

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

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.

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WHAT WOULD IT TAKE?

Steve Higginbotham

When I was in Israel, I quickly realized how many cultural changes there are between our countries. In Israel, when one goes to the marketplace, he is expected to bargain for his purchase. You never pay for an item without first bargaining. I was terrible at that, and the merchants had to love to see me coming. Yet, most people like to think of themselves as good bargainers. Many take great pride in running across a good deal, saving a few dollars and coming out on top in a transaction. Whether it's yard sales, the purchase of an automobile or the purchase of a house, we like to be able to say, "I made a good deal."

That almost universal desire to "make a good deal" has caused me to think. I began to wonder if people are as shrewd as they think they are. Consider the following proposition. What would it take for you to exchange your good health? If someone had the ability to give you anything in the world in exchange for your good health, what would it take? Would you exchange your health for a new car? A home? 100 million dollars? How about fame and universal recognition? The list of offers could go on all day, and yet, I dare say that no one would accept this offer. Why? Because it would be a foolish trade? What good would it do us if we should gain the whole world and lose our health?

I guess you can see where I'm going now, can't you. As careful as people are about making good deals and finding good bargains, they are often so careless with their most important possession, their souls. What would it take to sell your soul? Here's what I find amazing about this proposition. You don't have to start out offering the world, because people will sell out for much less than that. People will sell their souls for the contents of a bottle, a grudge, gossip, hatred, sexual relations, a lie and the list goes on.

So you see, I'm not so sure that people are as shrewd as they think they are. When we place more value on our physical health than our eternal well-being, we've made a poor decision. When we wouldn't trade our physical health for the whole world, yet would trade our spiritual health for the smallest of matters, we're not the good bargainers we thought we were.

Friends, the Devil has made and continues to make a proposition to you every day. His proposition is for the sale of your soul. Will you sell out? Seriously, give it some thought; what would it take for you to sell out? "What shall a man profit if he should gain the whole world and lose his own soul; or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matthew 16:26)

WAS SIMON THE SORCERER SINCERE?

Raymond Elliott

The reason why the conversion of Simon is questioned is due to his actions following his baptism. Previously he had deceived the people of Samaria by his practice of sorcery. He was esteemed highly by his followers. They said: *“This man is the great power of God”* (v. 10). However, the people could distinguish between the genuine miracles of Philip and the so-called magic of Simon (vs. 6-7, 12). In fact, Simon was greatly impressed with the miracles done by Philip (v. 13). When the apostles Peter and John came from Jerusalem and prayed for the new disciples, laying their hands upon them in order for these Christians to receive the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, Simon sought to purchase this power *“...that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit”* (vs. 14-19). Of course, he sinned as is pointed out by the apostle Peter. Simon stood in a condemned condition (vs. 20-21). This action by Simon the Sorcerer is the basis of much disagreement as to his sincerity in responding to the preaching of Philip.

The advocates of the Calvinistic doctrine of the perseverance of the saints (once saved always saved) insist that Simon was insincere at the time he was baptized. The reason being, a true Christian, they claim, would not and could not have committed such a sin. The religionists who propose a second blessing of grace would declare that a true convert to Christ is given power to live above sin. Thus, there is the apparent need to say that Simon was not sincere in his response to the Gospel of Christ as preached by Philip.

Please study very carefully the following observations in order to help us reach the right conclusion regarding the sincerity or insincerity of Simon when he was baptized.

First of all, if we believe and understand that all the Samaritans who believed and were baptized were saved, should we not by the same reasoning accept the conversion of Simon who believed and was baptized (vs. 12-13)? Are we ready to assert that the Lord saved the Samaritans but not Simon, even though they all responded in the exact manner to the preaching of Philip?

Second, if Simon had been hypocritical, surely Philip, Peter or even Luke the inspired historian and author of the Book of Acts would have made mention of this fact. However, there is no indication whatsoever that any of these men of God doubted his obedience to the Gospel of Christ. When Peter said, *“You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God”* (v. 21), he had reference to Simon’s transgression in offering money to the apostles so that he might possess their power to impart the Holy Spirit to others.

Third, notice closely what the apostle Peter instructed Simon to do in order to obtain forgiveness of God for his sin: *“Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you”* (v. 22). That statement is very significant. The reason being, if Peter had perceived that Simon had not been truly converted, he would not have told him to repent and pray for the forgiveness of his sins. Rather, he would have required Simon to truly be penitent of his sins and be scripturally baptized this time. But, he didn’t instruct him in this manner. He instructed him to repent and pray to God for forgiveness of his sins. An inspired man like the apostle Peter never commanded an alien sinner to repent and pray for the remission of sins. Likewise, an erring Christian was never required to be baptized. This should be sufficient proof that Simon was a fallen Christian and not an insincere sinner who needed to obey the Gospel in order to be saved.

Fourth, can we not discern that the Holy Spirit has given to us this example of Simon as being a case of a Christian sinning after being saved by the Gospel of Christ? There are numerous warnings in the New Testament for the Christian to *“take heed lest he fall”* (1 Corinthians 10:12). Satan simply tempted Simon in his weakness, that is, of possessing the desire to have the preeminence and prominence among his fellowman. The fallen disciple understands that he can be forgiven of his sins by the blood of Jesus Christ when he repents and prays to God. The apostle John informs Christians to confess their sins to God and he will *“cleanse us from all unrighteousness”* (1 John 1:7-10). We see in the command given by Peter to Simon to repent and pray as being God’s second law of pardon for the erring Christian and not the insincerity of an imposter posing as a saint.

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Ann Howard has been released from L.R.M.C. and is back at Savannah Court. Keep Ron & Judy Ford, Margaret Coone, Jacquelin Dopwell, Gerry Lawrence, Janie Wise, Margaret Norman and Sharon Washington in prayer.

Relatives: Stacy Lester, daughter of Jim & Wanda Turner is in critical but stable condition at Tampa General. Wayne Hendrix, Alice Watson, Craig Mills, and Jeffrey Moore.

Shut In Members: Ann Howard, Virginia Plumlee, Bill Burton, Dick & Joyce Burbage.

Others: Keep in prayer Sybil Carr who is still under Hospice care, Ashley Finn and family, Chrissi Fuesner and Cherie Campbell (friend of Sharon Egolf).

Upcoming Events

June 7th: Monthly "Fellowship In Service" will meet after evening services. We will be honoring our graduates by bringing their favorite foods. The sign up sheet is on the back bulletin board.

June 21st-25th: V.B.S.!!! Please mark your calendars. Plan to attend and bring a friend!!

Congratulations

Colby Dix, Hannah and June Hendrix recited all of the books of the Bible and passed the test on the baptism of Jesus. We are so proud of our little ones.

Picture Board

We are taking new (current) pictures to go on the refurbished picture board in the foyer. Please see Dottie Fife to have your picture taken.

Updating our Mailing List

If you are not a member here and would like to continue to receive our bulletin in the mail, please contact the office by phone or e-mail by June 16th.

Visitors

Beverly Jakelsky and Mr. Robert Marshall & Magnus.

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

June

John McShane..... **Table** Charles Paulin
Robert Cooper **Assist** C.J. Grimes

Sunday, May 31, 2015

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class David Williams
Prayer Josh Estridge

10:30 A.M.

Announcements Bobby Sheumaker
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Ken Walker
Closing Prayer Kyle Williams

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Paul Romine
Opening Prayer Tucker Sweeney
Closing Prayer Chuck Wyatt
Greeters The Grimes
Att. Cards Quadarius & Antonio
Open & Close Building Jim Turner

Wed. June 3, 2015

Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Phil Fife
Closing Prayer Kyle Bingle

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

Sunday, June 7, 2015

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Ken Walker
Prayer Jim Turner

10:30 A.M.

Announcements Kenny French
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Tucker Sweeney
Closing Prayer Tim Croson

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Jim Turner
Opening Prayer Jeff Bingle
Closing Prayer Paul Romine
Greeters The Estridges
Att. Cards Paul & Ian
Open & Close Building Tim Croson

Wed. June 10, 2015

Song Leader Ken Walker
Opening Prayer David Williams
Closing Prayer David Anderson

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

May 3	\$5,259.10
May 10	\$4,630.00
May 17	\$4,222.72
May 24	\$4,264.50
Contribution Average	\$4,655.62
2015 Weekly Budget	\$4,302.98

HEAR OUR RADIO SPOTS

Message this Week

"Thomas Edison"

WONN 1230 or WLKF 1430 or on web page
www.southfloridaavenuechurchofchrist.com



THE IMPORTANCE OF LIVING HOW GOD WANTS

In his First Inaugural Address (1789), President George Washington said, "The propitious [favorable] smiles of Heaven can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right, which Heaven itself has ordained." This country's first President recognized the connection between living in accordance with God's revealed word and receiving God's blessings. Even more significant are Solomon's words, "Righteousness exalts a nation, But sin is a reproach to any people" (Proverbs 14:34). History teaches us that nations rise and fall. God-inspired history tells us why! When a nation's people become too wicked by God's measure, that nation will fall. A prime example is Sodom (Genesis 19). God turned "the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly" (2 Peter 2:6; Jude 7). The future well-being of the United States of America is in the hands of God's people, even those in our youth group. We need to get serious about living how God wants, rather than what the world demands



(Romans 12:2). In order for us to live how God wants, we must know God's will, which means we must study our Bibles and regularly attend church services. Unfortunately, unlike this country's founding fathers, our government today, including many public school policy makers, have little regard for God, yet He still says, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD" (Psalm 33:12). Are we contributing to our nation's exaltation? ❤️ Brian



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

YOUTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

FRIDAY-SATURDAY, JUNE 5-6 A **girls only** "lock-in" will be held at the church building. Be prepared to learn God's word, sing spiritual songs, and have lots of fun and fellowship in the process! Hope all **girls** can participate.

SUNDAYS, JUNE 7 and 14 "Second Language study with Lads to Leaders will meet at 5:00 p.m. All are invited to participate, especially those going to Costa Rica!

SATURDAY, JUNE 20 will be our regular monthly youth devotional and activity. The activity will involve a service project to help with our VBS, Stay tuned for more details.

VBS

June 21-25 **CLASSES 4**
ALL AGES!

Pray for Costa Rica

On July 10, our youth group and adult mentors will depart Orlando for a Costa Rica missionary campaign. The group will join other church



of Christ members and seek to bring lost souls to Jesus. We will do personal Bible studies with a Gospel meeting each evening. **THANKS**



June 26-July 4 is Bible Camp week!
Be sure to make plans now to join us!

ADULT CLASS TEACHER: Kevin Patterson (Sebring Parkway)
TEENAGE CLASS TEACHER: Hiram Kemp (FSOP student)