

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. 36 09-26-17

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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

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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www.southfloridaavenuechurchofchrist.com



IN
SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY

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

The "Abba, Father" Relationship

By Brian R. Kenyon

Conscientious Christian parents in blended families know first-hand the challenge of establishing close parent-child relationships with children they have not nurtured from the womb up. Differences in maturity, cultural backgrounds, and past experiences of those involved all play into the depth of relationship that is possible, no matter how much deeper the parent or children could wish the relationship were. Thankfully, the spiritual children of God are guaranteed the closest, most intimate relationship with their Father, no matter the previous life they lived outside of Christ. Paul wrote to the church at Rome, "For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father'" (Rom. 8:15). The fact that faithful Christians "cry out, Abba, Father" gives great insight to the relationship they have with God. Let us examine the relationship conveyed by the ability to say "Abba, Father."

Based Upon Receiving the Holy Spirit

Receiving the Holy Spirit through obedience to God's word makes this "Abba, Father" relationship possible (Rom. 8:1-14). Paul tells us about this Holy Spirit. First, consider who the Spirit is not. Paul says that we "have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear." In both parts of the verse, "have received" points to an action completed in the past, which must refer to their baptism (cf. Acts 19:2-3, "received ... believed ... baptized"). The Spirit that Christians receive is not "a spirit of slavery leading to fear again" (NAS). The bondage of sin is what leads to fear (Heb. 2:14-15), but since the Holy Spirit, through "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," sets us free from sin (Rom. 8:1-4 cf. Rom. 6:6; 16-17; 7:25), being converted is not a reversion to the state from which we have been freed. Christians are under bondage (Rom. 6:18), but it is to "righteousness," not to the fear associated with being lost in sin.

Second, consider who the Spirit is. Paul says, "but you received the Spirit of adoption." The word "but" is translated from a word that gives a strong contrast—in contrast to "the spirit of bondage," we have received the "Spirit of adoption." Spiritual adoption in the New Testament is always viewed in connection with the work of Christ (Gal. 4:5-6; Eph. 1:5).

Here, it will be of value to consider adoption in the first century Roman Empire, since this is how Paul would have known the term "adoption." According to William Barclay, there were two steps in the Roman adoption process (106). The first step was carried out by a "symbolic sale" in which copper and balances

were used. The father would “sell” his son and “buy” him back twice. The third time the son was sold, the father did not buy him back, thus breaking the power of the father. This showed that the father’s giving up the child was deliberate and premeditated. The second step involved the adopting father’s going to a Roman magistrate and presenting the legal case for the transference of the child into the adopting father’s own power. The following consequences resulted from this adoption: (1) the one adopted lost “all rights in his old family and gained all the rights of a legitimate son in his new family;” (2) The one adopted “became heir to his new father’s estate”—even if other sons were born after his adoption, it did not effect his rights; and (3) the “old life of the adopted person” was legally wiped out (debts cancelled, etc.)—“he was regarded as a new person entering into a new life with which the past had nothing to do.” He was absolutely the son of his new father.

Although the Christian’s adoption will not be ultimately complete until the Second Coming of Christ (cf. Rom. 8:19-23), note the following changes that are involved now: (1) a change in family from a son of Satan to a son of God; (2) a change of inheritance from eternal damnation to eternal life; and (3) a change of status from the fear of a ruthless master to the care and protection of a loving Father (cf. Ps. 103:13). Even within the context of Romans 8, this “Spirit of adoption” is evidenced by the moral walk of the Christian (Rom. 8:13), the reception of the Spirit which results in His “witness” with our own spirits (Rom. 8:16), and the joint-suffering and subsequent glorification of the Christian with Christ (Rom. 8:17).

“Abba, Father”—Sign of Family Intimacy

“Abba” is the transliteration of an Aramaic word that means “father.” Every time this word occurs in the New Testament, it is accompanied with the Greek word for “Father” (Mk. 14:36; Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6). Why is this the case? Likely, the term “Abba” by itself would seem disrespectful. “Abba” was used as an intimate address like “Daddy,” or “Papa” (Edwards 208). The word is “from the babbling of a little child ... and is the familiar term used in the home” (Morris 315). It must be remembered that the Jews of the first century avoided pronouncing God’s name when possible, and even when they did, they accompanied it with a blessing, for fear of profaning His name. Jesus, however, in a “remarkable break with tradition,” dared to simply address God as “Father” in His prayers (Mt. 26:39; Jn. 17:1) (Edwards 208). The one time Jesus used “Abba, Father,” it was a very emotional and stressful time under the looming shadow of the cross. Jesus prayed, “Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will” (Mk. 14:36). Paul’s use of “Abba, Father” in Romans 8:15 is in a similar context. The term “cry out” in “by whom we cry out, ‘Abba, Father’” reflects strong emotion, and it is likewise in a context of suffering (cf. Rom. 8:17-18). “Abba” would be the normal way a child in that culture would address his or her father in times of great distress. The comfort that this brings to us today is that the very same intimate relationship that Jesus had with the Father moments before the cross, expressed by His address, “Abba, Father,” belongs to every faithful child of God!

To the Galatians, Paul wrote, “And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, ‘Abba, Father!’ Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ” (Gal. 4:6-7). Sonship carries with it the most intimate relationship with God. Because all faithful Christians are “sons” (children) in good standing, all will be heirs of every blessing that can possibly come from God through Jesus Christ, who in this sense is also our fellow brother and heir!

Conclusion

Although “Abba” as an address to God may have seemed inappropriate in the first century, it did (and does) show the new family relationship that Christians have entered. The Spirit’s indwelling makes possible this relationship. The Spirit only indwells the faithful Christian (Rom. 8:5-9). Are we outside of Christ? If so, let us go through the “adoption” process and obey the Gospel (Acts 2:38). Are we faithful Christians? If not, let us repent and be restored. God wants all of us to have the intimate relationship with Him expressed by “Abba, Father.

Works Cited

- Barclay, William. *The Letter to the Romans*. Rev. ed. Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1975.
- Edwards, James R. *Romans*. New International Biblical Commentary. Vol. 6. Ed. W. Ward Gasque. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1992.
- Morris, Leon. *The Epistle to the Romans*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988.

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Please keep Ginny Hamby in prayer as she under-goes a tough round of chemo treatment. Also keep Jim Turner, Margaret Coone, Sharon Washington, Carol Eason and Josephine Bowman in prayer.

Relatives: Joy Baker, (Michelle Paulin's cousin).

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

Others: Duane Nelson, Joyce Stearsman, Chrissi Fuesner, Jack Pinckert, Corey Perry and Paul Meacham, (preacher for the Panama St. church of Christ in Montgomery, AL). Please continue to keep in prayer the members of the Burnette church of Christ in Antioch, Tennessee, who were affected by the mass shooting.

Upcoming Events

Saturday Sept. 30th: Ladies brunch at the Skyview church of Christ at 10:00 a.m.

Saturday Sept. 30th: Young adults get together and devotional at Josh & Marissa Estridge's house at 6:30 p.m. This will be a potluck meal, please bring a dish to share.

Sunday Oct. 1st: Lads to Leaders kick off meeting at 4:30 p.m. This is for ages 4 through high school and all adults that can help here or from home. Please plan to attend and support our youth group.

Sunday Oct. 1st: Fellowship In-Service after evening services. Again please bring finger foods.


Saturday October 7th: South Florida Ave.'s Ladies Day!
We are in need of men from the congregation that can serve lunch. Please sign up on the bulletin board if you are able to help. There is also a sign up sheet for items needed for the breakfast. For questions see Kelcey Grimes or Brittani Kemp.

Hither, Thither and Yon

Duane and Gloria Nelson have moved to Arkansas to be with their son. The corrected address is 9 Amanda Dr., Vilonia, AR 72173. Continue to keep them in prayer.

Visitors

Dennis & Jean McCarter, Tiffany Hash, Sam and Megan, Robersons, Dora Viner and Leigh Anne Garland.

 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. This is a joint effort to evangelize involving Terrance Brownlow-Dindy (6th Street) and Hiram Kemp. Let's point our community to the Bible!

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

October

David Anderson **Table** David Williams
 Vince Daughtery **Assist** Robert Cooper

Sunday, Oct. 1, 2017

9:30 A.M.
Song at Bible Class Frank Hamby
Prayer David Anderson

10:30 A.M.
Announcements Kenny French
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Matt Willcut
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Tyler Anderson

6:00 P.M.
Song Leader Kyle Williams
Opening Prayer John McShane
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Charles Paulin

Greeters The Edmonsons
Att. Cards Willcut boy's
Open & Close Building John McShane

Wed. Oct 4, 2017

Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Fred Strickland
Closing Prayer David Deal

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

Sunday, Oct 8, 2017

9:30 A.M.
Song at Bible Class Stacey Paulin
Prayer Tucker Sweeney

10:30 A.M.
Announcements Kenny French
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Frank Hamby
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer David Deal

6:00 P.M.
Song Leader Kyle Williams
Opening Prayer Jimmy Sweeney
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Tyler Anderson
Greeters Sweeneys
Att. Cards Paul/Sebastian
Open & Close Building John McShane

Wed. Oct. 11, 2017

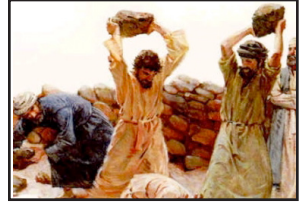
Song Leader Vince Daughtery
Opening Prayer C.J. Grimes
Closing Prayer Jeff Bingle

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Sept 03.....	\$5,383.00
Sept 10.....	\$.....N/A
Sept 17.....	\$7,596.00
Sept 24.....	\$6,078.00
Contribution Average	\$5,278.84
2017 Weekly Budget	\$4,716.51

Are We Ready to Die?

Last Sunday, another tragic church shooting occurred. This time, though, it hits a little closer to home. This happened at the Burnette church of Christ in Antioch, Tennessee, near Nashville, was dismissing. At the time this article was written, the investigation was still going on. Our hearts are broken for the unnecessary loss of life, and these families that were affected are in our prayers. This incident reminds us of life's frailty. For the purpose of this article, neither the shooter, his background, nor his motives are of much importance. The fact is, given America's and, for that matter, the world's situation, this kind of thing could happen to anyone of us. If not a shooting, our lives could be unexpectedly taken in a number of other ways. Are we ready? God said long ago that "it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment" (Heb. 9:27). Furthermore, He also taught, "Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12), which could certainly include being murdered (cf. Rev. 2:10; 6:9-11). There is inherent value in physical life. Even a part of Jesus did not want to die, as evidenced in his thrice repeated prayer, "if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me" (Mt. 26:36-44). However, we must not be so attached to this life that we think we will live to a ripe old age. Hopefully we will, but it is always good to "Be ready to keep from having to get ready!" Let us make sure our "house is in order" (cf. Isa. 38:1), more sooner than later! Are you a faithful Christian? ❤️ *Brian*



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 . . .

The L2L "Kick-Off" meeting has been rescheduled for October 1 @ 4:30 p.m. in the fellowship room. See how you can help our young people grow spiritually!



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

Think souls! Let's Invite our friends and neighbors to church assemblies and/or to one-on-one Bible studies!



Almost Here Oct. 7, 2017

Ladies Day @ SFA w/ Kathy Pollard

"Falling in Love with Your Bible"

Sometimes it seems this world is unravelling. For what it's worth, though, this world, shortly after Adam and Eve were expelled from Eden, has been in turmoil and God's people have been the objects of disdain. Be patient and trust the Lord. He is in control. Now, more than ever, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven" (Mt. 5:16).