

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. 68 No.37 09-22-15

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SUNDAY SERVICES

Bible Study.....9:30a.m.
Worship.....10:30a.m.
Evening Worship.....6:00p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Ladies Class.....10:00a.m.
Bible Study.....7:00p.m.

HOME OF

Florida School of Preaching

MISSION FIELDS

Dub Hill.....Russia
Don Iverson.....India
Randy Judd.....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

Stop Looking for the Ram Caught in the Thicket

Darrell Powell

God commanded Abraham, *“Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of...”* (Genesis 22:2). So Abraham set out to do God’s will, and he came to the place and said to his servants, *“Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you...”* (22:5). But, just as Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son, the angel of the Lord called out to him, *“Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me...”* (22:10-12). Just then, Abraham saw a ram caught in a thicket by his horns. He offered it up as a burnt offering to the Lord, and then he named the place *“The Lord will provide”* (22:14).

God had given Abraham instructions on how he was to worship Him. Abraham was then bound to that command, and it was only when God Himself amended it that it could go undone or be altered in any way. After God changed His command, He provided an alternative sacrifice to take Isaac’s place. But without God’s authorization, Abraham by no means could have altered his worship.

I fear that today many are busy searching for the “ram in the thicket” rather than accepting the will of God. People seem to be ever ready to change God-authorized worship. They are looking for what they feel is a “better” or “more spiritual” way to worship. They want to take “the fruit of our lips” (Hebrews 13:15) in song, and add mechanical instruments and/or hand clapping. They want to partake of the Lord’s Supper less frequently so that it will not “lose its meaning.”

I urge you to stop looking for the ram caught in the thicket. No longer will God change His instructions for worship. His Word, which contains *“all things that pertain to life and godliness”* (2 Peter 1:3), has been “once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3). It is complete, and will never be changed again. *“Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man”* (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

\$1.00 FOR A SOUL?

Jim Faughn

He is not a member of the Lord's church. He has expressed on more than one occasion his admiration for his wife who is a faithful and dedicated Christian lady. He admires her for her example and helps her find a congregation of God's people with whom she can worship when they are out of town.

He used to go with her. He used to listen to the Bible being taught in a class environment. He used to hear Gospel lessons being preached. He used to have repeated opportunities to hear a preacher extend the invitation. He used to have to think about his spiritual condition when the "invitation song" was being sung.

None of those things is true any longer. He no longer joins his wife as she faithfully makes her way to be with her brothers and sisters in the Lord and offer worship to Him.

When I talked with him, he did not indicate that he really had anything against the church. In fact, he was very complimentary of many of the Christians he knew. He called some by name and expressed to me how much he thought of them.

As we talked about his spiritual condition and needs, I became aware of the fact that, like so many others, there is not just one reason why he no longer makes the effort to be with his wife when she worships. There hardly ever is just one reason in situations like this.

However, in most situations, there is a "tipping point." There can be that one incident that is the "straw that broke the camel's back." In this man's case, that point involved what many would consider a very insignificant event and maybe even a less significant amount of money.

He watched a man whom he knew to be a Christian and a preacher drive into a convenience store and buy \$19.00 worth of gas. Instead of paying \$19.00, he wrote a check in the amount of \$20.00.

Do you have any idea what happened with the other dollar? What could a preacher have done with only \$1.00 that could cause somebody else to think that it was not worthwhile to hear him preach? He bought a lottery ticket!

When I heard this, I thought of a couple of applications for all of us. First of all, I hear the argument from time to time that gambling should not be opposed because it is "victimless." In the sense of somebody being killed or injured when the man bought the lottery ticket, I suppose that a case could be made for that. The case would be much more difficult to make when we consider things such as a person's spiritual wellbeing.

The case would also be more difficult to make when we consider influence. Somebody is watching each and every one of us (not just the elders and preachers). Some action that I take, some words I use or some attitudes that I have which I do not consider to be a "big deal" may be being carefully scrutinized by some precious soul.

I do not want somebody to be able to use me as their reason for not being interested in the Lord and His church. While, in some instances, their "reasons" may be totally unjustified and based on unrealistic expectations of what a Christian is supposed to be, they are still valid to the ones who are observing our lives.

How ironic: the same person who I am sure has preached repeatedly that one soul is worth more than the entire world (Matthew 16:26) helped with one "insignificant act" push a soul further from the Lord for \$1.00! I wonder how many I have had the same effect on for far less! "Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity" (Colossians 4:5).

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Jacqueline Dopwell is home from the hospital and waiting on further testing before starting chemotherapy. Ethan Thrower has been home sick with bronchitis. Also keep Grace McAnally, Ginny Hamby, Brenda Mask, Jim Turner, Taleah Anderson, Margaret Coone and Rembert & Gloria Allen in prayer.

Relatives: Wayne Hendrix and Barry Richardson.

Shut In Members: Virginia Plumlee, Bill Burton, Dick & Joyce Burbage and Duane Nelson.

Others: Chrissi Fuesner and Shirley Randall.

Upcoming Events

Sept. 25th: Chicken Supper at the Mount Dora Christian Academy. See the flyer on the bulletin board for more details.

Oct. 2nd-3rd: Ladies' Fall Encampment at the Central Florida Bible Camp. See the flyer for further info.

Oct. 3rd: Area Wide Ladies Brunch here at South Florida Ave. at 9:00 a.m. All ladies' are invited to join us for food and fellowship. If you would like to help in some way please see Melissa Craft.

Oct. 3rd - 4th: 50th Anniversary Homecoming at the Central Church of Christ in Clearwater. The flyer is on the bulletin board for more info.

Oct. 4th - 8th: Family Enrichment Seminar at the Hilltop Church of Christ in Winter Haven. See the flyer for more details.

Oct. 11th: Spencer Broome from Latin American Missions (Forrest Park, Valdosta), will be here Sunday morning to give a YES II report during the Bible class and morning worship.

Nov 7th: Fall Fundraising BBQ at the Cental Florida Bible Camp. The flyer is on the bulletin board with more info.

Visitors

Jordan Kessler, Tim Gengle, Amanda Patterson and Claud Romine.

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

October

Bobby Sheumaker Table Fred Strickland
Bobby Simpson..... Assist Phil Fife

Sunday, September 27, 2015

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Jim Turner
Prayer..... Fred Strickland

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... Jimmy Sweeney
Song Leader..... Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Frank Hamby
Closing Prayer Antonio Martin

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Tucker Sweeney
Opening Prayer C.J. Grimes
Closing Prayer David Williams
Greeters The Bingles
Att. Cards..... Quadarius and Ian
Open & Close Building..... Jimmy Sweeney

Wed. Sept 30, 2015

Song Leader..... Jim Turner
Opening Prayer Charles Paulin
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, October 4, 2015

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class..... Kyle Bingle
Prayer..... Ken Walker

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... David Anderson
Song Leader..... Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer..... Kenny French
Closing Prayer..... Tim Croson

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader..... Kyle Williams
Opening Prayer..... Paul Romine
Closing Prayer..... Stacey Paulin
Greeters..... The Fifes
Att. Cards..... Paul & Ian
Open & Close Building..... Phil Fife

Wed. October 7, 2015

Song Leader..... Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer..... Brian Kenyon
Closing Prayer..... Fred Strickland

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Aug 30	\$4,984.70
Sept 06.....	\$4,562.00
Sept 13.....	\$3,742.60
Sept 20	\$4,063.90
Contribution Average.....	\$4,622.29
2015 Weekly Budget.....	\$4,302.98

HEAR OUR RADIO SPOTS

This Week

"Earth's Most Sacred Spot"



WONN 1230 or WLKF 1430 or on web page
www.southfloridaavenuechurchofchrist.com

"NO NEW THING UNDER THE SUN"

Back in February during the Freed-Hardeman Lectureship's Open Forum, a discussion ensued about how to reach the "millennials" (people born after the early 1984) with the Gospel. It made me think, "Do they think they are the only ones in history who refused to believe the status quo and demand evidence?" Then, very recently a follower of mine tweeted, "Apparently, every generation thinks they invented rebellion." These two incidents, though months apart, reminded me of Solomon's words, "That which has been is what will be, That which is done is what will be done, And there is nothing new under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 1:9). The term "under the sun" in Ecclesiastes has to do with life here and now, without reference to God. Generations of people have come and gone since Adam and Eve. The Bible records all kinds of people who rebelled against God ... and they never succeeded. Those who built the tower of Babel were scattered (Genesis 11:8-9), Nadab and Abihu were devoured by fire (Leviticus 10:1-2), and Korah and his cohorts were swallowed by the earth (Numbers 16:31-33), just to name a few. If people today think they possess never-before-seen boldness to defy God and/or supreme intelligence so as to outsmart God's will, they are sadly mistaken. These types are nothing new! God has dealt with them before! If people today will not accept the Gospel simply because some "older generation" people have and millennials refuse to rationally consider the evidence and act upon it, this is nothing new. People have "written off" the Gospel for centuries, and have paid the price (2 Thes. 1:7-8). Let us accept Solomon's conclusion in our lives: "Fear God and keep His commandments" (Ecclesiastes 12:13). ❤️ *Brian*



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

Youth Group News

Sunday, Sept. 27 The girls involved in the **Keepers** event will meet with our two sisters Pat and Pat, and the boys involved in **Song Leading** will meet with Steve at the church building at 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, Oct. 11 Will be our next L2L group meeting. in the fellowship room at 4:00 p.m. In the meantime, our event mentors are coming up with their schedules, which will be out soon. If you would like to be a mentor in the following events, please let Brian know: puppet theater, mass media website, or mass media audio and video. We have a great group of young people. Let us pray for them!

"Pew Packers" is meeting every Sunday evening at 5:45 to learn the Bible!



If you would like to help with snack-time on Lads to Leaders days, there is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board. You can help by donating snacks, or helping to serve.



The Book of Matthew

Let Brian know if you still need a copy of the questions in order to study at home!

This Week's Memory Verses ➡ **Matthew 12:46-50** ➡ **Join As We Memorize 100 Verses!**