

# 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. 70 No. 018 05-02-17

## ELDERS

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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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IN  
**SEARCH**  
OF THE LORD'S WAY

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

## Requirements of a Disciple

Brian R. Kenyon

A disciple may be defined as a student or follower of any person or school of thought. Obviously, some disciples are a good influence while other disciples are a bad influence. Their influence depends on the teacher or the school of thought they follow. Being Christ's disciple involves the greatest discipleship because Christ is the greatest teacher. A person must know and accept the requirements below if he or she is to be a true disciple of Christ.

### A True Disciple Realizes His or Her Position

Jesus said, "A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they call those of his household!" (Mt. 10:24-25). The point that Jesus is making to his disciples as he sends them on the "limited commission" is that they cannot expect to be exempt from what their Master has received. The people that called Jesus a devil will certainly do the same to His followers. The same lesson is ours today. We are not better than the Master (Lk. 6:40). Therefore, if Christ suffered hardship and persecution, so will we. He told the apostles, "If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me" (Jn. 15:20). Despite the persecution, however, happiness results from knowing our position before the Great Teacher (Jn. 13:13-16; 16:33).

### A True Disciple Denies Self

Jesus said, "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple" (Lk. 14:26-27). Jesus addressed a crowd, most of whom thought that following him required little or no change in life. They were more concerned with outward attendance than inward adherence. However, Jesus taught them (and us) something different. We must not let our own family members come before Christ. We must be willing to give up everything and suffer anything for Christ! "Bearing our cross" may involve suffering, persecution, and even choosing between relatives or Christ. However, we must bear that cross, knowing that Christ will help us and reward us a hundred-fold (Mk. 10:28-30).

*(continued on page 2)*

# A True Disciple Continues in the Word of Christ

“Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, ‘If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free’” (Jn. 8:31-32). Jesus taught that there is more involved in discipleship than merely “believing on him.” True discipleship is belief in Christ that motivates us to obey him (cf. Jas. 2:14-26). Since “continue” means to “abide, remain, cleave to,” Jesus teaches that discipleship is an abiding condition, not a one-time act. Although it is necessary to obey God’s plan of salvation, baptism is not the final act of discipleship. We must continue to abide in God’s word by living it, for “we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:10). As a result of continuing in this word, the true disciple is free indeed!

## A True Disciple Loves “One Another”

Jesus told the apostles, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (Jn. 13:34-35). The command to love is not new (Lev. 19:18), but the command to love “as I [Jesus] have loved you” is. As Jesus loved people, He showed us what true love involved (seeking the highest good for others by compassion, helping those in need, following the Father’s will, etc.). In his death, however, Jesus taught the ultimate meaning of love. “For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:6-8). The love that must characterize His disciples is a love that is self-denying, self-sacrificing, and always seeking the good of its object. This “new commandment” to love is thus motivated by Christ’s love (1 Jn. 3:16). Indeed, when we possess the love that Christ exemplified, all people will know that we are his disciples!

## A True Disciple Bears Fruit

Jesus said to His apostles, “By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples” (Jn. 15:8). In order to bear fruit, we must be part of the vine. The vine in this analogy is Christ (Jn. 15:1-7). The fruit that His disciples bear must be “good fruit.” Bearing fruit certainly involves the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23). Additionally, we “bear fruit” by any act of genuine love and kindness done in His name, by teaching and/or converting sinners, and by promoting the Gospel. To be sure, every act that Jesus would do if He were here would be a “fruit bearing” act. However, Jesus is not here in the flesh; therefore, he depends on his disciples. The work that “Jesus began both to do and teach” (Acts 1:1) must be continued and finished by His church! “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven” (Mt. 5:16). Those who continue to “bear fruit” show that they are “tapped” into the Vine.

### Who Is a Christian?

The word “Christian” is only found three times in the Bible, yet each occurrence gives insight into who is a Christian!

#### 1. A Christian is a disciple, a person who follows the teachings of Christ.

“And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called **Christians** in Antioch” (Acts 11:26).

#### 2. A Christian is a person persuaded enough to do what Jesus says.

“Then Agrippa said to Paul, ‘You almost persuade me to become a **Christian**’” (Acts 26:28).

#### 3. A Christian is a person whose goal is to glorify God no matter what.

“Yet if anyone suffers as a **Christian**, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter.” (1 Peter 4:16).

## Conclusion

Jesus did have some “fair weather” followers, who bailed-out when they understood the sacrifice following Him would require (Jn. 6:60-68). Let us not be like them. Are we willing to be true disciples of Christ by realizing our place before the Master, by denying self, by continuing in His word, by loving one another, and by bearing much fruit in the Vine? May we know God’s will and realize both the reactions and the rewards of being a disciple of Jesus. ♥ Brian

# SFA FAMILY MATTERS

## Prayer List

**Our Members:** Ron Ford has been home with a sinus infection and severe headaches. Jim Turner is home and extremely weak and cannot get out. Ginny Hamby will be continuing with treatment. Margaret Norman is having testing done. Avery Grimes fell last Thursday and broke her collar bone, but is doing well.

**Relatives:** Tonya Mathis, Sarah Blevins, Owen Lewis, Bobby Cole, Sandy West and Evie McCormack.

**Shut In Members:** Virginia Plumlee, Dick & Joyce Burbage, Don Starks, Sharon Edler and Duane Nelson.

**Others:** Joyce Stearsman, Chrissi Fuesner, Elizabeth Tubbs, Robin Pack, Sandy Given, Dorothy Noonan and Jack Pinckert.

## Upcoming Events

**Sunday May 7th:** Florida School of Preaching Graduation. There will be a fellowship meal following the evening service. There will be two graduates, please bring enough food for visitors.

**Tuesday May 9th:** Elders/Deacons Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

**Saturday May 20th:** Men's Breakfast at the North Lakeland Church of Christ at 8:00 a.m.

## Sympathy

Ruth Tubbs, grandmother of Elizabeth Tubbs, passed away last Friday. Please keep Elizabeth and her family in your prayers during this difficult time.

## Hither, Thither and Yon

Hiram Kemp will be travelling to Pickwick, Tennessee, to preach in a Gospel Meeting. He will not be with us this coming Sunday and will surely be missed. Keep him in prayer for a successful meeting and safe travels.

## Visitors

Amanda Patterson, Peter Saunders, Floyd & Shirley Loudermilk, Tiffany, Sam and Megan Hash, Jane Jessee, Mary Moore, Buford Willis and Debra Lester.

### - 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 May 07, 2017. 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

### May

Frank Hamby ..... **Table** ..... Fred Strickland  
Chaz Hine ..... **Assist** ..... Bobby Simpson

### Sunday, May 7, 2017 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  
**Closing Prayer** ..... Charles Paulin

**Greeters** ..... The Frenchs  
**Att. Cards** ..... Quadarius and Ian  
**Open & Close Building** ..... Jim Turner

### Wed. May 10, 2017

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

*Please meet in the library. If you cannot serve, please call Chuck Wyatt so he can get a replacement - (863) 602-9005*

### Sunday, May 14, 2017 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** ..... Hiram Kemp  
**Closing Prayer** ..... C.J. Grimes

### 6:00 P.M.

**Song Leader** ..... Kyle Williams  
**Opening Prayer** ..... Steve Hunley  
**Sermon** ..... Hiram Kemp  
**Closing Prayer** ..... Tucker Sweeney

**Greeters** ..... The Williams  
**Att. Cards** ..... Paul and Sebastian  
**Open & Close Building** ..... David Anderson

### Wed. May 17, 2017

**Song Leader** ..... Steve Hunley  
**Opening Prayer** ..... Phil Fife  
**Closing Prayer** ..... Ken Walker

### ~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

**Apr. 09** ..... \$5,764.00  
**Apr. 16** ..... \$5,435.00  
**Apr. 23** ..... \$5,273.51  
**Apr. 30** ..... \$5,226.35  
**Contribution Average** ..... \$5,420.08  
**2016 Weekly Budget** ..... \$4,716.51

# "I Thought They Were Lollipops!"

In preparation for my first mission trip to Ghana, Africa, I had to go to the health clinic to be vaccinated against yellow fever and other tropical, sub-Sahara diseases. At the reception desk, I noticed a box on the counter with a sign that said "Free." In the box were small, brightly colored, flat, square packages with something circular inside. I immediately thought, "How nice. Free lollipops." When I grabbed what I thought was going to be a sweet tasting snack, I discovered that they were condoms! I do not know what surprised me the most: the fact that they were so attractively (and deceptively) packaged or that they were absolutely free for anybody who walked to the counter, male or female, young or old! As I recovered from the initial shock, I thought how ironic: sin is similarly packaged. Sin is made to look so attractive (Gen. 3:6); it seems so innocent (2 Pet. 2:19); it even offers "pleasures ... for a season" (Heb. 11:25, KJV). Sin is also just as available as those (what I thought were) lollipops. The devil, like a roaring lion (1 Pet. 5:8), will do everything he can to



lead us away from God. Sin often looks so attractive, but let us not be deceived nor drawn away by Satan's schemes (cf. Eph. 6:10-12; 2 Cor. 11:3; Jas. 1:13-15). Do not "give place to the devil" (Eph. 4:27), but resist him (Jas. 4:7)! ❤️ *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 . . .



Continue praying for our YES II campaign to Penonome, Panama, July 1-9, 2017. Our young people and their chaperones will be involved with personal evangelism!

Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. (Mark 16:15-16)



## GHANA MISSION TRIP

**BRIAN** and **HIRAM** will be on an evangelistic mission trip to Ghana, Africa, with Bob Bauer and team May 29 - June 12. Pray for their safety.



If you or someone from your immediate family is graduating this year, please get a picture to the office along with the name of the school and degree (if applicable). We will have a special bulletin!



**Saturday Morning Fun! Thanks Rene' for hosting this event!**