

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. 71 No. 21 06-05-18

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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
since 1969

MISSION FIELDS

Dub Hill.....Russia
Don Iverson.....India
Marc Veary.....Malawi, Africa
Graham McDonald..Scotland
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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

What We Need to Succeed

Brian R. Kenyon

Being successful in anything constructive does not just accidentally happen. Not only does being successful in a business or profession take hard work and sacrifice, it also involves other things falling into place, without which success would be impossible. Being successful in the Lord is no different. Not only does it take deliberate effort and sacrifice, it also involves the right things falling into place. Fortunately for the Christian, those necessary things “falling into place” are provided by the Lord. Let us consider three things that are needed in order to succeed in the sight of the Lord.

The Lord's Word

The success of the Christian begins first with the word of God. Without God's word, no one would ever know how to please Him. Thus, Paul requests, “Finally, brethren, pray for us” (2 Thes. 3:1a). Paul was not afraid to ask the prayers of the church (Eph. 6:18-20; Col. 4:3; 1 Thes. 5:25). Here, the apostle requests that they pray for two things, each of which has to do with the word of God.

First, Paul wants prayers so that “the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified, just as it is with you” (2 Thes. 3:1b). The word translated “run swiftly [have free course, KJV; spread rapidly, ESV]” literally means to run, but when used metaphorically, as here, it means to “make rapid strides” (the same word is translated “run” in 1 Cor. 9:24-26). The word of God being able to “run swiftly” will result in many people pleasing God (cf. Rom. 10:17). The devil knows this. Thus, he wants to snatch the word from our hearts (Lk. 8:12).

Second, Paul wants prayers so that “we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for not all have faith” (2 Thes. 3:2). The “unreasonable [perverse, NAS]” are those who are hurtful and antagonistic to the Lord and His cause. These are those who will spare no expense in doing all they can to eliminate the truth and those who labor in it (cf. 1 Thes. 2:14-16). These types of people were present in the days of Jesus, being so opposed to God's will that they even attributed the power of the Holy Spirit to “Beelzebub” (Mt. 12:22-37). These types of people are also present today. Christians must realize that everyone will not accept the Gospel!

Where the word of God goes unhindered, it will often result in people glorifying the Lord. In order for us to be successful, we must allow God's word to run swiftly and have free reign within us, controlling our entire being!

(continued on page 2)

The Lord's Faithfulness

The success of the Christian also involves the Lord's faithfulness, which strengthens and protects. To contrast those who do not have faith (2 Thes. 3:2b), Paul wrote, "But the Lord is faithful" (2 Thes. 3:3a). The Lord is the one on whom Christians can rely. "Faithful" carries the idea of trustworthy, reliable, and sure. God is perfect in His trustworthiness; He is completely reliable (1 Cor. 1:9; 10:13; Rev. 3:14). His "faithfulness" means that He "will establish you and guard you from the evil one" (2 Thes. 3:3b). "Establish [strengthen, NAS]" means to make firm (Rom. 1:11; 1 Thes. 3:2; 2 Thes. 2:17). His faithfulness also protects us from "the evil one" (cf. Mt. 6:13; Jn. 17:15). Paul wrote elsewhere, concerning God's ability to keep us from evil, "No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. 10:13). Note that His deliverance from evil requires our cooperation.

As a result of the Lord's faithfulness, Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, "And we have confidence in the Lord concerning you, both that you do and will do the things we command you" (2 Thes. 3:4). As long as we allow the word of God to "run swiftly" and "be glorified" in our lives (2 Thes. 3:1), we will continue to obey it and thus be successful in the sight of the Lord!

The Lord's Direction

Finally, the success of the Christian in this context depends upon the Lord's direction, which readies us for eternity. Paul concluded this section with a brief prayer, "Now may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patience of Christ" (2 Thes. 3:5). The word translated "direct" first means to "make straight," and then guide (Lk. 1:79), which may even include the removing of obstacles in the path (cf. 1 Thes. 3:11). The requests for which Paul asked the Lord's direction concerned love and perseverance. Since the "love of God" in Paul's writings usually refers to God's love for humanity (cf. Rom. 5:5; 8:39; 2 Cor. 13:14; Tit. 3:4), the request here was that the Thessalonians would be guided to appreciate more and more the sacrificial love Christ showed, which would in turn help them to patiently endure. The translation "patience [patient waiting, KJV]" is actually from a Greek word that means patient endurance, steadfastness, perseverance. This depicts a quality that is necessary to succeed into eternal life (Rom. 2:7; Jas. 1:3-4). No person is more successful than the one who spends eternity with the Lord!

Conclusion

We have everything we need to succeed in the Lord. Yes, success requires our deliberate effort and sacrifice, but there is more to it than that. We must have those blessings that come from the Lord. His word brings success wherever it is allowed to go and be received. The Lord's faithfulness strengthens and protects us. The Lord's direction readies us for eternity. God continues to supply His part. Are we doing our part? May the Lord help us to continually accept His word, trust His faithfulness, and allow His direction in our lives.

Real Success Is More Valuable Than Life Itself

Jesus said, "For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mt. 16:25-26). The word "profit" means to help, aid, benefit, be of use to. Thus, Jesus was essentially asking, "What good will it do?" Although a person gains as much as can be imagined (i.e., the wealth and resources of the "whole world"), it pales in comparison to the value of his or her soul. Because mankind was created in the image and likeness of God and will live forever, the human soul is the most valuable thing God created! While material wealth can be used for good in this life, it will not make a bit of difference on Judgment Day (cf. Mt. 7:21-23; 25:31-46). In fact, its allure will probably keep more people out of heaven than assist them in finding God's righteousness (cf. 1 Tim. 6:9-10). Let us put more value on knowing and living the "unsearchable riches of Christ" so that it consumes our desires and efforts! If we lose our soul, we lose everything! ♥ Brian

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Heidi Bingle was home sick. Carol Eason will soon move from Lakeland Rehab to a permanent residence. Also remember Faith West, Ginny Hamby, Jim Turner, Brenda Mask, Evelyn Wyatt, Margaret Coone, and Bert and Gloria Allen (seasonal members).

Shut In Members: Carol Eason, Virginia Plumlee, Dick & Joyce Burbage, Don Starks, and Sharon Edler.

Others: Lynn Stevens, Jack Pinckert, Chrissi Fuesner, Bob McAnally, Doris Smith, Joyce Stearsman, Paul Shearer, James & Ellen Shearer, JoAnn (Ginny Hamby's mother), Ruth Brunson, (Wesley Brunson's mother), Chip Bolding (bettie bolding's son) who has an aggressive form of bladder cancer, Triase Deblis (friend of Flo Duffy), Ray Parker and Warren Lane (friends of the Kirklands).

Upcoming Events

Sunday June 10th: Elders/Deacons meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Friday June 15th: Wedding Shower for Heidi Bingle and Ty Rhymes at 6:30 p.m. Please bring a side dish to go with Barbeque. They are registered at Target. If you would like to contribute to the money tree see Kelcey Grimes.

Saturday June 16th: Men's Breakfast at Central church of Christ in Haines City

Tuesday June 19th: Senior Saints Meeting at 9:30 a.m.

Tuesday June 21-23rd: WWCC K-5 Camp for ages 5 thru 5th grade.

Tuesday June 26th: Trip to Bok Tower. Meet at the building at 8:30 a.m. The cost is \$14.00 per person. All are invited! Sign up sheet on the bulletin board.

Visitors

Dan & Kelli Huther, Victor and Alexis Travis, Frederick & Brandi Bown, Woody Khoury, Rick & Stephanie Kenyon, Klark & Karissa, Modline Valnor, George & Marion Beals.



Tune into AM 1330 (station WWAB) with your friends and neighbors every Monday from 5:00-5:30 p.m. for the "Way of Truth" program. Let's influence Lakeland!

Watch . . .



In Search of the Lord's Way

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

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

June

Bobby Sheumaker **Table** C.J. Grimes
Wayne Shearer **Assist** Alex Parramore

Sunday, June 10, 2018
9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class..... Ken Walker
Prayer..... David Anderson

10:30 A.M.

Announcements Frank Hamby
Song Leader..... Vince Daugherty
Opening Prayer..... Jim Sweeney
Sermon.....Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer..... Paul Romine
Sound Booth.....Tucker Sweeney

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader..... David Williams
Opening Prayer..... John McShane
Sermon.....Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer..... Tim Croson
Sound Booth.....Tucker Sweeney
Greeters.....Debra/Melissa
Att. Cards.....Paul/Ian
Open & Close BuildingTim Croson

Wednesday, June 13, 2018

Song Leader..... Steve Hunley
Opening Prayer..... John McShane
Closing Prayer..... David Anderson

Please meet in the library. If you cannot serve, please call Stacey Paulin so he can get a replacement - (863) 838-8911

Sunday, June 17, 2018
9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class..... Frank Hamby
Prayer..... Tucker Sweeney

10:30 A.M.

Announcements Frank Hamby
Song Leader..... Vince Daugherty
Opening Prayer..... Kenny French
Sermon.....Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer..... Paul Romine
Sound Booth..... Paul Sweeney

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader..... David Williams
Opening Prayer..... Steve Hunley
Sermon.....Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer..... Ken Walker
Sound Booth..... Paul Sweeney
GreetersBingle
Att. Cards..... Willcut
Open & Close Building Tim Croson

Wednesday, June 20, 2018

Song Leader..... Kyle Bingle
Opening Prayer..... Kenny French
Closing Prayer..... Paul Romine

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

May 13.....	\$6,681.74
May 20.....	\$4,828.36
May 27.....	\$5,695.27
June 03.....	\$7,242.55
Contribution Average	\$5,867.25
2018 Weekly Budget	\$4,887.98

DOES ALL "LOVE" WIN?

"Love wins" became a major slogan of the LGBT (plus whatever other letters they want to add) Movement following the June 26, 2015, decision of the Supreme Court of the United States to legalize same-sex marriages. Proponents of homosexuality all over the world celebrated the decision. The White House, Cinderella's Castle, and other noted landmarks were lit that night in rainbow colors. Since that time, the homosexual agenda has continued its attempt to convince the public that homosexual practice is good behavior. However, this relevant question must be considered: Does all "love" really win? John, sometimes known as "the apostle of love," wrote, "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the



lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever" (1 Jn. 2:15-17). Of course, it would depend on how someone defines "win," but if winning is equated with an eternal home in the presence of God, then, clearly, John has just described a "love" that loses miserably! Does the practice of homosexuality fall within the "love of the world"? To answer, consider that "the world," as the God-inspired John defines it, consists of "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." No one can rationally deny that homosexual practice is a "lust of the flesh" as other sexual *(continued below)*



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 mission team's success and safety in Boquete, Panama. They are engaged in handing out tracts, inviting people to a Gospel meeting, and conducting Bible studies. Pray also for "good ground" (Mt. 13:23).

Congratulations to our elementary school Bible class! They are repeat champions of the end-of-the-quarter "knowledge bowl."



Think souls! Let's Invite our friends and neighbors to church assemblies and/or to one-on-one Bible studies!

(continued from above) sins (cf. Gal. 5:19; Col. 3:5), a "lust of the eyes" as that which leads to adultery (cf. Mt. 5:27-28), and a "pride of life" issue. In fact, proponents of homosexuality are known to take "pride" in designated weeks, months, and parades! These lusts and this kind of pride of the "world" is not from God nor endorsed by Him. Therefore, those who live in the sin of homosexual practice, like other sins, cannot be with God eternally unless they repent (cf. 1 Cor. 6:9-11)! Let us learn the lesson from "Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 7). The good news is that Jesus can save even the vilest of sinners, like Saul of Tarsus (1 Tim. 1:12-16). Let us, as God's people, reach out in love with the Gospel to sinners of every sort! ❤️ *Brian*