

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. 26 07-18-17

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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

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IN
SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY

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

Common Misconceptions About the Preacher

By Brian R. Kenyon

New Testament writers predicted that some would depart from the faith (1 Tim. 4:1-3). One needs only to look at the contemporary religious world to know that these predictions stand true. Thus, everyone must examine his or her life and beliefs to be sure that they are in harmony with God's word (2 Cor. 13:5). As one considers the Scriptural role of a preacher, it is easy to form non-biblical views based upon denominational errors, the portrayal of "preachers" in Hollywood, and/or the expectations of an unlearned and selfish society. The Bible, however, gives distinct roles for Gospel preachers (see First and Second Timothy and Titus). Any conception of the role of a preacher that does not harmonize with the Bible is a misconception. Some of the more common misconceptions that this writer has observed are examined below.

The Preacher Is Not The "Pastor"

One common misconception about the preacher is that he is "the Pastor." This largely comes from the erroneous doctrines of many denominational churches. The term "pastor" (translated from the Greek word *poimen*) is in the Bible (Eph. 4:11), but it is often misapplied. This Greek word occurs eighteen times in the Greek text from which the KJV is translated (Mt. 9:36; 25:32; 26:31; Mk. 6:34; 14:27; Lk. 2:8, 15, 18, 20; Jn. 10:2, 11 [twice], 12, 14, 16; Eph. 4:11; Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 2:25). The word is usually translated "shepherd," and it *never* refers to the role of a preacher. In Ephesians 4:11 (the only place "pastors" is found), preachers are the "evangelists" and elders are the "pastors."

The verb form *poimaino* occurs eleven times (Mt. 2:6; Lk. 17:7; Jn. 21:16; Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 9:7; 1 Pet. 5:2; Jude 12; Rev. 2:27; 7:17; 12:5; 19:15). This word is always translated in the KJV by some form of the English verb "feed" or "rule." This word is used twice to describe the work of elders (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2), but is nowhere used to describe the role of a preacher.

Some may think that because Peter was told by Christ to "Feed [Tend, NKJ; Shepherd, NAS] my sheep" (Jn. 21:16) that the preacher has authority to "shepherd" the flock. While it is true that a form of the verb *poimaino* is used in this command, it must be remembered that Peter held a position that was unlike any preacher today. Peter was also an apostle. He was given the "keys of the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 16:19), and, along with the other apostles, he was told, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye

shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Mt. 16:19; 18:18). Peter was also an elder (1 Pet. 5:1). The fact of the matter is that elders, not preachers, are the ones who are responsible for “shepherding” the flock. However, even in denominational circles, people do not know the Scriptural role of elders. Contemplating the denominational idea of “the Pastor,” brings up a second common misconception about the role of a preacher among some members of the church.

The Preacher Is Not The “Head-Honcho-In-Charge”

Some people commonly mistake the role of the preacher to be that of the “head-honcho-in-charge.” People consider the church to be “his church” and/or consider his word to be the final say. These “preachers” can be heard saying, “My members...,” or “I have a brother who...” The true church of Christ, however, has no earthly head. Jesus is the one and only Head of the church (Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18). No preacher, no elder, no deacon, no member, no man, or no woman has the right or the place to be head of the church. Although some people act as though they are the head of the church (cf. Diotrephes in 3 Jn. 9), that position belongs only to Deity! The Bible reveals how the church is to function (cf. 1 Cor. 14:37; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:3).

Within Christ’s divine doctrine is the organization of the church. In His superior wisdom, Christ authorized a plurality of elders to oversee the proper functioning of a local body of Christ (Phil. 1:1; 1 Pet. 5:2). These men are to meet God-given qualifications (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9), and they have no authority to change God’s revealed will. In His wisdom, Christ authorized special servants called “deacons” (Phil. 1:1). These men must also meet God-given qualifications (1 Tim. 3:8-13), and their task is to work in conjunction with the elders in whatever capacity is deemed expedient to help the church function better (cf. Acts 6:1-7). In His wisdom, Christ authorized the role of the preacher/evangelist. These men also must meet God-given qualifications (1 Tim. 4:12-13, 15-16; 5:22; 2 Tim. 2:15, 22; Titus 2:7-8, etc.), and their work focuses upon teaching, preaching, and evangelizing (1 Tim. 4:6; 2 Tim. 2:2; 4:1-5; Titus 2:1-6, etc.). The preacher is not given the responsibility to “run” the church. No single man on earth is given that responsibility. In His wisdom, Christ made every member of His body important to the proper functioning of the whole (1 Cor. 12:13-31). Every person added to the church is important, and every person has a role to fulfill! However, a misunderstanding of the responsibilities of every member of the church of Christ leads to other misconceptions about the role of a preacher.

The Preacher Is Not The “Official Visitor” Of The Church

Some people commonly mistake the role of a preacher to be the “official visitor” and/or “tab keeper” of every member of a congregation. While it is true that many local preachers usually have more of an opportunity to visit members than the average member of the local church, this does not mean that others have no responsibility in this area. The fact is that all Christians, whether preachers, elders, deacons, husbands, wives, singles, etc., are responsible for visiting the sick and/or other members in need (cf. Mt. 25:34-46; Jas. 1:27). While it is true that a preacher is his “brother’s keeper,” like every other Christian should be, it is extremely difficult (if not impossible) for one person to keep up with all the needs and concerns of every member of a congregation. That is the reason why every member is important and needs to be involved in the work of the church (Eph. 4:15-16).

It is not wrong to look to the preacher for an example in visiting, because he should be a good example (Rom. 2:21-23; 1 Cor. 11:1; 1 Tim. 4:12). However, it is wrong and detrimental to the growth of the local church to expect a preacher to do the work of the elders, the deacons, and/or every member of the church. Remember, each member is important to the proper functioning of the body (1 Cor. 12:13-31). Every person added to the church is important, and every person has a role to fulfill!

The Preacher Is Not (Necessarily) A Lazy Man Who Cannot Find A Job Anywhere Else

Some people think that preaching is a “piece of cake” job in which the preacher gets paid for only four hours of work (one hour each for Sunday morning Bible class, morning sermon, evening sermon, and Wednesday night Bible study). Sadly, some preachers (in the States and overseas) are lazy. However, when a preacher is truly doing the “work of an evangelist” (2 Tim. 4:5), he cannot be lazy. If preaching is such a “cushy” job, then why are not our preaching schools overflowing with students? Instead, some of the few drop out because the *(continued on page 4)*

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Toney Wilson is back home from the hospital. Good to have her back with us. Sharon Mathis-Washington is still in the hospital, but expects to be discharged in a few days. Continue prayers for Jim Turner, Ginny Hamby, Margaret Coone, Josephine Bowman, and Nadia Kemp.

Relatives: Benny Martin, Allan Cooper, son of Bob & June Cooper, Cameron Soles, grandson of Cheryl Barker, and Dorothy Trice.

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

Others: Joyce Stearsman, Chrissi Fuesner, Connie Hyer, Jack Pinckert, and Sam & Judy Crow.

Upcoming Events

Saturday July 22nd: Door Knocking Campaign to promote South Florida Ave's V.B.S. Please meet here at the building at 9:00 a.m.

Saturday July 22nd: VBS at the North Lakeland church of Christ 9am to 2pm. The theme is "Ocean Commotion."

July 24th-28th: VBS will be hosted by the Orange Street church of Christ. The theme is "Fix Your Eyes on Jesus!"

Saturday, July 29th: Remember our VBS here at SFA. The theme this year is "God's Team-Stories of God's Power." Terrance Brownlow-Dindy from 6th Street church of Christ will be teaching the adult class.

August 4th-6th: Fall Teen Youth Recharge at the Weeki Wachee Christian Camp. Applications available in office.

Sept. 29th - Oct. 1st: A weekend of spiritual enrichment called **Rush** at Freed Hardeman University for middle school and high school students.

Response

Toney Wilson responded to the invitation on Sunday morning. Please keep her in your prayers.

Hither, Thither and Yon

Hiram Kemp will preaching in a Gospel Meeting in St. Augustine, FL July 23rd-26th. Also Brian Kenyon will be preaching in a Gospel Meeting for the Pike Road Church of Christ in Pantego, NC, July 21st-27th. They will surely be missed! Pray for safe travels.

Visitors

Darnell & Jane Kirkland, Jane Jessee, Linda Boon and Kayden, Callie, and Lilly, Victor Travis, Alexis and Jada and Alex & Beth Szabo.



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!

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

July

David Anderson **Table** Ken Walker
John McShane..... **Assist** Kenny French

Sunday, July 23, 2017

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible ClassDavid Williams
Prayer..... Josh Estridge

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... Fred Strickland
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening PrayerMatt Willcut
Sermon..... C. J. Grimes
Closing Prayer Jimmy Sweeney

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Stacey Paulin
Opening PrayerBobby Sheumaker
Sermon..... C. J. Grimes
Closing Prayer Bobby Simpson

GreetersThe Pratts
Att. Cards..... Paul and Ian
Open & Close Building..... Phil Flfe

Wed. July 26, 2017

Song LeaderMatt Willcut
Opening PrayerSteve Hunley
Closing PrayerTucker Sweeney

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

Sunday, July 30, 2017

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Kyle Bingle
Prayer..... Tyler Anderson

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... Fred Strickland
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening PrayerPaul Romine
Sermon.....Hiram Kemp
Closing PrayerTucker Sweeney

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Stacey Paulin
Opening PrayerKenny French
Sermon.....Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Chuck Wyatt

Greeters The Edmonsons
Att. Cards.....Willcut boy'sl
Open & Close Building.....Phil Flfe

Wed. August 02, 2017

Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening PrayerDavid Anderson
Closing Prayer Kenny French

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

June 25.....	\$4,994.45
July 02.....	\$5,127.00
July 09.....	\$5,336.05
July 16.....	\$4,392.82
Contribution Average	\$5,344.94
2017 Weekly Budget	\$4,716.51

Common Misconceptions About the Preacher (continued from page 2) . . .

demands are so high. Studying is hard work (2 Tim. 2:15). Preaching and teaching is easy compared to the time and energy it takes to study. If the reader does not think this is so, then why is it so hard to find Bible class teachers? Why do not more members fill-in for the preacher when he is gone? Not only must a preacher prepare for lessons, he is also on “twenty-four hour call.” At any moment he may be called upon to conduct a funeral. He may be involved in one-on-one Bible studies in the evening or counseling a couple who plan on marrying. When others talk about going home after work to relax, watch their favorite TV show, go to the ball game, or go fishing, the conscientious preacher realizes he still has work to do and often has to sacrifice these times of leisure. Does this mean he is bitter and angry? Absolutely not! The conscientious preacher loves what he does no matter what the cost or the inconvenience because he serves the Master and knows that from Him his reward will be worth it all (2 Tim. 4:6-8 cf. Mt. 6:19-21).

Conclusion

There are other misconceptions about the role of a preacher that could be mentioned, but will not be in this article. These have been given to help us realize the importance that God has placed upon each member in the local church doing his or her part. The human body functions at its best when every member is healthy and involved. The spiritual *(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 . . .

body of Christ's church is no exception. When each member fulfills his or her God-given role, the church will grow (cf. Acts 6:7). Until then, growth, at best, will be minimal. May the Lord help every one of us to recognize, appreciate, and fulfill his or her role in the church of Christ! ❤️ Brian

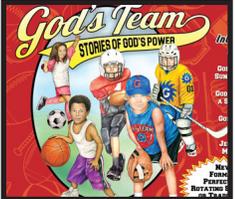


Special Opportunity to get the word out to our surrounding communities about our VBS. Those participating in this door-knocking campaign will meet in the fellowship room at 9:00 a.m., this Saturday, July 22.

“Whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant” (Mt. 20:26).



“Super Saturday”
VBS July 29



The logo for "God's Team" VBS features the text "God's Team" in a stylized font, with "STORIES OF GOD'S POWER" below it. The logo is surrounded by various sports equipment like a soccer ball, basketball, and baseball bat. A yellow sticky note with the words "DON'T FORGET" is pinned to the left.

Let the Lord Lighten Your Darkness

The psalmist wrote, “For You will light my lamp; The LORD my God will enlighten my darkness” (Psalm 18:28). No matter the difficulty in life, God provides the solution. Whether we are troubled by inward struggles, physical issues, or those who oppose the truth, God is the source of comfort. We must trust in Him and allow His light to dispel our darkness!

