

# 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. 69 No.30 07-26-16

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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

## LEFT BEHIND

Hiram Kemp

There have always been religious error and false teachers in the world (Gen. 3:1-5). Individuals have always been gullible in religion and there have been those that profit from the ignorance of others (2 Pet. 2:1-3). Authors Jerry B. Jenkins and Tim LaHaye have written sixteen books in their *Left Behind* series and there have even been a few movies that have come from these books as well. Among many dispensational errors taught by these authors concerning end time things is the false idea of a rapture. The rapture is a religious teaching that suggest there will be a time when believers in Christ will be snatched away without warning out of the world. The snatching away of these believers will be followed by a seven-year period of tribulation, after which Jesus will come to reign in Jerusalem on a literal throne of David for one thousand years. The doctrine of the rapture is a result of misapplying what Paul taught in First Thessalonians about the return of Christ, coupled with a lot of imagination and fanciful thinking (1 Thess. 4:13-18). The return of Christ will be visible (Rev. 1:7). There will not be any need for Jesus to reign on a literal throne in Jerusalem because He is reigning now (Acts 2:29-36; 1 Cor. 15:24-26). Paul says when Jesus comes again the dead will rise and the living will be caught up with Him in the clouds. We will at that moment forever be with the Lord. He will not step foot on this earth again (1 Thess. 4:13-17). There will be no earth to return to because it will be destroyed with fire upon the Lord's return (2 Pet. 3:9-12). While the rapture is a false view of how things will end, no one will be left behind. However, there are some things we must leave behind. Likewise, there are other things that we must never leave behind.

## THINGS TO LEAVE BEHIND

In the life of the Christian, there are certain things that cannot be brought along for the ride. The Christian life is not only one of clinging to the Lord but also one of leaving certain things behind. As you read the gospel accounts (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) be impressed with the things people naturally left behind as they followed Jesus. On one occasion Jesus was talking with a Samaritan woman at a well. He discussed worship with her and the fact that He was the promised Messiah (Jn. 4:19-26). She was so awe struck by the conversation she enjoyed with Jesus that she left her water pot at the well and went and told everyone she came into contact with about Jesus (Jn. 4:28-29). In our efforts to evangelize on a daily basis we must be willing to leave our water pots behind. There will be inconveniences and things we need to alter in our schedules to talk to individuals about the Lord. (continued on page 2)

(continued from page 1) As long as we are always ready and willing, the opportunities will be there, but we may have to leave the water pot behind.

Many need to leave behind their false views of Christianity. It is possible to be zealous, morally upright and religiously wrong all at the same time. Saul of Tarsus was a young Judaizing sensation, perhaps on his way to promotion in the Sanhedrin council, but he was wrong religiously (Acts 22:1-5). When Saul found out that he was wrong he was willing to leave behind his false ideas about how to please God and become a Christian (Acts 22:6-16). We need to realize that there is nothing wrong with leaving behind false religion and false ideas about God. Our friends and neighbors need to be taught that it is not a bad idea to leave behind a church they may have grown up in to become a member of the church that Jesus built (Mt. 16:18-19; Acts 2:37-47).

Some need to leave behind family and friends that would hinder their spiritual growth and development. When Jesus called two brothers to follow Him, they left their father and their jobs as fishermen and followed Him (Mk. 1:19-20). Jesus was interrupted on one occasion while teaching because his mother and brothers were desiring to speak with Him. Jesus said His spiritual family was of greater importance (Lk. 8:19-21). Jesus would go so far as to say if we love our physical family more than we love Him, then we are not worthy of Him (Mt. 10:35-39). Sometimes my family may try and discourage me from following the Lord, and I must make a decision. Sometimes my family is influencing me to do wrong, and I must leave them behind for righteousness sake.

## THINGS TO NEVER LEAVE BEHIND

While some things must be left behind, there are other things that can never be left behind. As we engage in spiritual warfare daily with the wicked one, it is important that we never leave our Christian armor behind (2 Cor. 10:3-5; Eph. 6:11-17). Daily we must check ourselves and be sure we are clothed with the armor that provides us with peace, truth, faith, righteousness, salvation, and the Word of God that informs us of all these things. We will be destroyed in battle a little more for every day that we lack the necessary armor.

We do not need to leave our Bibles behind. As Paul was nearing death he told Timothy to bring him some things he needed while in prison. Along with a coat to keep warm in a cold cell, he told Timothy to bring along the parchments and the books (2 Tim. 4:13). The aged and experienced apostle still desired to write and study as death encroached upon his door. Do not leave your Bible behind when you come to the assembly. Sometimes people come to worship and say they did not get anything out of the lesson. Usually, the people who get nothing out of a sermon have not brought their Bibles, and if they have, they have used them sparingly as the lesson was preached. Do not leave your Bible when you go to work or on vacation. Take passages with you in memory and bind the principles on your heart (Prov. 7:2-3). There is only one way to always be ready to give an answer to inquiring minds concerning our hope as Christians, keep the answer key nearby (1 Pet. 3:15).

## CONCLUSION

While there are false views in the world concerning who will be left behind at the return of our Lord, we do not need to be caught up in these errors. However, there is a lesson that we can learn from this concept of things being left behind. When I become the Lord's disciple, I need to depart with certain people, pleasures, and pastimes (1 Jn. 2:15-17). Nevertheless, as the Lord's servant there are some things that I must lay hold of and never part with nor leave behind (1 Tim. 6:12).



### “Remember Lot’s Wife”

In a context where Jesus discussed the unexpectedness of His coming to those who did not accept His word, He said, “Remember Lot’s wife” (Lk. 17:32). God told Abraham that Sodom was going to be destroyed (Gen. 18:20-33). When the time came, Lot and his family fled, but his wife looked back and was turned to a pillar of salt (Gen. 19:15-26). It seems her heart was still in that wicked city. We cannot please God when our focus is on worldly things (Col. 3:1-3). We must leave behind the attitude of the world if we are going to live for God! ♥ Brian

# SFA FAMILY MATTERS

## Prayer List

**Our Members:** Carlene Long was in L.R.M.C this week after a diabetic comma, but has been discharged and is at home. Joyce Burbage is home from the hospital after a fall. Smitty Smith was in L.R.M.C. for dehydration. Carol Eason had surgery and a skin graft last Thursday. She is now home. Linda Pennington will have knee replacement on Aug. 4th. Also keep Evelyn Wyatt, Patricia Chisholm, Jacquelin Dopwell, JoAnn Hoback, Debbie Horsley and Margaret Coone in prayer.

**Relatives:** Joe Shanes, Wayne Hendrix, Bonnie Patterson, Tonya Mathis, Dee Moore, Margie Bolding and Harold Rister.

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

**Others:** Jackie Stearsman, Chrissi Fuesner, Alyssa Buckner and Gerri Howell (a former member is having some medical problems). Keep all of these in your prayers.

## Upcoming Events

**August 1st-5th:** Vacation Bible School at the Orange Street Church of Christ in Auburndale. The theme is God's Creation, Digging for Answers. See the flyer for more details.

**August 7th:** Fellowship in service immediately following our evening worship service. We are going to be showing slides from the Nicaragua Mission Trip. Please bring Spanish foods to stay with the theme.

## Sympathy

Janet Lively, the sister in law of Joyce Burbage passed away on July 3rd. Please keep Joyce and the family in your prayers. Please continue to keep Tonya Anderson and family in your prayers after the passing of her mom, Ruth McDaniel, on 7/14 in Danville, VA. Services were held in Russellville, AL. Also Dorothy Webb, Darnell Kirkland's mother in law, passed away 7/21. Please continue prayers for all these families.

## Response

We are rejoicing that Olivia Smith was baptized into Christ last Wednesday after services. Please let us encourage her and welcome her into our family here at S.F.A.

## Visitors

Will & Autumn Vann and family, Floyd & Shirley Loudermilk, Tiffany Hash and children and Melody Baxter.

## SCHEDULED TO SERVE

### August

Frank Hamby ..... Table ..... Jimmy Sweeney  
Jim Turner ..... Assist ..... Josh Estridge

### Sunday, July 31, 2016

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class ..... Kyle Bingle  
Prayer ..... Phil Fife

10:30 A.M.

Announcements ..... Fred Strickland  
Song Leader ..... Jason Hendrix  
Opening Prayer ..... Paul Romine  
Sermon ..... Brian Kenyon  
Closing Prayer ..... John McShane

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader ..... Stacey Paulin  
Opening Prayer ..... Kenny French  
Sermon ..... Brian Kenyon  
Greeters ..... Tyler & Jessica Anderson  
Att. Cards ..... Paul & Ian  
Closing Prayer ..... John McShane  
Open & Close Building ..... John McShane

Wed. Aug. 3, 2016

Song Leader ..... Jason Hendrix  
Opening Prayer ..... Steve Hunley  
Closing Prayer ..... Bobby Sheumaker

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

### Sunday, August 7, 2016

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class ..... Frank Hamby  
Prayer ..... Stacey Paulin

10:30 A.M.

Announcements ..... David Williams  
Song Leader ..... Jason Hendrix  
Opening Prayer ..... Kenny French  
Sermon ..... Hiram Kemp  
Closing Prayer ..... Antonio Martin

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader ..... Tucker Sweeney  
Opening Prayer ..... Jeff Bingle  
Sermon ..... Hiram Kemp  
Greeters ..... The Pratts  
Att. Cards ..... Paul & Ian  
Closing Prayer ..... Paul Romine  
Open & Close Building ..... Jimmy Sweeney

Wed. August 10, 2016

Song Leader ..... Bill Long  
Opening Prayer ..... Kenny French  
Closing Prayer ..... Paul Romine

## ~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

July 03.....	\$4,927.00
July 10 .....	\$4,733.00
July 17.....	\$4,613.26
July 24.....	\$4,606.43
Contribution Average.....	\$4,946.72
2016 Weekly Budget.....	\$4,422.60

# DECEPTIVELY DANGEROUS

While the South Florida Avenue team was in Nicaragua, we were able to eat lunch by the Pacific Ocean. The scenery was beautiful! There were sections of sandy beach between large sections of dark rocks. The water became bluer the further away from the shore we looked. The seas were textured with a slight breeze, and tropical vegetation garnished the sight. While we were waiting on our food, some of our team wandered close to the water to better experience the view and get their feet wet. Seemingly out of nowhere, a wave crashed through the rocks high into the air and drenched a few people with sediment laden liquid. For the rest of the day, discomfort constantly reminded them of what happened. This innocent experience of nature is reminiscent of the deceptive dangers of sin. The very first time humans were tempted to sin, God allowed Satan to work through the “serpent.” The word translated “serpent” is from the same root as the word meaning “brass,” or “bronze.” This may suggest the snake’s shining and luminous appearance that would arrest Eve’s attention. Satan never appears in his true character! He is the tempter who comes to the woman under the guise of a serpent (2 Corinthians 11:3; Revelation 12:9; 20:2). By the “appearance” of sin, nobody would expect anything dangerous about it. The devil can make sin look really good and promising. The Bible even acknowledges that sin is pleasurable .... but only momentarily (Hebrews 11:25). Consider intoxicating beverage. Solomon wrote, “Do not look on the wine when it is red, When it sparkles (*continued from above*)



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



We rejoice that Olivia was baptized into Christ on July 20, 2016. Welcome to the family!



**Thanks to Jason and Casey (along with Hiram and Brian) who enlightened us on this summer’s mission trips. We thank you for supporting us!**

(*continued from above*) in the cup, When it swirls around smoothly; At the last it bites like a serpent, And stings like a viper” (Proverbs 23:31-32). That wine may look so good and beneficial, but God-inspired wisdom says it bites with destructive fangs! The tempter’s character was “more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made” (Genesis 3:1). The meaning of the word “cunning [subtle, KJV]” carries the idea of being shrewd, which may be good in honest business negotiations, but can also be used dishonestly (Proverbs 12:16 cf Job 5:12). In the original language, the words “cunning” and “naked” (Genesis 2:25) have a similar sound, which forms an obvious word play, illustrated with English words, “shrewd” and “nude.” That is, Adam and Eve will think themselves shrewd, but will find themselves nude (and ashamed). In noting his cunningness, Moses hints that the serpent’s words better be examined very closely. Just because something does not appear dangerous at first glance doesn’t mean that it is safe. The devil has “prettied up” sin so well that some do not even think they are yielding to temptation when they partake. May we examine our spiritual surroundings closely and not be deceived! ❤️ *Brian*