

The South Florida Avenue MESSENGER

A Friendly Church With a Vital Message Proclaiming the Unsearchable Riches of the Lord Jesus.
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ELDERS

David Anderson
Kenny French
Bobby Sheumaker

DEACONS

Stacey Paulin
Jimmy Sweeney
Chuck Wyatt

MINISTER

Hiram Kemp
(386) 405-5372

ASSOCIATE MINISTER

Brian Kenyon
(863) 944-8565

SECRETARY

Michelle Paulin

OFFICE PHONE

(863) 682-4702

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.

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EMAIL

SFA.church@gmail.com

WEB PAGE

www.southfloridaavenuechurchofchrist.com



IN
SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY

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

Our Treatment of One Another

Brian R. Kenyon

Members of the church of Christ are family (Eph. 3:14-15). Sometimes, earthly family members treat others better than their own flesh and blood. For example, a man may leave his office and open the door for others and show extraordinary politeness, yet when he comes home, he slams down his stuff, grumbles at his wife, and demands, "Where's my supper?" Unfortunately, some members of the church are the same toward their own spiritual family. There are several New Testament verses that contain the term "one another." When we consider them, a pattern emerges on how we should and should not treat one another.

Must Be Governed By Love

The primary factor in our treatment of one another is Biblical love. Paul wrote, "Owe no one anything except to love one another" (Rom. 13:8). He further stated, "But concerning brotherly love ... you yourselves are taught by God to love one another" (1 Thes. 4:9). John likewise wrote, "For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another ... that we should ... love one another, as He gave us commandment" (1 Jn. 3:11, 23). The reason why we must love one another is clear: "if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another" (1 Jn. 4:11). We must seek the highest good for our brothers and sisters in Christ!

There is tremendous significance in treating one another in love. First, "everyone who loves is born of God and knows God" (1 Jn. 4:7). Since being "born of God" and "knowing" God require obedience to the Gospel (Jn. 3:3-5; 1 Jn. 2:3), loving one another is used representatively (a synecdoche) for obedience to the entire Gospel. Thus, if love is not governing our treatment of one another, we are not obeying the Gospel! Second, "If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us" (1 Jn. 4:12). God will dwell in us because, again, loving one another is used representatively for obedience, and obedience to the Gospel results in God's indwelling (cf. Jn. 14:23). The idea of "perfected" in "His love ... perfected in us" is maturity. When love governs our treatment of one another, we grow and develop in our love for God (cf. 1 Jn. 4:20-21). Given love's importance, then, how should we treat each other?

How To Treat One Another

Be Like Minded. "Be of the same mind toward one another" (Rom. 12:16). This is to "live in harmony" (ESV); be united in the same spiritual interests, which requires adherence to God's word (1 Cor. 1:10).

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Edify “Therefore comfort each other and edify one another” (1 Thes. 5:11). “Comfort [encourage, NAS]” and “edify [build up, NAS]” mean to help one another be stronger in the faith. This requires that we do our best through words and actions to give each other encouragement and strength in the Lord.

Accept “Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God” (Rom. 15:7). The word “receive [accept, NAS]” means to welcome and/or accept. Obviously, this does not mean that we endorse church members’ living in sin (cf. 1 Cor. 5:1-5; 2 Thes. 3:6-15), but it does mean we should realize that Christ accepted us as we were as long as we gave (and continue to give) our lives to Him (cf. Mt. 11:28-30), regardless of our race, nationality, character imperfections, etc. We should also do the same.

Exhort We are to “exhort one another daily, while it is called ‘Today’” (Heb. 3:13); “And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching” (Heb. 10:24-25). To exhort means to call upon one another for the purpose of encouraging one another to overcome the obstacles in living faithful lives. Since this “one another” exhorting takes place when each “one another” comes together in the “assembling of ourselves together,” it is very important that we attend church services!

Forebear “Walk worthy of the calling with which you were called ... bearing with one another in love” (Eph. 4:1-2). “Bearing [forbearing, KJV; showing tolerance, NAS]” means to endure, be patient with, or give patient attention to. Family members in Christ may disappoint us (intentionally or not), but we must continue to work with them, showing love (1 Cor. 13:4), extending kindness (Eph. 4:32), and practicing the Golden Rule (Mt. 7:12).

Forgive “Bearing with one another, and forgiving one another ... even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do” (Col. 3:13). The Lord forgives us when we repent (Acts 2:38), no matter how badly we sin against Him (1 Tim. 1:12-14). One of the conditions of our being forgiven is that we forgive others (Mt. 6:14-15). How forgiving are we to one another?

How Not To Treat One Another

Do Not Speak Evil “Do not speak evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law” (Jas. 4:11). To “speak evil” is to say bad things against someone, or to slander. Peter uses the same word (in the original language) with reference to those of the world who persecute Christians (2 Pet. 2:12; 3:16). We would expect the enemies of Christ to say bad things about Christians, but such evil speaking should not be done against our own family in Christ! When we do engage in this evil speaking, not only are we condemning our family in Christ, but we are also showing no regard for God’s law because that law says we should love one another (cf. 1 Jn. 2:10-11; 4:20)!

Do Not Lie “Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds” (Col. 3:9). Putting off “the old man [old self, NAS]” is done at baptism (cf. Col. 2:12; 3:1; Rom. 6:3-6), the very same act that results in our being added to Christ’s church (Acts 2:47). Lying, perhaps more than any other sin, shows ill-will toward our brothers and sisters in Christ. We must not lie to one another (Rev. 21:8)!

Do Not Show Prejudice “I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality” (1 Tim. 5:21). Two words in this verse are of note: “prejudice [preferring one before another, KJV; bias, NAS],” which means to judge beforehand, without the facts; and “partiality,” which means to show favoritism. This does not mean we are forbidden to have friends in the church that are closer than others (cf. Jesus and Peter, James, and John, Mt. 17:1; 26:37), but it does mean that we are not to form cliques and be prejudice toward those who are not part of our clique!

Do Not Irritate or Envy “Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another” (Gal. 5:26). This verse comes after listing the “fruits of the spirit” (Gal. 5:22-23). The word “provoking [challenging, NAS]” means to irritate, or make angry. Immature children do this to one another, but how sad it is when grown people, especially Christians, do this to one another! “Envying” means to be jealous. It is one of the “works of the flesh” (Gal. 5:21), and it was one reason Jesus was crucified (Mt. 27:18). We must be content with what God has given us (1 Tim. 6:6), and not envy our own family in Christ!

Do Not Judge/Condemn “Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother’s way” (Rom.14:13). In the context of Romans 14, Paul is dealing with matters of personal conscience, particularly the eating of meats (Rom.14:1-3). While some

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SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Katrina Greene is having some medical testing done this week. Also remember Evelyn Wyatt, Genny Johnson, Joyce Burgage Ginny Hamby, Brenda Mask, Jim Turner, Margaret Coone, Josephine Bowman and Wanda Bruno in prayer.

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

Others: Darnell Kirkland, Ray Parker (friend of the Kirkland's), Joy Baker, (Michelle Paulin's cousin), Duane Nelson, Joyce Stearsman, Jack Pinckert, Joe Kozlesky, (Michelle Paulin's nephew), Debra Enzor (Elizabeth Tubbs Deen's aunt), and Mary Ankroum and son Victory.

Upcoming Events

Saturday Nov. 18th: Men's breakfast at the Orange Street church of Christ in Auburndale at 8:00 a.m.

Saturday Nov. 18th: Youth Progressive Dinner hosted by the Venice church of Christ. The theme is "Are You Dead to the World". Please let Jagie Kenyon know if you plan to attend.

Sunday Nov. 19th: Elders and Deacons Meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Tuesday Nov. 28th: F.S.O.P. Ladie's class at 7:00 p.m.

Save the Date: Saturday January 13, 2018: The Lakeland Police Dept. Crime Prevention section will be giving a presentation for our Senior Saints on scams targeting the elderly. It will be in the fellowship hall starting at 10:00 a.m.

Sympathy

George Bailey, long time preacher of the gospel passed away this last week. Please keep his family in your prayers.

Response

Adam Dyal, a visitor was touched by the invitation at our Gospel meeting Sunday morning, and asked for the prayers of the congregation. Also Pat Haynes, another visitor, asked for prayers. Let us please pray and encourage them as well as pray for other hearts to be touched to want to know more about the gospel.

Visitors

Mildred Estrella, Victor Travis and Alexis, Page Stayer, Mr & Mrs. Chad Fife, Marvin & Shandell Elliott, Cieara Edwards and Pat Haynes.



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. Let's influence Lakeland!

Watch . . .



In Search of the Lord's Way

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

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

November

Stacey Paulin..... **Table** John McShane
Bobby Sheumaker **Assist** Tucker Sweeney

Sunday, November 19, 2017

9:30 A.M.
Song at Bible Class Jim Turner
Prayer..... Kenny French

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... Matt Willcut
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Paul Romine
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Tyler Anderson

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Vince Daugherty
Opening Prayer Fred Strickland
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer David Deal
Greeters Fifes
Att. Cards..... Antonio/Paul
Open & Close Building..... Charles Paulin

Wednesday, November 22, 2017

Song Leader Stacey Paulin
Opening Prayer Jeff Bingle
Closing Prayer Tucker Sweeney

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

Sunday, November 26, 2017

9:30 A.M.
Song at Bible Class Ken Walker
Prayer..... C.J. Grimes

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... Matt Willcut
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Ken Walker
Sermon..... Brian Kenyon
Closing Prayer Tucker Sweeney

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Vince Daugherty
Opening Prayer Charles Paulin
Sermon..... Brian Kenyon
Closing Prayer Jimmy Sweeney
Greeters Darlene/ Brenda
Att. Cards..... Paul and Ian
Open & Close Building..... Charles Paulin

Wednesday, November 29, 2017

Song Leader Tucker Sweeney
Opening Prayer Kenny French
Closing Prayer Bobby Sheumaker

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Oct. 22.....	\$4,652.46
Oct. 29.....	\$4,943.57
Nov. 05.....	\$5,581.02
Nov. 12.....	\$6,940.50
Contribution Average.....	\$5,391.55
2017 Weekly Budget.....	\$4,716.51

Our Treatment of One Another *(continued)*

(continued from page 2) could eat meat, others could not conscientiously eat it due to former associations with idolatry. The point is that it does not matter to God whether we eat meat (1 Cor. 8:8), but we should not “judge” those who take a different view on a matter of indifference. “Judge [pass judgment, ESV]” in this context means to condemn (cf. Mt. 7:1-5). Rather than condemning our family in Christ because they hold a different view on a matter of indifference, Paul says we should resolve not to be a hindrance toward the conscience, and thus the faith, of our family in Christ!

Do Not Complain “Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!” (Jas. 5:9). Although the term “grumble [grudge, KJV; complain, NAS; murmur, ASV]” can simply refer to sighing or groaning (Rom. 8:23; 2 Cor. 5:2, 4), in this context it refers to complaining that results when we are under severe stress due to difficulties in life, even the trials of our faith (cf. Heb. 13:17, “grief”). Some may take out their frustrations by kicking the garbage can (which is immature enough), but how often do we take our frustrations out on family members by complaining and/or “chewing them out” for insignificant things just because we are frustrated? Even worse is when we do this with our brothers and sisters in Christ. The Israelites of old were often characterized by their complaining, and they suffered because of it (Deut. 1:27-28; 1 Cor. 10:10). Let us not complain against one another, lest we, like the Israelites be “condemned” by the Judge, Jesus Christ!

(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 . . .



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

Pray for and encourage our young people as they work with this year's L2L program!



Thank You, Steve Higginbotham



for the encouraging lessons motivating us to greater service to God. We are also thankful to the SFA church support!

(continued from above)

Conclusion

Our relationship to one another is an important part of being the properly functioning spiritual body that the Lord desires (cf. 1 Cor. 12:12-26). If we cannot get along with one another and treat one another Scripturally, how can we expect to influence the world to be a part of Christ's body? Success in evangelism, in large part, rests on our treating one another as God desires. Let us make sure that love governs our relationships with one another. Only then, “all will know that you are My [Jesus'] disciples, if you have love for one another” (Jn. 13:35). Only by treating one another in love will we “be made perfect in one ... that the world may know that You [Father] have sent Me [Jesus], and have loved them as You have loved Me” (Jn. 17:23). ❤️ *Brian*