

# A LESSON FROM NATURE AND ANTLERS

*Bruce Howell*

SOME TIME AGO National Geographic ran an article about the Alaskan bull moose. The males of the species battle for dominance during the fall breeding season, literally going head-to-head with antlers crunching together as they collide. Often the antlers, their only weapon are broken. That ensures defeat. The heftiest moose, with the largest and strongest antlers, triumphs.

Therefore, the battle fought in the fall is really won during the summer, when the moose eat continually. The one that consumes the best diet for growing antlers and gaining weight will be the heavyweight in the fight. Those that eat inadequately sport weaker antlers and less bulk.

THOUGHT: Spiritual battles await us. Satan will choose a season to attack. Will we be victorious, or will we fall? Much depends on what we do now--before the wars begin. Remember the bull-moose principle: enduring faith, strength, and wisdom for trials are best developed before they're needed.



*South Florida Avenue*  
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The End of Your Search for a Friendly Church . . .

## A SPOKEN WORD

*Ron Thomas*

Proverbs 10:19 says, "In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, but he who restrains his lips is wise." Many years ago I learned that the value of a word fitly spoken penetrates powerfully. Though I learned this I did not always do what I learned. While I was in the USAF, stationed in Guam, I heard a brother in the Lord answer someone's question about why he spoke so little. He responded, "I'm tired of eating my foot." Those few words said more to me than all the philosophy classes I took in college.

What is your impression of a person who seems to always be talking? My impression, sometimes, is that the person doing all or nearly all the talking doesn't have much to say, but it is going to be said anyway. The context, of course, of the circumstances (and words) will determine how this is to be interpreted.

The proverb writer does not speak anything profoundly spiritual. He simply utters a truth that any mature adult can understand. I wish, though, that many adults would transfer this understanding of theirs into actions. Someone has said that if you give a man enough rope he will hang himself. I think I'll carry a short rope.

# The South Florida Avenue MESSENGER

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

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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  
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Randy Judd.....Malawi, Africa  
Graham McDonald.....Scotland  
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Joey Treat.....Pacific Islands  
Ted Wheeler.....Ghana, W.A.

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[www.southfloridaavenuechurchofchrist.com](http://www.southfloridaavenuechurchofchrist.com)  
[www.sfacc.net](http://www.sfacc.net)

## I Said Nothing

*Wade Webster*

Robert Benchley once remarked, "Drawing on my fine command of language, I said nothing." No matter how great your vocabulary may be, sometimes, the right thing to say is nothing.

**First, if you cannot speak with purity**, the best thing that you can say, no matter how large your vocabulary may be, is nothing. We read, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers" (Ephesians 4:29).

**Second, if you cannot speak with sweetness**, the best thing that you can say, no matter how rich your vocabulary may be, is nothing. We read, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Ephesians 4:31-32).

**Third, if you cannot speak with grace**, the best thing that you can say, no matter how extensive your vocabulary may be, is nothing. Paul wrote, "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man" (Colossians 4:6).

**Fourth, if you cannot speak with self-control**, the best thing that you can say, no matter how full your vocabulary may be, is nothing. We read, "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth" (Colossians 3:8).

**Fifth, if you cannot speak with truthfulness**, the best thing that you can say, no matter how huge your vocabulary may be, is nothing. We read, "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds" (Colossians 3:9).

**Sixth, if you cannot speak with love**, the best thing to say, no matter how big your vocabulary may be, is nothing. Paul wrote, "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ" (Ephesians 4:15).

Obviously, I could go on and on. However, I believe that you get my point. Let's make sure that what we say is what needs to be said. If it doesn't need to be said, the best thing that we can do is to say nothing.

# Count Your Blessings

*David A. Sargent*

**A**n American preacher told of being on a mission trip to the island of Tobago where, in a worship service, a woman requested the song, “Count Your Blessings.” She did so by raising a hand without fingers and speaking from a face with neither nose nor ears. She was a member of the leper colony where the service was being held. Erma Bombeck wrote in the October 1992 edition of *Redbook*: “An estimated 1.5 million people are living today after bouts with breast cancer. Every time I forget to feel grateful to be among them, I hear the voice of an eight-year-old named Christina, who had cancer of the nervous system. When asked what she wanted for her birthday, she thought long and hard and finally said, ‘I don’t know. I have two sticker books and a Cabbage Patch doll. I have everything!’ The kid is right.”

Have you counted your blessings recently? Are you thankful? In the United States, we have an annual holiday – Thanksgiving. Yet, thanksgiving should be something we do every day.

The Amplified Bible [more nearly a commentary than a Bible translation, Editor] gives this reading of 1 Thessalonians 5:18. “Thank [God] in everything [no matter what the circumstances may be, be thankful and give thanks], for this is the will of God for you [who are] in Christ Jesus [the Revealer and Mediator of that will].” Did you catch that? “No matter what the circumstances may be, be thankful and give thanks.” It can be difficult to follow this instruction, especially if our circumstances are challenging.

However, if a woman with no fingers can sing “Count Your Blessings,” can’t we find the blessings in our own lives? If a little girl suffering with cancer can find joy in two sticker books and a doll, can’t we rejoice in the blessings that we have? “In Christ Jesus” there are countless reasons to be thankful, even in the midst of the most difficult of circumstances.

The most difficult and deadly “circumstance” is to be lost because of our sins (Matthew 7:13-14; Romans 6:23). God, though, loves us so much that He gave His Son Jesus to die on the cross for our sins (John 3:16; 1 Peter 2:24). Those who accept His offer of salvation through trusting obedience are placed “in Christ” where all spiritual blessings are enjoyed (Ephesians 1:3) – blessings like the forgiveness of sins, the hope of eternal life, peace that surpasses understanding and being a part of God’s family.

One accepts God’s offer of salvation and is placed “in Christ” when he places his faith and trust in Jesus (Acts 16:30-31), turns from his sin in repentance (Acts 17:30-31), confesses Jesus before men (Romans 10:9-10) and is baptized (immersed) into Christ for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38; Galatians 3:27). No matter how difficult your current circumstances may be, you can have every reason to be thankful if you accept God’s offer of salvation and life on His terms. Won’t you?

# SFA FAMILY MATTERS

## Prayer List

**Our Members:** Gene Patterson is doing well after triple bypass surgery. Josephine Bowman was scheduled for eye surgery July 1st. Dick Burbage's surgery is re-scheduled for July 18th. Also: Sam Bolding, Joyce Burbage, Jacquelin Dopwell, Margaret Coone & Sharon Washington.

**Relatives:** Earl Anderson, Annie Beth Coone. Trina Bates, at the passing of her mother-in-law. Cindy Kirkland & children at the passing of Paul Kirkland. Also, all of the Kirkland family.

**Shut In Members:** Artis Bassett, Mary Shoemake.

**Others:** Barbara Farmer's husband, Robert is in very critical condition at Mayo clinic. Thelma Stellers, friend of Genifer Johnson had a stroke. Teresa Moore, upcoming surgery. Curtis Presscott in the passing of his mother, Sylvia. Gene & Irma Dampier, Bonnie Hendrick, Christina Feussner, Kathy Peel, Danny Edmonds, James Leslie Cribbs, Cody Drye, Eddie McClay.

## Upcoming Events

**July 7th - 11th** - Gospel meeting at 6th Street Church of Christ. Sammy Jones will be the speaker.

**July 20th** - Men's Breakfast at Eagle Lake at 8:00 am.

**Aug 5th-9th** - Vacation Bible School at Kissimmee Church of Christ. See bulletin board for information.

## Visitors

Katie Hartsfield, Fran Hinson, Brittany Price & Tristan, David & Angie Simons.

## Men to Serve Schedule

If you are scheduled to serve, but unable to do so, please call Jason Hendrix at 537-0857 so he can get a replacement.

## Hither, Thither and Yon

A number of our young people and adults are at camp this week. Others who will be traveling are: Kenny & Reba French, The Anderson, Bingle, Hendrix, and Williams families, Becky Sheumaker and Pam Share. Please keep them, and others who may be traveling in your prayers.

## SCHEDULED TO SERVE

### July

David Anderson ..... **Table** ..... Jimmy Sweeney  
Phil Fife ..... **Assist** ..... Josh Estridge

### Sunday, July 7, 2013 9:30 A.M.

**Song at Bible Class** ..... David Williams  
**Prayer** ..... Jim Turner

### 10:30 A.M.

**Announcements** ..... Frank Hamby  
**Song Leader** ..... Jason Hendrix  
**Opening Prayer** ..... Fred Strickland  
**Closing Prayer** ..... Tim Croson

### 6:00 P.M.

**Song Leader** ..... Kyle Williams  
**Opening Prayer** ..... Jeremy Padilla  
**Closing Prayer** ..... Jeff Bingle  
**Greeters** ..... Frank & Ginny Hamby  
**Att. Cards** ..... Tucker & Paul Sweeney  
**Open & Close Building** ..... Kenny French

### Wed. July 10, 2013

**Song Leader** ..... David Williams  
**Opening Prayer** ..... Charles Paulin  
**Closing Prayer** ..... Kenny French

*Please meet in the library. If you cannot serve, please call Jason Hendrix, so he can get a replacement - 537-0857*

### July 14,, 2013 9:30 A.M.

**Song at Bible Class** ..... Kyle Williams  
**Prayer** ..... Fred Strickland

### 10:30 A.M.

**Announcements** ..... Frank Hamby  
**Song Leader** ..... Jason Hendrix  
**Opening Prayer** ..... David Williams  
**Closing Prayer** ..... David Deal

### 6:00 P.M.

**Song Leader** ..... Kyle Williams  
**Opening Prayer** ..... Steve Hunley  
**Closing Prayer** ..... Kyle Bingle  
**Greeters** ..... The Williams Family  
**Att. Cards** ..... Ian Enamorado & Sebastian Rapley  
**Open & Close Building** ..... Kenny French

### Wed. July 17, 2013

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

## ~ HOW WE ARE GIVING ~

Jun 09..... \$4,406.64  
Jun 16..... \$3,768.14  
Jun 23..... \$4,019.34  
Jun 30..... \$6,799.58  
**Contribution Average** ..... \$4,255.94  
**2013 Weekly Budget** ..... \$4,255.13

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