



South Florida Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST *MESSENGER*



1807 S. Florida Ave.
Lakeland, FL 33803

Vol. 78 No. 32, August 6, 2024

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DEACONS

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Jason Hendrix
Stacey Paulin

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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.....6:30 p.m.

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Praising and Serving the Lord

Steven Ford

Praise and service to God are central parts of the life of a Christian. They not only impact individual lives, but they also shape the communities and societies in which we all live. The praise and service rendered by Christians is not born of mere obligation alone. On the contrary, they stem from the recognition of God's sovereignty, love, and tender mercy as demonstrated toward mankind. Praising and serving the Lord are both a privilege and a responsibility that reflect the Christian's relationship with the One that saved him. This is not unique to the New Testament either. This article will explore the theme of praise and service to God from both the Old and New Testaments.

God Is Sovereign and Worthy

The Book of Genesis opens with the following declaration, "In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). From the beginning of the inspired text, it is set forth that the Self-Existent, God over all, created the entire Universe. As such He is worthy of praise, worship and service. Notice these words from the psalmist, "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture" (Psalm 100:1-3). Joyful service is highlighted as an appropriate response to the Lord for who He is.

In the New Testament, few passages demonstrate God's worthiness to be praised and served like Revelation 4. In part, it reads, "And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those beasts give glory and honor and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created (Revelation 4:8-11).

Without a doubt, it is fitting to praise and serve the Almighty God because He is sovereign and worthy. Yet, that is not the only reason.

Love and Gratitude for Salvation

The concept of God's saving power is highlighted in the events of the Exodus

from Egypt. Once Israel had crossed through the Red Sea on dry ground, they burst into songs of praise. They recognized that there was no god like unto Jehovah! For He alone was able to vanquish the Egyptians and save Israel from bondage. Within one of the songs, questions were asked and answered showing that Israel knew that God was indeed their savior. “Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? Thou stretchedst out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them. Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed” (Exodus 15:11-13). Later in Deuteronomy 6, the children of Israel were commanded to love God completely and teach their young ones to do the same (v. 4-9). Not only so, but they were to serve the Lord and diligently keep His commandments. The reason for such is set forth in verses 21-25. God saved Israel from Egyptian bondage and was thus worthy to be praised, served, and obeyed.

In the Book of Ephesians, Paul affirmed that service to God was ordained from the beginning and fitting for those that had been saved by God’s grace. “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:8-10). Earlier in that same book, Paul addressed praising the Lord for His saving power. “Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace” (Ephesians 1:5-7). Yes, God is worthy for our praise and service because he has saved us from our sins.

How Can I Praise and Serve God?

Praise If one desires to praise the Lord in a way that exalts and honors Him, then singing in worship is a wonderful practice. Quoting from the Psalms (Psalm 22:22), the Hebrews writer penned the following words, “I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.” Singing praises to God is a fitting way to declare that He is good, He is gracious, and He can save all that would accept His grace. Later, the same penman wrote, “By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name” (Hebrews 13:15). As Christians gather for worship on the first day of the week, songs of praise can be offered from hearts filled with joy, gratitude, and humility.

Serve Service to God must be rendered according to His own standard of holiness and respect. “Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear” (Hebrews 12:28). Jesus set forth wonderful ways to serve Him by serving those around us. “Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matthew 25:34-40). Offering food, drink, shelter, clothing, and care to those in need is a wonderful way one can serve the Lord today.

Conclusion

There are daily opportunities to praise, honor, and serve our Lord. May every believer from every land be determined to do all to honor God through praise and service. This writer firmly believes there is no greater way to use one’s strength than to offer songs of praise and loving service to the great and almighty God of Heaven.

PRAYER LIST

Current: Fran Gabaldon is back at Moffett in Tampa for an infection, Nancy Jacobs has upcoming medical tests, Sharon Mathis Washington has surgery that went well and is waiting on pathology reports concerning colon cancer, Brenda Mask has been home sick with cold symptoms.

Continual: Jim Turner (cancer) Sharon Mathis Washington (Health & family); Stacey Wilson (health); Debbie Bush (struggles); Carlene Long (health & strength); Ron Ford (health); Annett Phillip (health); Janie Wise (health); Margaret Coone (health); Melissa Craft (health); Kathy Nester (health).

Shut-ins: Carol Eason, Kenny & Reba French, Barbara Jones, Charles Paulin, Helen Perrin, Bettye Bolding, Nellie Anderson, Cheryl Barker

Also continue to pray for those on the extended family and friends list!

Scheduled to Serve in August	
Designated Elder	David Anderson
Wednesday, August 7, 2024	
Announcements	Tyler Anderson
Song Leader / Prayer	Kyle Faneuf
Devotional / Invitation	Brian Kenyon
Closing Prayer	Allen Grimes
Sunday, August 11, 2024	
10:30 am Sermon	Steven Ford
"Abraham, A Model for All Men" (Gen. 12:1-3)	
6:00 pm Sermon	Steven Ford
"Won't It Be Wonderful There"	
Those to Serve 10:30 am	
Greeters	Rogers
Song/Pray before class	Stacey Paulin
Announcements (both)	Brian Kenyon
Song Leader (both)	David Williams
Prayer / Bible reading	Kyle Bingle
Lord's Table (both)	Josh Estridge
Closing Prayer	W. Brunson
Open/Close Building	David Deal
Attendance Cards	Sawyer
Sound Booth (both)	Jason H
Those to Serve 6:00 pm	
Greeters	McCarters
Announcements	Brian Kenyon
Song Leader	David Williams
Prayer / Bible reading	Paul Sweeney
Closing Prayer	Jarred Spivey
Wednesday, August 14, 2024	
Announcements	Tyler Anderson
Song Leader / Prayer	Andre Medley
Devotional / Invitation	Steven Ford
Closing Prayer	Jeff Stewart
How We Are Giving	
July 21	\$5,040.00
July 28	\$4,711.00
Aug. 4	\$10,461.00
Contribution Average	\$6,823.55
Weekly Budget	\$7,410.00
If you cannot serve as scheduled, please notify Stacey or the office. Even if you arrange your replacement, please notify Stacey or the office. Thanks!	

✦ YOUNG ADULT GATHERING ✦

YAG

August 11, 2024

7:15pm

in fellowship room
after evening worship

DINNER & FELLOWSHIP FUN!



• Going away party for Landan Willcutt who will be leaving soon to attend Faulkner University. His parents are hosting the party at their home on Saturday August 10th at 5:00 PM. Please let Matt or Shannon know if you will be able to attend.

Welcome: Khalial and Khalia Pope have placed membership with us here at SFA. Please make this awesome couple feel welcome here among us as we all labor together for the Lord

We still need Bible class teachers for the next quarter. Please see Brian if you would like to either teach or be a helper in a classroom.

*You then who teach others, do you not teach yourself?
(Rom 2:21)*

Elders and Deacons Meeting

Sunday August 11

Please let the elders know if there is anything you would like them to discuss at this meeting.

Perfect

My children fight over the same toys all day long. I have a toddler going through the “everything is mine” phase, and a 7 year old stuck in the “only child” stage. This sometimes makes it hard for them to play with each other. My oldest wants whatever battle his toys are in to play out perfectly. He sees the battle unfold in his imagination, and he plays it out exactly in real life. My toddler doesn’t understand this, and will destroy that battle in seconds. Then, I have two upset children. As my frustration mounts, I think to myself, “This must be how God feels when I make mistakes daily.” But it’s not! God knows that every one of us will make mistakes. God is patient (1 Corinthians 13:4). He expect us to be perfect (Matthew 5:48) by learning from our mistakes (our repentance Luke 13:3,5) and by extending his grace and mercy. He wants for us to learn from our mistakes! He doesn’t scream at me or put me in time-out. I, as a Christian, do that all by myself through my guilt and shame of my sin. But if I repent, and pray for forgiveness, our Father gives me another chance. Knowing the love and patience that God has for me helps me everyday with my children. God’s love makes me a more loving, patient, and forgiving mother than I ever thought I could be. I pray that even though my children see me make mistakes daily, they also see me pray and ask for forgiveness, and learn from those mistakes. We are not perfect, and our Father has never asked us to be. We just need to remember that God loves us through all of our mistakes, we just need to try and do better the next time.

"He who covers his sins will not prosper,
But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy."
Proverbs 28:16

LADIES CLASSES:

Wednesday Morning Class beginning in September there will be a class at 10:00 am taught by Marion Beals. They will be studying the book of Genesis.

Thursday Evening Class begins August 13 at 7:00 PM. They will be starting a book on Prayer.

TEN VERSES TO PRAY OVER YOUR KIDS AS THEY HEAD BACK TO SCHOOL



1. **Ephesians 4:32**- ask God to help them to be kind.
2. **Joshua 1:9**- Praise God for always being with them.
3. **Proverbs 10:9** - Ask God to help them walk in integrity this year.
4. **Psalms 56:3** - Ask God to help them put their trust in Him.
5. **Phillippians 4:6-7** - Ask God to help them not to worry.
6. **Luke 2:52** - Ask God to help them grow this year.
7. **Proverbs 17:17** - Pray for their friends.
8. **Colossians 3:23** - Ask God to help them work hard.
9. **James 1:5** - Ask God to give them wisdom.
10. **Philippians 4:12** - Pray for them to be content in all circumstances.

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South Florida Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Return Service Requested

"... nor height nor depth, nor any other
created thing, shall be able to separate
us from the love of God which is in Christ
Jesus our Lord."
Romans 8:39



If you prefer to receive the bulletin via email, contact us.