religious duties or acts of charity (Matthew 6:1). It is a quality or attribute of God or, as is likely the case here, the right standing that God makes possible and gives through the Gospel. The term "from faith to faith" (literally, "out of faith into faith") emphasizes the place of faith in obtaining the righteousness of God—"faith through and through"! The connection between righteousness and faith is quite prominent in Romans (3:20-22, 25, 28; 4:2-3, 13; 5:1). "The just shall live by faith" is a quote from Habakkuk 2:4 (also quoted in Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38). In the context of Habakkuk, the prophet is assured, through a comparison, that Babylon, the archenemy of God's people, will not continue long (Habakkuk 2:4-5). Babylon will die because of arrogance (Habakkuk 2:4a also in 1:7, 11), but "the just shall live by his faith"! Faith implies trust and obedience to God no matter the consequences (Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:20-21; Revelation 2:10). As one commentator said, the Gospel, God's righteousness revealed, comes to us by faith as a condition and is revealed in order to increase in faith (Romans 10:17). Have we obeyed the Gospel, being baptized into Jesus Christ and increasing daily in faith? ❤️ Brian



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Return Service Requested

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

WEEKI WACHEE YOUTH RETREAT APRIL 29 - MAY 1

Make plans now to attend this annual event! Let Brian know if you want to attend. We will arrange the transportation. This will be a great weekend!



SFA Graduates We will put together a bulletin announcing our graduates. Please get a picture to the office ASAP. Thanks!

save the **Date** **VBS** *saturday*
June 18

Fun Day of Devo and Mini-Golf

