



South Florida Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST MESSENGER



1807 S. Florida Ave.,
Lakeland, FL 33803

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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.

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Israel's Place in God's Plan Consistently Disobedient

Brian R. Kenyon

Israel was called by God to be His special people, not "because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; but because the LORD loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers" (Deut. 7:7-8). Their special status was conditional upon their keeping "the commandment, the statutes, and the judgments which I command you" (Deut. 7:11-26). Rather than keeping God's word, Israel consistently disobeyed.

Christ Completes Mosaic Law

Paul began Romans 10 similar to Romans 9 by acknowledging Israel's being spiritually lost (Rom. 10:1-3). Their zeal without knowledge was more than just a deterrent. It led them to formulate their own system of righteousness opposed to God's (cf. Rom. 1:16-17). Christ was the purpose for the entire Law of Moses (Rom. 10:4-10), the ultimate end to which the Law pointed (Mt. 5:17; Gal. 3:24-25). The Law by itself (without Christ's fulfilment) could not accomplish righteousness (cf. Rom. 8:3-4; Heb. 8:8). "To everyone who believes" (Rom. 10:4b) shows God's righteousness is realized only by those believe (trust) in Christ. Justification through belief in Christ is entirely different from justification by the Law! Paul appealed to Moses' writing, "You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them" (cf. Lev. 18:5) to show the Jews erred in seeking justification through the Law because none kept it perfectly (Rom. 10:5 cf. Rom. 3:23). In their way of seeking it, righteousness was impossible (Deut. 27:26)! Paul declared that the righteousness in the Law through Christ did not require the impossible: to ascend to heaven and bring down Christ or to descend to Hades and bring up Christ (Rom. 10:6-7 cf. Deut. 30:11-14). The righteousness by faith says "the word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (Rom. 10:8-10). Saving truth is not "far off," but is as close as belief of the heart and word of the mouth. Faith does not demand or require the personal presence of Christ, but rather "the word of faith which we preach" (Rom. cf. 10:17). If we confess and believe, we shall be saved. The mouth confesses what the heart believes. Obviously, salvation is not dependant upon these two things alone (what about repentance and baptism?), but when we properly understand biblical belief and confession of Christ, these two items summarize all acts of obedience (cf. Mt. 10:32-33; Mk. 16:16; Jn. 12:42; 2 Tim. 2:19).

Then His disciples ...
said ... "Do You know
that the Pharisees
were offended ...?"
But He answered
and said, "Every
plant which My
heavenly Father has
not planted will be
uprooted."

Matthew 15:12-13

Righteousness Is Attainable

Faith, not nationality, is the basis of salvation (Rom. 10:11-13). "Scripture says," in Isaiah 28:16 with reference to the "cornerstone," that since Christ will never forsake or disappoint His own, those who commit themselves to Christ will never be let down by God (Rom. 10:11 cf. Rom. 9:33). The Lord is the same Lord over both Jews and Gentiles (Rom. 10:12-13). All are in need of salvation (cf. Rom. 3:1-18, 23). Paul appealed to Joel's prophecy, "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved" (Joel 2:32), to show salvation was universally offered (Rom. 10:13 cf. Mk. 16:16; Acts 10:34-35). Calling on His name is more than just verbally calling Him "Lord" (Mt. 7:21-23; Lk. 6:46), or praying (cf. 1 Pet. 3:12). Rather, it is a determination to follow what the Lord teaches (cf. Acts 22:16). Calling upon the Lord necessarily involves answering His call through the Gospel and obedience to it (2 Thes. 2:14 cf. 2 Thes. 1:8). Paul emphasized the necessity for Gospel proclamation by a series of rhetorical questions: "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: 'How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!'" (Rom. 10:14-15). Paul here forged an unbreakable chain in God's plan to save. Each link depended upon the previous one. The chain is in a reverse order. Everyone, including the Jews, should have welcomed the preacher's proclamation (cf. Isa. 52:7). The faith that saves comes from hearing God's word (Rom. 10:16-17). The Jews did not obey (cf. Isa. 53:1). Hearing the message is the first step. It is impossible for the mind to verify and believe what it has never heard! Some will ask, however, "Have the Jews been able to hear the Gospel?"

Israel Heard But Disobeyed

Israel heard the gospel, even witnessing its verification by them who heard Christ (cf. Heb. 2:3-4), but they refused to obey it (Rom. 10:18-21). The gospel had been unmistakably declared to the Jews. As nature (cf. "their sound") proclaimed the "glory of God" (Ps. 19:1-3), so the gospel has been preached to the Jews (and Gentiles). Though some Jews believed (Acts 14:1), nationally, as a whole, they did not (cf. Rom. 9:1-3; 10:1-3). Jewish unbelief did not disprove that faith comes by hearing the gospel. Israel had ample opportunity to know the gospel, including the admittance of Gentiles into God's kingdom. Paul declared, "First Moses says: 'I will provoke you to jealousy by those who are not a nation, I will move you to anger by a foolish nation.' But Isaiah is very bold and says: 'I was found by those who did not seek Me; I was made manifest to those who did not ask for Me.' But to Israel he says: 'All day long I have stretched out My hands To a disobedient and contrary people'" (Rom. 10:19-21 cf. Deut. 32:21). Even though Moses spoke of the Gentiles coming in, Israel would be provoked by God's inviting the Gentiles to share equally with them in the blessings of the gospel. As Moses, Isaiah also boldly expressed the same concept (cf. Isa. 65:1-2). God took the initiative in making His will known to the Gentiles, which was His choice (cf. Rom. 9), and He pleaded for Israel to accept it, but they consistently rejected Him (Rom. 10:21 cf. Isa. 65:2). Because of their rejection of the gospel, Israel ceased to be His special nation (cf. Mt. 23:37-39). With the call of the Gentiles to salvation, Israel was (and is) no longer considered God's exclusive, chosen people. "For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham ... the children of the flesh ... are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed" (cf. Rom. 9:6-8).

Conclusion

God wants all people, including the Israelites of Paul's day and the Jews of our day, to be saved (1 Tim. 2:4). He constantly calls us, but like the Israelites of old, some do not want to accept His offer. The only way we can be saved is by accepting the gospel (Rom. 10:13). The first step in that acceptance is hearing God's word (Rom. 10:17). Do you believe the gospel? Do you stand in the gospel (1 Cor. 15:1-2). If not, why not reach out for the promise, "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved" (Rom. 10:13)?

Upcoming Events
November
18 — Thankful Meal @ Daugherty's (6:00 pm)
December
3 — "Walk Out of Darkness" event
9 — SFA Holiday Party
January
15-18 FSOP Lectureship

PRAYER LIST

Current : Toney Wilson is having some medical issues and upcoming tests. Casey Potvin is still struggling with bad migraines and is having tests. Neil Entwistle is in the VA hospital in Tampa.

Continual: Debbie Bush (struggles); Antoine & Marcella Swain (health); Bill & Carlene Long (health & strength); Ron Ford (health); Bobby Simpson (health); Annett Phillip (health); Janie Wise (health); Jim Turner (health); Margaret Coone (health); Melissa Craft (health); Kathy Nester (health); Ronnie Lynn is recovering from neck surgery.

Shut-ins: Joyce Burbage, Carol Eason, Kenny & Reba French and Barbara Jones

Prayers for forgiveness: Jeff and Ingrid Stewart, Andre Medley, Cierra Edwards, Tommy Brooks.

Also continue to pray for those on the extended family and friends list!

Senior Saints Shining The Light

The following items were discussed and/or implemented at the last meeting. All seniors (and not-so-seniors) are invited.

Visitation—eighty visits were conducted in September and October. The list was revised and goals set for this month.

Thanksgiving Baskets—will be distributed to church members and/or their neighbors who are in need.

Holiday Season—the group is determining ways to bring cheer and promote fellowship throughout this time.

February 6 —Lori Edwards, Polk County Supervisor of Elections, will speak about the voting process. All are welcome to attend and learn about our government (Rom. 13:1-6).

Thankful Meal - The youth group will be having a Thankful Meal at the Daugherty's house on Nov. 18 @ 6:00 PM. Everyone is to bring their favorite food with share. A sign up sheet is posted on Vince's office door.



Walk Out of Darkness/ Suicide Prevention Walk

Join us on Sunday December 3 as we share the Hope of Christ at this annual event!

We need volunteers to come to the event to encourage walkers, and we need volunteers to donate items to be given away.

Items needed: 16oz water bottles, granola bars, fruit, small packs of crackers or snacks. We also need coolers to hold the water while at the event. See Rick Kenyon with any questions.

Save the Date:
December 9, 2023
SFA Christmas Party
Details to follow soon!



Scheduled to Serve in November

Designated Elder	David Anderson
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Wednesday, November 15, 2023

Announcements	Tyler Anderson
Song Leader / Prayer	Rick Kenyon
Devotional / Invitation	Tommy Brooks
Closing Prayer	Phil Fife

Sunday, November 19, 2023

10:30 am Sermon	Vince Daugherty
Chief Cornerstone (Ephesians 2:19-22)	
6:00 pm Sermon	Rick Kenyon

Those to Serve 10:30 am

Greeters	Nona/Janis
Song/Pray before class	Stacey Paulin
Announcements (both)	Jimmy Sweeney
Song Leader (both)	Terrance Dindy Jr
Bible Reader/Prayer	Paul Sweeney
Lord's Table (both)	Nigel St Bernard
Closing Prayer	Jeff Stewart
Open/Close Building	David Deal
Attendance Cards	Declan/Ellis
Sound Booth (both)	Jason Hendrix

Those to Serve 6:00 pm

Greeters	D & N Williams
Announcements	Jimmy Sweeney
Song Leader	Terrance Dindy
Bible Reader/Prayer	Bobby Sheumaker
Closing Prayer	Andre Medley

Wednesday, November 22, 2023

Announcements	Brian Kenyon
Song Leader / Prayer	Andre Medley
Devotional / Invitation	B. Sheumaker
Closing Prayer	Terrance Dindy

How We Are Giving

October 29	\$11,432.00
November 5	\$10,215.00
November 12	\$7,738.00
Contribution Average	\$7,079.95
Weekly Budget	\$7,410.00

If you cannot serve as scheduled, please notify Stacey or the office. Even if you arrange your replacement, please notify Stacey or the office. Thanks!

WALK WITH ME

Walk with me Lord when the trials of life are too much to bear,
Walk with me Lord when I'm stumbling on the path of fear.

Walk with me Lord and show me the way,
Walk with me Lord and turn my night to day.

Walk with me Lord when I feel like giving into temptations,
Walk with me Lord and guide me as I wrestle with frustrations.

Walk with me Lord when I get tired, weary, and low,
Walk with me Lord because I can't fight this battle alone.

Walk with me Lord, Walk with me,
Walk with me Lord this is my humble plea.

Scriptures

Psalm 23:4 "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me."

Psalm 128:1

"Blessed is every one who fears the Lord, who walks in His ways."

Psalm 143:7-8

"Answer me speedily, O Lord; my spirit fails. Do not hide your face from me, lest I be like those who go down into the pit.

Cause me to hear your loving kindness in the morning, for in you do I trust; cause me to know the way in which I should walk, for I lift up my soul to you."

Hymn

"Just a closer walk with Thee,
Grant it, Jesus, is my plea,
Daily walking close to Thee,
Let it be, dear Lord, let it be."

God or Nothing

[The following statements are taken from a YouTube short]

I recently came across a bit in a standup routine where the comedian laid out a very logical argument of why atheism does not make sense. I assume he is not a Christian because of some of the language I had to clean up to share with you, but the man is spitting out straight logic!

"Some people think God created the universe. Some people think Nothing created the universe, which is the funniest guess... And the nothing people make fun of the God people. They say God doesn't exist. I'm like ok maybe... but you know what definitely doesn't exist... NOTHING! That is the defining characteristic of nothing, is that it doesn't exist. So what are we talking about? Either you think it's God, something you can't see, touch, taste, [or] photograph; Or, it's Nothing, something you can't see, touch, taste, [or] photograph. I think we can all agree, if your Nothing sometimes spontaneously erupts into everything that is a MAGICAL Nothing. And if you ask the nothing people what happens when you die, people will tell you, nothing, you go into nothing. You mean you merge with your Creator?" - VD

Colossians 1:16

For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.

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South Florida Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST

1807 South Florida Avenue
Lakeland, FL 33803-2653

Return Service Requested

"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18



If you prefer to receive the bulletin via email, contact us.