

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

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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IN
SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY

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

Three P's to Paradise

Hiram Kemp

The Bible holds out heaven as the hope to mankind at the end of this life (1 Pet. 1:3-5). The road to eternal bliss is traveled by many, though some quit along the way for various reasons. We must do our best to remain steadfast as we live for Jesus so that the promises of paradise can be realized by us in eternity. Jesus said if we would serve him we would end up in the same place where he is (Jn. 12:26). Jesus led the way to paradise for us with the life that he lived, the death that he died, and his triumphant resurrection (Jn. 14:1-6). How does one get from earth to heaven? The first answer is, a person must respond to what Jesus has done in faithful obedience and become a Christian (Mk. 16:16; Acts 22:16). However, initial obedience to the gospel is not the end of the journey but merely the beginning. As one becomes a disciple of Jesus there are many detours that attempt to get in the way and cloud one's vision of the promises of God and the provisions he has made concerning our eternal security. Let me offer three P's that will help the Christian navigate through this life and end it in heaven with God.

Prayer

This seems like an obvious point but it should not be overlooked. Christians are told that we should pray constantly (1 Thess. 5:17). How is your communication with God? No relationship is healthy when one person does all of the talking. It would be a shame if the first time God hears from us is in the day of judgment. God speaks to us through his word and we speak to him through prayer. We need to fill our prayers with confession, thanksgiving, and praise (Mt. 6:9-13). We also need to pray to God and express our longing and anticipation for heaven (Rev. 22:20). When our prayer life is strong and we are in constant communication with God, this helps us to keep our priorities in order as we live from day to day. When we talk to the Father in heaven it continues to heighten our awareness that one day we will be there too if we continue to walk in the light of his word. Do not rush through prayer, instead take the time each day to get one on one with God and express to him your fears, your gratitude, and your mistakes. If Paul recognized he needed prayer, we must see the importance of it as well (Col. 4:2; 1 Thess. 5:25).

Praise

Heaven is mentioned in the Bible as a place where God is praised continually (Rev. 7:11-12). Those who do not enjoy offering praise to God on *(continued on page 2)*

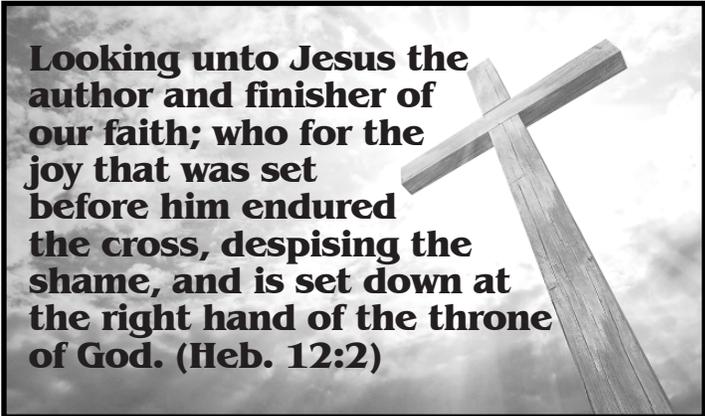
(continued from page 1) earth for a limited time, will not enjoy doing it for an eternity. We should get in the habit of praising God for all that he has done in our lives and all that he is doing now. We worship God as a congregation on the first day of the week, but we should not limit our worship and praise to him to one hour a week, he does not limit his blessings to the same time frame. Christians in the first century praised God as people responded to the gospel (Acts 2:47), after being beaten (Acts 5:41), and even in prison (Acts 16:25). We can sing songs to God on our way to work or as we get dressed in the morning to start our day. The more we praise God through prayer and song, the less we will have time to complain or become discouraged. I realize that praising God does not remove the harsh realities of life, but it does help us to view them for what they really are, incomparable to the glory that awaits us in heaven (Rom. 8:18). Families would benefit from getting together at night to praise God together in their home. Nothing can bring a family closer than gathering around the throne of God together. The religious world around us often misunderstands what it means to praise God. Many have adopted the philosophy that whoever can put on the biggest show is the one that is praising God the best. We know better than this. The writer of Hebrews says we can offer up praise to God sacrificially, using the fruit of our lips (Heb. 13:15). Would you view your praise as sacrificial, that which cost you something? The Bible says we should. On the road to paradise do not forget to praise.

Plunge

While journeying through this life, we should plunge into the word of God. We have all heard sermons on the need to study the Bible and the benefits that come from doing so, the truth is we should view Bible study as the most enjoyable part of our day and not as a burdensome obligation which must be performed (Psa. 119:97). The Bible is the book about God and from God. We need to plunge into Scripture because the more we know about God's Word, the more we know about him. When traveling to a foreign country, it is wise to learn all you can about the culture and customs beforehand. When going to meet an important person, knowing their likes and dislikes may remove some awkwardness during the meeting. We are going to see God, and the more we can learn about him before time the better (1 Jn. 3:2). The more you study the Bible, the more you will want to. You are as close to God as you are to your Bible. No one is close to God who does not study the Bible regardless of how spiritual he or she claims to be. Plunging into Scripture helps us to avoid sin (Psa. 119:11). Digging into the word removes fears as we realize God has empowered us to live the Christian life to his glory (2 Tim. 1:7). As we canvass Scripture, familiar stories began to mean more to us as we find Jesus on every page (Lk. 24:44). How is your Bible study going? Not only are you reading, but are you reveling in Scripture? The Bible was penned both for enlightenment and our enjoyment as we learn who we really are and who God is. Those who are heading to paradise should familiarize themselves with the inspired road map, the Bible (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

Conclusion

The Christian should be ready for the eventual hardships that will come (Acts 14:22). Yet, while there will be difficulties, there will also be victories. There are small victories on earth, but the ultimate victory comes as we escape the powers of death and are presented to God in peace (1 Cor. 15:57). The road to paradise will not be smooth, but as we incorporate these three things into our daily life, it will make the trip more enjoyable. Pray to God this week, and thank him for Jesus and the hope of heaven. Praise God in song at unusual times throughout the day; sing songs that highlight the power and majesty of God. Plunge deeper into Bible study, read from several translations, read longer sections than you have read in the past; and gain more from the Bible than you have in the past. God has given us everything we need in order to make it out of this life alive (2 Pet. 1:3). We would do well to avail ourselves to all of the things that God has made available to help us through this world. Jesus went to prepare a place for us, and we should be preparing to go to that place.



Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Heb. 12:2)

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Home sick this week, were Melody Baxter, William Gramm and Frank Hamby. Please also keep Jim Turner, Ginny Hamby, Joe Dopwell, Jacquelin Dopwell, Kenny French, Genifer Johnson, JoAnn Hoback, Carol Eason, Elizabeth Tubbs, Janet Crosby, Jim Edmondson, Dorothy Trice and Margaret Coone in prayer.

Relatives: Wayne Hendrix, Tonya Mathis, Dee Moore, Margie Bolding, Blanche Dopwell & Dayne Romine.

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

Others: Jackie and Joyce Stearsman and Chrissi Fuesner. Keep all of these in your prayers.

Upcoming Events

November 19th: Men's breakfast at Orange Street Church of Christ in Auburndale at 8:00 a.m.

Hither, Thither and Yon

Janet Crosby has gone to live with her son. Her address is 657 North Broadway St. Joliet, IL. 60435.

Christmas Stockings

Rene Bingle is making Christmas stockings for children in a shelter. If you would like to contribute for this she will put a list of needed items in the foyer. She needs the items by December 4th.

Responses

Debra Pavlovic-Okolichany and Jacquelin Dopwell asked for the prayers of the congregation last Sunday.

Sympathy

Some of you may remember Rachel Capps, who used to work at F.S.O.P. Bob Capps her husband, passed away last Thursday Nov. 10th. Please keep this family in prayer.

Visitors

Victor Travis, Amanda Patterson, James Turpin, Tim & Karen Smith and Melissa Catterlin.

 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 (of 6th Street) and our own Hiram Kemp. Let's point our community to the Bible!

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

November

Stacey Paulin..... **Table** Josh Estridge
Fred Rapley **Assist** David Anderson

Sunday, November 20, 2016

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Kyle Bingle
Prayer..... Tucker Sweeney

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... Jimmy Sweeney
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Kenny French
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Jim Edmondson

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader David Williams
Opening Prayer Steve Hunley
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Greeters..... The Bingles
Att. Cards..... Sebastian & Quadarius
Closing Prayer..... Ken Walker
Open & Close Building..... Charles Paulin

Wed. November 23, 2016

Song Leader Jim Turner
Opening Prayer Jimmy Sweeney
Closing Prayer Jeff Bingle

Please meet in the library. If you cannot serve, please call Chuck Wyatt so he can get a replacement - 859-5231 or 602-9005

Sunday, November 27, 2016

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Kyle Williams
Prayer..... Paul Romine

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... Jimmy Sweeney
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Fred Strickland
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer David Deal

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader David Williams
Opening Prayer David Anderson
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Greeters..... The Kenyons
Att. Cards..... Paul & Ian
Closing Prayer Tyler Anderson
Open & Close Building..... Charles Paulin

Wed. November 30, 2016

Song Leader Bill Long
Opening Prayer Steve Hunley
Closing Prayer Charles Paulin

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Oct. 23.....	\$4,760.25
Oct. 30	\$5,709.36
Nov. 06.....	\$5,565.20
Nov. 13.....	\$3,894.00
Contribution Average	\$4,945.49
2016 Weekly Budget	\$4,422.60

History Preserving Music

Between all the election news last week, social media also reminded those online that last week also marked the 41st anniversary of the wreck of the SS Edmund Fitzgerald, which sunk on November 10, 1975, in Lake Superior. When it was first launched in 1958, it was the largest ship on North America's Great Lakes, and it is still the largest ship to have sunk there (www.en.wikipedia.org). How many of us would have ever even known about this tragic maritime event had it not been for the smooth and penetrating song by Gordon Lightfoot, titled "The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald"? How many other historical events are unknown to us because no one took the time to put them into a song? Songs and singing are also very important to God! From early in Genesis, where we read of "Jubal ... the father of all those who play the harp and flute" (Genesis 4:21), to Miriam and Moses singing songs of celebration after crossing the Red Sea (Exodus 15:1-21),



to the songs the Israelites regularly sang while commemorating the Passover, to which Jesus gave new meaning after instituting the Lord's Supper (Matthew 26:30), music has played a vital role in the history of God's people. The same is true today. The kind of music God authorizes in worship is singing without the accompaniment of mechanical musical instruments (also known as singing "acapela"). The importance of reminding ourselves of passages and events preserved in the Bible is crucial. This is at least one (*continued below*)



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The End of Your Search for a Friendly Church . . .



Save the Date!

**THIS YEAR'S FOCUS WILL BE ON THE
IDOLS THAT COME FROM OUR HEARTS—
WHAT ARE THEY AND HOW DO WE
DEFEAT THEM!**

(*continued from above*) reason why God is so precise on what He wants music to accomplish in worship. First, music in God's assemblies must involve "speaking to one another ... singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:19), which leaves out mechanical instruments! Second, music in God's assemblies must involve "teaching and admonishing one another ... singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Colossians 3:16), which again leaves out mechanical instruments. Third, in a context where Paul says prophesying is better than speaking in tongues, he wrote, "I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding" (1 Corinthians 14:15). Singing must be understood! Fourth, singing must build-up, or edify, those in the assembly. Whether one in that first-century, miraculous setting had a song, a teaching, or a revelation from God, Paul said, "Let all things be done for edification" (1 Corinthians 14:26). There are great events in "salvation history" that we must never forget! One way we can constantly keep them before our minds is to continually sing about those events. Make sure we are present at every assembly and sing our hearts out unto the Lord! ❤️ Brian