

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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IN
SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY

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

Fields White for Harvest

By Brian R. Kenyon

While in Samaria, Jesus told His disciples, "Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest?' Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!" (Jn. 4:35). As in agriculture, so also in evangelism, fields "white for harvest" do not just happen. Preparation must first be made. Jesus had prepared these people by teaching the Samaritan woman, who in turn went and told her village about Jesus (Jn. 4:4-30). The local church must constantly be looking for souls who can be brought to Christ. Let us note three principles concerning fields "white for harvest" as it relates to evangelism and how laborers can reap those souls for Christ.

Finding Prospects

There are two ways prospects can be found: they either come to us or we go to them. First, consider how contacts come to us. When Jesus left Judea for Galilee, "He needed to go through Samaria" (Jn. 4:4). This need was not so much geographical as it was a moral need for the people of Samaria to come in contact with the Gospel. While Jesus was resting at the well, the Samaritan woman came to Him (Jn. 4:5-6). She did not come to the well because of Him. She simply came to draw water. However, Jesus took advantage of the situation and initiated a conversation that eventually led to a discussion of spiritual truth. **Lesson one:** let us initiate a conversation that leads to spiritual truths among people within our reach, even if they are strangers. By talking with the Samaritan woman, Jesus went against the status quo. In the first century, Jews and Samaritans avoided each other. Even the woman was surprised that Jesus spoke to her (Jn. 4:9). **Lesson two:** let us be willing to go against the status quo. Sometimes we think that some people would not even give us the time of day, but, as Jesus showed, that is not always the case. In fact, there are people out there who are looking for what we have, but if we never strike up that conversation, they may never find the Gospel.

Second, consider making contact with others by inviting them to "Come and see." Shortly after John the Baptist identified Jesus as "The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world," two of John's disciples stayed with Jesus to learn more about Him (Jn. 1:29-39). One of those disciples was Andrew, who "first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, 'We have found the Messiah' (which is translated, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus" (Jn. 1:41-42a). Notice that Andrew did not deliver a great lesson to his brother. He simply brought him to Jesus! **Lesson three:** family members are often good contacts for us to take the

Gospel. Of course, sometimes family members are the hardest to reach, but it is a lesson worthy of our attention that Andrew first invited his brother. Next, consider taking the Gospel to friends and acquaintances. “Philip found Nathanael and said to him, ‘We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.’ And Nathanael said to him, ‘Can anything good come out of Nazareth?’ Philip said to him, ‘Come and see’” (Jn. 1:45-46). Again, Philip did not teach some great lesson to Nathanael; he simply invited him to “Come and see!” **Lesson four:** people who know us personally are more likely to accept our invitation than those to whom we are strangers.

Whether they come to us or we go to them, contacts are not difficult to find. Sometimes we are hindered by fear or shyness, but this can be overcome (cf. Phil. 4:13). Sometimes we are disinterested in the Gospel. This is a serious problem and must be overcome (cf. Rev. 3:14-22). Let us constantly look for contacts, realizing that we do not have to be eloquent. If nothing else, let us at least invite them to “Come and see.”

Taking The Message To Others

Going back to the incident with Jesus and the Samaritan woman, let us consider three lessons from her on taking the message to others. **First**, when we are convinced of the Gospel’s truth, evangelizing others will become a priority in our lives. Following her discussion with Jesus, “the woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city” to tell them about Jesus (Jn. 4:28). The very reason she went to the well in the first place was to draw water (Jn. 4:7), which was essential to physical life. Yet, after learning the truth about Jesus, her priority was no longer sustaining physical life. Rather, she was more interested in spiritual life, and not just her own, but also that of her entire village! Like the Samaritan woman, we also must realize that “Whoever drinks of this [physical] water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I [Jesus] shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life” (Jn. 4:13-14). The spiritual water that Jesus offered is part of the great invitation intended for all (Rev. 22:17).

Second, all of us, again, can at least invite others to “Come and see.” When the Samaritan woman finally comprehended the words of Jesus, she then “left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?” (Jn. 4:28-29). The woman of Samaria was one of questionable moral character (cf. Jn. 4:16-19). In the typical first century village, as in many villages in non-industrialized countries today, everyone knew each other’s background (cf. Acts 16:1-3). Thus, the Samaritan woman’s effectiveness of personally teaching the men of her village would be limited. However, given her marital background, what Jesus revealed about it, and the conviction with which she told her village, her invitation resulted in the men of the village coming out to meet Jesus. This is not to say that the more immoral our past, the better we are at inviting people, but it is to say that all of us can at least invite others to come and hear God’s word. If the Samaritan woman could do it, so can we!

Third, in taking the Gospel to others, not only will we reach the lost, but we will also encourage the saved. After the Samaritan woman left Jesus to invite her village, the disciples approached Jesus. When they left him, He was tired and hungry (Jn. 4:6). So they “urged Him, saying, Rabbi, eat. But He said to them, I have food to eat of which you do not know” (Jn. 4:31-32). This puzzled the disciples because they were the ones who went to get food (Jn. 4:8). “Therefore the disciples said to one another, Has anyone brought Him anything to eat? Jesus said to them, My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work” (Jn. 4:33-34). Jesus’ concern for the Samaritan woman’s soul as a priority over His own physical needs and the disciples’ lack of comprehension on true priorities provided the perfect opportunity to remind them that their very livelihood (“food”) must be to do God’s will! From this context Jesus said, “Do you not say, There are still four months and then comes the harvest? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!” (Jn. 4:35). Thus, the disciples were encouraged not to wait for the “perfect” time, which may never come, but to take the Gospel to others now while the opportunities are ours.

If we do not see taking the Gospel to others as a priority, then we will not look for the opportunities that present themselves through the providence of God. If we do not take advantage of the opportunities we have to invite others to study the Bible and/or attend church services, we will not be an encouragement to others to take the Gospel to the lost. We must consider taking the Gospel to others as a priority!

(continued on page 4)

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Jenna Hendrix and Hailee were both sick this week. Virginia Walker is home with pneumonia. Please continue to remember Ginny Hamby, Brenda Mask, Jim Turner, Margaret Coone, Sharon Washington, Carol Eason and Josephine Bowman in prayer.

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

Others: Joy Baker, (Michelle Paulin's cousin), Duane Nelson, Joyce Stearsman, Jack Pinckert, Corey Perry and Paul Meacham, Elizabeth Tubbs-Dean and Carla Chin (Zsazeli Enamorado's teacher).

Upcoming Events

Saturday, October 7th: South Florida Ave.'s Ladies Day! Breakfast at 8:30 am and program at 9:00 am **We are in need of men from the congregation that can serve lunch, please see Kelcey Grimes or Brittani Kemp.**

Tuesday, October 10th: Elders/Deacons meeting at 7:00 pm

Tuesday, October 17th: FSOP Ladies Class at 7:00 pm

Thursday, October 19th: Beginning of our weekly evening ladies class at 7:00 pm.

Saturday, October 21st: Semi-Annual Picnic/Sing at Mary Holland Park.

Saturday, October 21st: Trunk or Treat at Tyler & Jessica Anderson's house from 5:30 pm til dark. Please bring finger foods and camp chairs.



Tuesday, October 17th: FSOP Ladies Class at 7:00 pm

November 12th-15th: Our Fall Gospel Meeting, speaker will be Steve Higginbotham.

Hither, Thither and Yon

Brian Kenyon will be in Lubbock, Texas, for a lectureship October 7th thru 11th. Please pray for safe travels.

Visitors

Jeff Bauman, Paulisky Irizarry, Jane Jessee, Dennis & Jean McCarter, Richard & Connie Meadows, Mary Moore, and Peter Saunders.

Our Prayers Continue to Be with the Families of the

59 Dead and Hundreds Wounded

that resulted from the shooting in Las Vegas. Let us also pray that all Christians will do their part in applying the word of God to their lives, thus defeating the "strongholds ... arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God." The only lasting cure for this world's sin problem is the Gospel of Christ!

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

October

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

Sunday, October 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 PrayerDavid Deal

6:00 P.M.

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

Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Song LeaderVince Daughtery
Opening Prayer..... C.J. Grimes
Closing PrayerJeff Bingle

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

Sunday, October 15, 2017

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Jim Turner
Prayer..... Kyle Bingle

10:30 A.M.

Announcements.....Kenny French
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer CJ Grimes
Sermon.....Hiram Kemp
Closing PrayerTim Croson

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Kyle Williams
Opening Prayer Fred Strickland
Sermon.....Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer John McShane
Greeters Bingle Family
Att. Cards..... Antonio/Paul
Open & Close Building..... John McShane

Wednesday, October 18, 2017

Song LeaderDavid Williams
Opening Prayer John McShane
Closing Prayer Fred Strickland

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Sept 10.....	\$.....N/A
Sept 17.....	\$7,596.00
Sept 24.....	\$6,078.00
Oct 01.....	\$10,676.00
Contribution Average	\$5,408.89
2017 Weekly Budget	\$4,716.51

Fields White for Harvest (continued)

The Result of Fields White for Harvest

How people will respond to the Gospel is often predictable when their hearts are right (cf. Acts 8:30-31, 38; 10:33, 48). Honest people who weigh the evidence of Scripture will come to the proper conclusions and will pursue further knowledge. The Samaritan woman did influence a certain level of faith in others, for “many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, ‘He told me all that I ever did’” (Jn. 4:39). Their initial belief fueled their desire to know more, so that “when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. And many more believed because of His own word” (Jn. 4:40-41). Faith based upon the word of the woman led to faith based on the word of the Lord. “Then they said to the woman, Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world” (Jn. 4:42).

Conclusion

Before Jesus ascended back to the Father, He commissioned the apostles to “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned” (Mk. 16:15-16 cf. Mt. 28:18-20). The *(continued below)*



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

Let's encourage
our youth and
their mentors as
we begin a new
year of L2L



God blessed us with
a South African gift.
Welcome back, Pam!

(continued from above) commission did not just apply to them, but all of God's children have a role to fulfill in taking the good news to others (cf. Mt. 5:13-16; 13:3-8). May we never underestimate the power of the Gospel. One seemingly insignificant woman who had the desire to tell others about Jesus became an avenue through which many believed. So can we! If we do not see evangelism as a priority and carry the Gospel to others, who will? ❤️ *Brian*

**SPECIAL THANKS TO THE
ANONYMOUS "PLANT LADY" WHO
CHANGED OUT THE FLOWER POTS
AND BEAUTIFIED THE PROPERTY!**



This Saturday Oct. 7, 2017 Ladies Day @ SFA w/ Kathy Pollard