

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. 69 No.42 10-18-16

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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

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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WEB PAGE

www.southfloridaavenuechurchofchrist.com



IN
SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY

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

South Florida Avenue Church of Christ

Invites You To Our

Fall Gospel Meeting

October 16-19, 2016

with **Stephen Rogers**



Sunday Services, Oct. 16

9:30 am — *Grasping the Nature of Christianity*

10:30 am — *Knowing God*

11:50 — **Lunch provided (visitors welcome!)**

6:00 pm — *Exalting Jesus*

Mon.—Wed., Oct. 17-19, Services Begin at 7:00 pm

Mon. — *Helping People Realize*

They Can and Must Chose to Obey God

Tue. — *Getting the Outline Properly Put Together*

Wed. — *Clarifying the Plan of Salvation*

Let's Invite Our Family, Friends, and Neighbors! All Are Welcome!

Two-Thousand-Year-Old Responses

By Hiram Kemp

It is interesting to observe that two people can see the same movie and come away with different views concerning the value of it. Individuals can read the exact same book and develop opposite opinions about the material. I suppose the difference in views that we often see in our world comes from the free-will that God has given humanity (Josh. 24:14-15; 1 Kgs. 18:21). As it relates to the gospel, many hear the message of the cross and respond in different ways. In the first century there were those who believed the truth as soon as they heard it (1 Cor. 1:18, 24). There were those who demanded more proof before they would accept the gospel, and still there were individuals who sought worldly wisdom as the standard for truth (1 Cor. 1:22-23). Today, when we reach out to family, friends, and neighbors with the gospel, we need to be ready for the varying responses we will receive. It is wise to observe the way people responded to the gospel in the first century and realize that people still respond the same way today. As we prepare for our gospel meeting this week, we can be sure that these responses will be manifested; let us be sure to respond properly.

The Right Response

In Acts 2, Peter stood up with the eleven and delivered the first gospel sermon to a group of Jews and proselytes on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-40). Peter used the Old Testament prophecies to prove that Jesus was the long awaited Messiah of the Jews (Acts 2:22-35). As Peter concluded the sermon, he made the audience aware that they were guilty of crucifying the Son of God: “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36). The audience on Pentecost did not make excuses or respond in rebellion. Those to whom Peter spoke realized their guilt and asked, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” (Acts 2:37). When people hear the gospel, they should ask what God wants them to do.

When Saul of Tarsus was confronted on the Damascus road by Jesus, he also asked Jesus what he should do (Acts 9:6). In both of these instances people heard the gospel and they had the right response. When people are taught the right doctrine and have the proper disposition, they will have the right response (Acts 2:38-41, 22:16). Today there are still people like the three thousand from Pentecost and Saul of Tarsus. Some will hear the message of their guilt and God’s grace and respond properly (Eph. 2:8-10). There are honest hearted people among us who are looking for truth, and we must continue to teach truth for the benefit of these people (Prov. 23:23). This week when the gospel is preached, let us pray that people will respond properly (2 Thess. 3:1).

Responding in Rejection

Though some respond correctly, this will not happen with everyone. Stephen was a strong Christian who was selected to help with a problem concerning benevolence in the church (Acts 6:1-6). However, Stephen was also a preacher of the gospel, and a powerful one at that (Acts 6:8-10). As Stephen spoke to a gathering of Jews on one occasion, concerning the history of God’s people in the Old Testament and their rejection of his messengers, those who heard it became angry (Acts 7:1-53). Stephen’s sermon had “cut them to the heart” (Acts 7:54). The message did them no good. They “cried with a loud voice and stopped their ears” (Acts 7:57). It is always a bad idea when hearing the gospel, to close our ears and open our mouths (Prov. 13:3). The Jews to whom Stephen preached could not stand to hear the truth. They stoned him to death (Acts 7:58-60).

Many today respond to the gospel with rejection. When they hear about Jesus, they equate him with every other religious figure and reject his unique nature (Jn. 1:1-3, 14-17; Acts 4:12). As some are taught about the need to be baptized for sins to be forgiven, they shrug their shoulders and refuse to comply (Mk. 16:16). Still others will hear about the oneness of the church and the undenominational nature of Christianity and rebel under the false assumption that God approves of all religious groups (Mt. 16:13-18; Eph. 4:4-6). Although it has been two thousand years, there are still some who manifest the spirit of rejection present among Stephen’s executioners. While there will probably be no stones thrown this week, there will be some who hear the gospel and need to respond but won’t. There will be those who fall under the condemnation of sin. They will hear the consequences of such and move on with life as normal (Rom. 6:23; 2 Thess. 1:7-9). Let us pray this week that visitors will have an open heart to the gospel, not only this week, but anytime they hear it preached (1 Tim. 2:1).

Conclusion

People can hear the same message and still respond in totally different ways. Some respond with the right attitude and surrender all to follow Jesus (Acts 19:18-21). Some reject, mock, and ridicule the gospel to their own demise (Acts 17:32). In the end, there are only two responses people give to the message of Jesus: either the right response or the response of rejection (Mt. 7:13-14, 21-23). Responding to the gospel is not hard work; it is heart work (Lk. 8:5-15).

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Jim Edmonson is now at the Consulate Care Center of Lakeland on Socrum Loop Rd. for Rehab. Dorothy Trice is in rehab also. Carol Eason is having some medical testing done. Also keep Jim Turner, Ginny Hamby, Jacquelin Dopwell, Faith West, Debbie Horsley, Elizabeth Tubbs and Margaret Coone in prayer.

Relatives: Dayne Romine, (Paul Romine's brother), Tonya Mathis, Dee Moore, Margie Bolding, Preston Craft & Harold Rister.

Shut In Members: Virginia Plumlee, Ann Howard, Dick & Joyce Burbage, Janet Crosby and Duane Nelson.

Others: Tom Holland, Jackie Stearsman, Chrissi Fuesner and Alyssa Buckner. Keep all of these in your prayers.

Upcoming Events

October 15th: Semi Annual Picnic and Sing, Mary Holland Park, in Bartow. Hosted by Orange St. Church of Christ.

October 23rd: Fall Gospel Meeting-Laura Street Church of Christ in Plant City.

October 28-30th: 8th Annual Fall Gospel Meeting at the Osprey Ave. Church of Christ in Sarasota.

October 29th: Fall Festival at the Central Church of Christ in Haines City. from 4:00-6:00 p.m.

October 29th: N. Jackson Ave. in Bartow 89th Homecoming. The theme is "Living Faithful in a Troubled World."

November 3rd-6th: The 21st Annual South Florida Ave. Lectureship, hosted by the Palm Beach Lakes congregation. The theme is "Wait on the Lord."

November 5th: Ladies Day at the Kissimmee Church of Christ at 9:00 a.m.

Thank You

Dear Brother's and Sister's at South Fla. Ave.

I want to thank you for all the prayers, cards, calls and the gifts to the Florida School of Preaching during the illness and passing of my sister, Bonnie Byrd. It is comforting to me to know that you care so much.

I love you all, Virginia Walker

Visitors

Terry and Betty McCormick, Leana Palmer, William Go, Mark Barber, Sharon Guthrie, Rebecca Hill, Dennis Shaper, and Victor Travis.

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

October

Frank Hamby **Table** Jimmy Sweeney
Stacey Paulin **Assist** Josh Estridge

Sunday, October 16, 2016

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Jim Turner
Prayer Kenny French

10:30 A.M.

Announcements Bobby Sheumaker
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Paul Romine
Sermon Stephen Rogers
Closing Prayer John McShane

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Kyle Williams
Opening Prayer Tucker Sweeney
Sermon Stephen Rogers
Greeters The Fifes
Att. Cards Antonio & Paul
Closing Prayer David Deal
Open & Close Building Jimmy Sweeney

Wed. October 19, 2016

Song Leader Steve Hunley
Opening Prayer Phil Fife
Closing Prayer Ken Walker

*Please meet in the library. If you cannot serve, please call **Chuck Wyatt** so he can get a replacement - 859-5231*

Sunday, October 23, 2016

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Ken Walker
Prayer C.J. Grimes

10:30 A.M.

Announcements Bobby Sheumaker
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Ken Walker
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Tucker Sweeney

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Kyle Williams
Opening Prayer Kenny French
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Greeters The Longfellows
Att. Cards Paul & Ian
Closing Prayer Jimmy Sweeney
Open & Close Building Jimmy Sweeney

Wed. October 26, 2016

Song Leader Bill Long
Opening Prayer Jeff Bingle
Closing Prayer Tucker Sweeney

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Sept. 18.....	\$4,056.00
Sept. 25	\$4,594.67
Oct. 02.....	\$6,838.53
Oct. 09.....	\$4,375.00
Contribution Average	\$4,944.85
2016 Weekly Budget	\$4,422.60

Is Anything Hindering Our Spiritual Advance?

Paul often compares the Christian life to an athletic race (1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Philippians 3:13-14; 2 Timothy 4:7). Successfully running a race requires discipline (both in training and in the actual running) and adhering to the rules (1 Corinthians 9:24-26). Paul wrote to the Galatians, "You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? ⁸This persuasion does not come from Him who calls you. ⁹A little leaven leavens the whole lump" (Galatians 5:7-9). These church members began their Christianity very well. However, when Paul wrote to them, they had allowed themselves to be hindered from progress in the Gospel (Galatians 5:7). The word translated "hindered" was a military term that referred to placing obstacles or breaking up the road an enemy would use to advance. In the Galatians context, "the picture is that of the runner who has allowed his progress to be blocked or who is running, but on a the wrong course" (Rogers and Rogers). That which was blocking the progress of the Galatians did not come from God ("Him who calls you," see Galatians 1:15), but from the false doctrine of those who were requiring people to keep the Law of Moses in order to be saved (Galatians 5:1-4). While it may seem like a small thing to believe what the Bible does not teach, it is very disastrous. Like "leaven," which is a very tiny ingredient, false doctrine will influence a very large amount. Even Jesus warned about the "leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees," which He later explained was *(continued below)*



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Why Stop the Chariot?

In Acts 8:26-39, Philip preached Jesus to the Ethiopian eunuch. As they traveled the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" After commanding the chariot to stop, the eunuch was baptized. If some things taught in the religious world were true, there would be no need to stop the chariot. Why stop the chariot **if goodness alone saves**, or **if just being religious is all it takes for salvation**, or **if just reading the Bible is enough**, or **if we're saved by preaching alone**, or **if we're justified by faith only**, or **if we're saved by prayer**, or **if baptism were not necessary for salvation**? The truth of the matter is that the chariot did have to stop in order for the eunuch's soul to be saved at that moment. Baptism is "unto the remission of your sins" (Acts 2:38, ASV).

--Adapted from the Terre Haute (Indiana) church of Christ bulletin

(continued from above) "the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees" (Matthew 16:6-12). Believing false doctrine will always lead to disobeying the truth. In order to overcome the obstacle of false teaching, Christians must first know what the word of God teaches. Jesus showed the value of knowing truth when He overcame the devil's temptations by quoting and properly applying Scripture (Matthew 4:1-11). We must be "people of The Book"! Furthermore, to overcome the obstacle of false teaching, Christians must employ "the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand" (Ephesians 6:16). "Armor" comes from Greek word that means the full-equipment of a heavily armed soldier. There is no obstacle that *has* to hinder the Christian. Jesus is so much more powerful than them all, if only we will tap into the strength He offers! Be an overcomer! ❤️ Brian