

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. 31 08-22-17

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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

MISSION FIELDS

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Don Iverson.....India
Marc Yeary.....Malawi, Africa
Graham McDonald..Scotland
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IN
SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY

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

Are We "Binding" and "Loosing" as God Has? (PART 2)

By Brian R. Kenyon

The major difference between the church of Christ and denominationalism — and for that matter, the entire religious world — is that the faithful church of Christ does everything “in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ” (Col. 3:17). Essential to doing all things in the name of the Lord is learning and practicing what God binds and/or looses. In Part 1 of this study, we learned that Peter and the rest of the apostles were only to bind and/or loose on earth what God had already bound and/or loosed in heaven. We also learned the practical definitions for “liberalism” (loosing what God has bound) and “anti-ism” (binding what God has loosed). In Part 2 of this study we will examine commonalities between those two extremes and evaluate some practical issues and applications in common areas affecting the local church.

Common Elements of "Liberalism" and "Anti-ism"

As strange as it may seem, liberalism and anti-ism have two characteristics in common. First, both teach that explicit statements and/or examples are the only way the Bible binds and/or looses. The liberal will say that since there is no explicit Bible statement that says “thou shalt not ...,” a Christian has authority to perform any action. For example, they will say, “Since the Bible does not explicitly say, ‘Do not clap hands while singing during worship,’ we are free to clap hands in praise to God.” Of course, these brethren do not realize that asking, “Where does the Bible say I cannot,” is asking the wrong question. The question should be, “Where does the Bible teach I can.” The anti-ism proponent, on the other hand will affirm that since there is no explicit Bible statement that says “thou shalt ...,” a Christian has no authority to perform an action. For example, they will say, “Since the Bible nowhere explicitly commands the local church to support an orphan home, a local church cannot support an orphan home from its treasury.” Of course, these brethren do not realize that the Bible nowhere explicitly states that a local church can have a bank account, pay a utility bill, create a Facebook page, etc.

Second, a common element to both liberalism and anti-ism is that they are both easy to apply, at least in their extreme states. Faithful living requires diligent studying and “handling aright the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15, ASV). Studying is hard work (cf. 1 Tim. 4:13; 2 Tim. 4:5). However, it is easy to say, as does the liberal, “anything goes unless the Bible explicitly says ‘thou shalt not,’” or, as the anti-ism proponent, “nothing goes unless the Bible explicitly says ‘thou shalt.’”

Learning what God actually binds and/or looses is not always easy. The faithful Christian must study, learn, and grow (2 Pet. 3:18). He or she must be humble enough to receive more thorough instruction, as did Apollos when he was wrong about baptism (Acts 18:24-28). For the most part, the Bible is easy to understand and follow (if one is willing, Jn. 7:17). However, there are still some parts and applications that are “hard to understand” (2 Pet. 3:16). Studying is what is necessary, not the easier, extreme, “either/or” fallacy approaches of liberalism or anti-ism. May God help us to bind only what God has bound, to loose only what God has loosed, and the determination to study and learn the difference. What will make us different from the denominational world? Binding and loosing only as God has!

“Binding” and “Loosing” in Worship

True worship to God must be done “in spirit and in truth” (Jn. 4:23-24). That is, worship must be in accordance with the proper intent and attitude (love, humility, and reverence), and it must be done according to the specific avenues authorized by the Lord (cf. Col. 3:17). God has already bound that our worship consist of singing (Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19), praying (Acts 2:42), preaching/teaching (Acts 2:42; 20:7 cf. Mt. 15:8-9), giving of our means on the first day of the week (1 Cor. 16:1-2), and participating in the Lord’s Supper on the first day of the week (Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:23-29).

We have no right to loose any of these expressions of worship, nor do we have a right to bind something God has not bound concerning how these authorized expressions of worship are carried out. We loose what God has bound when, for example, we add a mechanical instrument of music to our worship. In so doing, we loose the singing that God authorized. One might say, “I can still sing while playing an instrument,” but by what authority does one decide a mechanical instrument is acceptable to God? Why not belly dancing, or doing jumping jacks? If we allow one thing that God did not authorize, then how can we oppose anything else? God’s word must be our standard! We bind what God has loosed when we make expedient matters in carrying out God’s requirements to worship unlawful. A congregation may, for example, use a data projector to display the songs on a big screen instead of using a songbook. God-authorized singing implies words and music, and how we all sing the words and music is a matter of expediency. A local eldership has the authority to designate expediciencies in singing (cf. Heb. 13:17). However, for some to say that a congregation who displays songs on a big screen is liberal and should not be fellowshiped merely because they chose to display songs on a big screen rather than from a songbook is binding what God has loosed.

“Binding” and “Loosing” in Benevolence

Among the many responsibilities that God has placed upon His people, both congregationally and individually, is benevolence (Gal. 6:10; Jas. 1:27). We have no right to loose God’s requirement for us to be benevolent (Mt. 25:41-46). Neither do we have a right to bind what God has loosed in matters of expediency in carrying out benevolence. For example, during natural disasters, all of us have seen (and maybe even experienced) the need for benevolent aid. Many brethren have deemed some disaster relief organizations unscriptural solely because, according to one writer, “their work is headed and controlled by a board of men, not the Lord’s church.” The main, unstated, implication in that brother’s article is that all obligations the Lord places on Christians, congregationally and/or individually, must be done under the direct oversight of a local church eldership. Where does God bind that? Did the Good Samaritan sin when he paid money to the inn keeper and said, “Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you” (Lk. 10:35)? Was he wrong to use a “man-made organization” in aiding the one who fell among thieves? Or was that something he was only allowed to do under the Old Covenant, but in the church we cannot do? Think of the implications if we take the position that all benevolence must be carried out under the direct oversight of a local church. First, it would be sin for a person to individually help someone in need without first checking with his elders. Second, it would mean that two brothers from different congregations would sin if they both contributed to buy a tank of gasoline for one in need. Third, it would be sinful for a local church to use any organization besides itself to carry out its work, including the US Postal Service, a printing company, etc. One may legitimately be critical of disaster relief organizations, for other reasons, but to say they are unscriptural simply because they are under a board of directors is binding what God has loosed.

(continued on page 4)

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Jim Turner, Ginny Hamby, Margaret Coone, Sharon Washington, Carol Eason and Josephine Bowman.

Relatives: Brian Patterson is off all life support, he is making good progress and Lord willing, will be in rehab soon. Also Benny Martin and Cameron Soles.

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

Others: Joyce Stearsman, Chrissi Fuesner, Connie Hyer, Jack Pinckert, Glen Edwards, (a friend of Sharon Egolf's), Brian Tagtow, Vince Daugherty, (student at F.S.O.P.) and Corey Perry.

Upcoming Events

Sept. 1st-3rd: Marriage and Family Seminar at the North Lakeland Church of Christ.

Sunday Sept. 3rd: Fellowship In-Service after evening services. Please bring finger foods.

Monday Sept. 4th: Annual Labor Day Lectureship at Sixth St. Church of Christ.

Wednesday Sept. 6th: Ladies class will resume every Wednesday at 10:00 a.m.

Tues. Sept. 12th: Elders/Deacons meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Saturday Sept 16th: Men's Breakfast at the Hilltop Church of Christ in Winter Haven at 8:00 a.m.

Sept. 29th - Oct. 1st: Rush at Freed Hardeman University for middle school and high school students.

Saturday October 7th: South FL. Avenue's Ladies Day!

Thank You

Your love and encouragement is missed so much. Keep Bob in your prayers as he needs it. I find myself very busy just taking care of him, but also very lonely with out you all. God bless you all.

Love to all, Grace & Bob McAnally.

Directory Corrections

Evelyn Wyatt's birthday is Nov. 6th and Maddox Estridge's is Nov. 4th. Rose Brook's address is 535 Longfellow Blvd. Lakeland, FL and corrected phone # is 863-602-9758.

Hither, Thither and Yon

Phil & Dottie Fife will be leaving on Aug. 29th and traveling to California. They will not be returning until the first week of October. Please pray for safe travels.

Visitors

Rudy Brooks, Joshua Potvin, Mary Moore, Ruthie Davila, Jeff & Hollis Bauman and Sarah.

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

September

Charles Paulin **Table** C.J. Grimes
Tucker Sweeney **Assist** Bobby Sheumaker

Sunday, August 27, 2017

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Jim Turner
Prayer..... C.J. Grimes

10:30 A.M.

Announcements.....David Williams.
Song Leader..... Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer.....Bobby Sheumaker
Sermon.....Hiram Kemp
Closing PrayerTucker Sweeney

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader.....Tucker Sweeney
Opening Prayer.....David Anderson
Sermon.....Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer C.J. Grimes
Greeters..... The Bingles
Att. Cards.....Paul & Ian
Open & Close Building..... Bob Pratt

Wed. August 30, 2017

Song Leader.....Matt Willcut
Opening Prayer..... Jason Hendrix
Closing Prayer Bobby Simpson

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

Sunday, Sept. 3, 2017

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Kyle Williams
Prayer.....David Anderson

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... Stacey Paulin
Song Leader..... Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer.....Frank Hamby
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Tyler Anderson

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader.....Paul Romine
Opening Prayer..... Stacey Paulin
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer David Anderson

Greeters..... The Edmonsons
Att. Cards..... Willcut boy's
Open & Close Building..... Jimmy Sweeney

Wed. Sept 6, 2017

Song Leader..... Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer..... Fred Strickland
Closing PrayerDavid Deal

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

July 30.....	\$5,817.95
Aug 06.....	\$6,128.50
Aug 13.....	\$5,116.75
Aug 20.....	\$4,954.00
Contribution Average	\$5,340.84
2017 Weekly Budget	\$4,716.51

Are We "Binding" and "Loosing" as God Has? (continued from page 1)

"Binding" and "Loosing" in Other Areas

Undoubtedly, some might be critical of such things as egg hunts, holiday parties in December, trick-or-treating, etc. While it is true that these things can be done in such a way that they detract from true religion and perhaps even imitate denominationalism (cf. Rom. 12:2), it is also true that they can be done simply as part of American culture. It is not inherently sinful to participate in some cultural activities (cf. 1 Cor. 9:19-23). In fact, all cultural practices that are not inherently sinful are cultural practices in which Christians may participate. Again, there are many factors to be considered, but to make a blanket statement that these activities are sinful is binding where God has not bound. May we never loose what God has bound nor bind what God has loosed, and may we ever be vigilant in studying to know the difference. ❤️ Brian

First John 1:7

If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Second John 9

Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son.



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 . . .



Coming Soon to South Florida Avenue

Beginning with the winter quarter, we will have a new Bible school curriculum. For those interested, our first training workshop will be Oct. 15 from 2:00-5:00 pm. See Hiram if you want to help.

The Church & The Home Working Together

Save the Date Nov. 12-15, 2017
Our Next Gospel Meeting
with Steve Higginbotham

Don't Be "Willingly Ignorant"

Concerning those denying Christ's Second Coming based on the world continuing unchanged since the Creation, Peter said, "For this they willingly are ignorant of" (2 Pet. 3:5). He then went on to explain how the flood blew their premise out of the water (pun intended). Likewise, there are people today who refuse to examine the evidence against their premises. Like little children covering their ears at the disliked instruction of parents, the "willingly ignorant" do not want to hear plain Bible passages or principles that substantiate New Testament Christianity as the only religion approved by God. There is no truth we should fear! Rather than being "willingly ignorant," let us immerse ourselves in studying God's word! ❤️ Brian