

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.....9:30 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 Yeary.....Malawi, Africa
Graham McDonald..Scotland
J. Paguaga.....Honduras, C.A.
Joey Treat.....Pacific Islands
Ted Wheeler.....Ghana, W.A.

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www.southfloridaavenuechurchofchrist.com



IN
SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY

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

Humor in the Scriptures

By Hiram Kemp

God is to be revered and honored (Psa. 89:7). His Word is to be held in the highest esteem and handled properly by those who study it (2 Tim. 2:15). The Bible is a serious book, and yet God has included a great deal of humor in his Word. We receive our spirits from God and are his offspring (Heb. 12:9). We are made in the image of God and so it should not surprise us, that since we have a sense of humor, God has one as well (Gen. 1:26). The Bible teaches that a merry heart does good like medicine (Prov. 17:22). Consider one of the humorous accounts in Scripture and allow it to enrich your life.

When Elijah, the prophet of God, was on Mount Carmel and challenging the idolatrous practices in Israel, he called the false prophets of Baal to a battle (1 Kgs. 18:19). Elijah challenged the false prophets to call on their god and he would call on Jehovah, and whichever God answered by fire in burning bullocks would be proven to be the true God in Israel. As the false prophets called on Baal, who would never show up, because he does not exist, Elijah challenged them to cry louder because maybe Baal had gone on a long trip or maybe he was sleeping and could not hear (1 Kgs. 18:27). They began to cut themselves and jump around, but Baal never showed up (1 Kgs. 18:28-29). Who cannot help but to find humor in this account as Elijah mocks the folly of those who would serve idols instead of the true and living God (1 Cor. 8:5-6). They cried, danced, and even harmed themselves, and their "god" never came to their rescue.

Today there is still a degree of humor as the world rushes on crying out to idols of money, fame, sexual perversion, and every other vice hoping to find fulfillment, only to realize no one is home. Humanity inflicts self-harm, jumps around from one false sense of security to another with no avail. The louder people cry after their idols, the more deafening the silence. It is not funny that people are losing their souls as they put their trust in things which do not profit, but it is a shame that they fail to turn to the living God who waits for them to turn to him. Jesus still cries to the world to come to him and he will give them rest, a rest not found anywhere else (Mt. 11:28-30). Elijah finally ended the comedy show being put on by the false prophets of Baal. He cried out to Jehovah who answered by fire and was shown to be the true and sovereign God of Israel (1 Kgs. 18:31-39). When the trumpet sounds and Jesus returns, those who have not trusted in Jesus will mourn and the righteous will laugh (Lk. 6:21,25). God will show up and the world will know he is the only true God (2 Thess. 1:7-9).

The Importance of Memorizing Scripture

By Hiram Kemp

The average American household has four Bibles in the home. Whether individuals are reading the Bible that is readily available to them is another story. The best place to keep our Bible is in our hearts. Preachers often commit verses to memory and quote them in their lessons and Christians may get the false impression that only preachers and Bible class teachers should make this a habit. We all need to be hiding the Bible in our hearts, not only learning it but memorizing it. We can memorize Scripture just to do it and not live out its meaning, but this would be memorizing in vain (Mt. 15:7-9). Nevertheless, it is always a good thing to memorize and internalize the word of God. You may be reading this and thinking, "Why do I need to memorize scripture, I am not a preacher or a Bible class teacher?" Yet, if you are a Christian, you should be searching the Scriptures and learning them by heart (Jn. 5:39; Acts 17:11). Here are a few reasons why we should make a habit of memorizing Scripture, and a few ideas on how to do it.

Fighting Temptation

When Jesus was tempted by the Devil, he fought the Devil with Scripture (Mt. 4:1-11). Three times Jesus responded by saying, "It is written." If Jesus, the Son of God, needed to use the Scriptures when tempted with sin, how much more should we? Jesus never committed sin, and one of the reasons why is because he had a healthy relationship with the word of God (Heb. 4:14-15). We need to memorize Scripture so that when we are tempted with sin, we can recall the word of God and allow it to guard us against sin. The Psalmist said that the Word was hidden in his heart so that he might not sin against God (Psa. 119:11). What kept the Psalmist from sin was the knowledge of the God's Word he had committed to memory. The way a young person cleanses his or her way and keeps it clean is by paying attention to the word of God (Psa. 119:9). If we fail to memorize Scripture, we may not be able to recall the law of God when we are thinking of giving in to sin. Jesus often asked people what did the Scriptures say when they had questions for him regarding what they should and should not do (Mt. 19:4; Lk. 10:26). Jesus expected them to know the Word of God and have enough of it committed to memory so they could make the proper decision. Is it the case that we give into lying, lust, gossip, and anger because we have failed to memorize and apply the passages that address these sinful practices? The Sadducees in Jesus' day believed false doctrine concerning the resurrection because they did not know the Scriptures (Mk. 12:24). It would be a good idea to identify the sin that tempts us the most, and gather as many Bible verses concerning that sin as we can and commit them to memory. The next time that sin is dangled before us, if we could recall what God says about that act and have the determination to please him, this would be of great benefit. We need to memorize Scripture because we cannot withstand temptation to sin by our own strength. A part of the armor we are clothed with as Christians is the "sword of the Spirit" (Eph. 6:17). No one can have a paper copy of the Bible always handy, even electronic copies are no guarantee as technology usually fails when we need it the most. The best thing to do is to have the Scriptures in our heart so we can use them when tempted, no matter where we are.

Being Ready At All Times

Peter wrote that as Christians we must always be ready to give a defense for what we believe (1 Pet. 3:15). It is impossible to always be ready if we do not know the Scriptures well. We may not memorize the Bible in its entirety, but what a person must do to be saved, how we worship, and the basics of the church are some of the things we should lodge in our memories. We may only have one opportunity to plant the seed, and if we can rattle off Scriptural references to get a person thinking, it could be the difference between heaven or hell for that person. I know our society is tempting us not to memorize Scripture, because there is Google and the internet, and all we have to do is type in one word or a part of a phrase and it is there. This is even more of a reason to memorize. We need to push ourselves to grow in both grace and knowledge (2 Pet. 3:18). We should use all the tools available to us, but we should not take the easy way out and be lazy concerning our study. The narrow road is still best (Mt. 7:13-14). Moses told parents to take every opportunity to teach their children the Scriptures (Deut. 6:4-9). Parents can hardly teach as they walk by the way if there are no Scriptures stored away in their heart. Memorizing Scripture takes practice, effort, and desire, but we can and must do this. *(continued on page 4)*

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Sharon Mathis Washington is back in the hospital. Virginia Walker was home sick. Also continue prayers for Jim Turner, Ginny Hamby, Margaret Coone, Mickey Phillips and Josephine Bowman.

Relatives: Brian Patterson, son of Gene Patterson, is doing some better, but still in I.C.U. and not breathing on his own. Benny Martin, 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, Brian Tagtow, brother of Chad Tagtow and Corey Perry, a good friend of Stacey Paulin.

Upcoming Events

Sunday, August 6th: Fellowship In-Service will be after evening services, please bring finger foods.

Tuesday August 8th: Elder/Deacons Meeting at the building at 7:00 p.m.

Saturday August 19th: Men's breakfast at Jackson Ave. in Bartow at 8:00 a.m.

Sept. 8th-10th: Scrap the Weekend at the Central Florida Bible Camp. Bring your scrapbook and crafting supplies.

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

October 7th: Save the Date: South FL. Avenue's Ladies Day!

Visitors

Leigh Anne Garland and children, Heather Barfield, Brandi Gant, Victor Travis and Alexis, Cora King and Joshua Potrin.



Keep the Lord in Your Summer Travel Plans



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

August

Frank Hamby Table Fred Strickland
Chaz Hine Assist Bobby Simpson

Sunday, August 6, 2017

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 Jim Edmonson

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Tucker Sweeney
Opening Prayer Kyle Bingle
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Paul Romine

Greeters The Pratts
Att. Cards Quadarius and Ian
Open & Close Building Phil Fife

Wed. August 9, 2017

Song Leader Ken Walker
Opening Prayer Kenny French
Closing Prayer Paul Romine

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

Sunday, August 13, 2017

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Stacey Paulin
Prayer Ken Walker

10:30 A.M.

Announcements David Williams.
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer David Anderson
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer David Deal

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Tucker Sweeney
Opening Prayer John McShane
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Kyle Bingle

Greeters The Grimes
Att. Cards Paul & Sebastian
Open & Close Building Phil Fife

Wed. August 16, 2017

Song Leader Steve Hunley
Opening Prayer John McShane
Closing Prayer Phil Fife

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

July 09.....	\$5,336.05
July 16.....	\$4,392.82
July 23.....	\$4,568.00
July 31.....	\$5,817.95
Contribution Average.....	\$5,335.13
2017 Weekly Budget.....	\$4,716.51

The Importance of Memorizing Scripture (continued from page 2)

How to Memorize

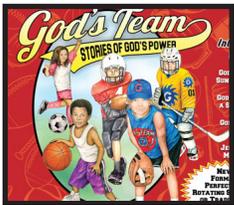
There is only one way to memorize Scripture: one verse at a time. Start with small verses and work your way on to more difficult ones (1 Pet. 2:2). Continuously review the verses you learn and use them in your daily life and conversation with others. We can bring up the Bible naturally in daily conversation without sounding "holier than thou" or self-righteous. There are phone apps where we can play fill-in the blank games to memorize verses. I use the index card method to memorize verses. Write a verse on the back of an index card and carry it with you and look at it throughout the day and see how much you can get down before the end of the day. Make the most of your time, look at it while waiting at a red light (Eph. 5:16). Families could make a game of it and memorize verses together, with a reward for a family trip of some sort once everyone memorized a certain amount together (Psa. 127:1). No one will memorize Scripture who does not think he needs to or does not think he can (Prov. 23:7). Have the confidence that you can. See the mandate from Scripture that you must, and press on giving it your best effort (Prov. 7:2-3). When Paul said he could do all things through the strength of Christ, I am persuaded that he meant all things relating to Spiritual matters (Phil. 4:13). We should memorize Scripture to fight off temptation, but also so that we are ready and able to freely teach the word to others. Find whatever method works for you and hide the word of God in your heart. Ω



South Florida Avenue
CHURCH OF CHRIST
1807 South Florida Avenue
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Return Service Requested

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



Special Thanks to God's Team at South Florida Avenue for a wonderful VBS last Saturday. We especially thank C. J., Kelcy, little Avery, and all who helped in this "hands on" effort!

