



# South Florida Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST MESSENGER



1807 S. Florida Ave.,  
Lakeland, FL 33803

Vol. 77 No. 48 November 28, 2023

## ELDERS

David Anderson  
Brian Kenyon  
Bobby Sheumaker

## DEACONS

Tyler Anderson  
Jason Hendrix  
Stacey Paulin

## MINISTER

### ASSOCIATE MINISTER

Vince Daugherty

### OFFICE PHONE

(863) 682-4702

### EMAIL

[SFA.church@gmail.com](mailto:SFA.church@gmail.com)

## 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.

## WEB PAGE

[SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com](http://SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com)

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## HOME OF

*Florida School of Preaching*  
since 1969

**Missionary - Huron, SD**  
*Casey & Emily Paulin*

## MISSION FIELDS

Dub Hill ..... Russia  
Don Iverson ..... India  
Marc Veary ..... Malawi, Africa  
Graham McDonald ..... Scotland  
J. Paguaga ..... Honduras  
Ted Wheeler ..... Ghana, W.A.

## The Atheist's Prison

Vince Daugherty

In 1977, Dr. Thomas B. Warren, a preacher, and professor of philosophy of religion and apologetics at Harding Graduate School debated Dr. Antony Flew, an atheistic scholar and professor of philosophy at Reading England. At the outset of the debate, Flew took the atheistic position, "I know there is no God," and Warren levied objections to Flew's position. While Flew's job was to present arguments or evidence as to why he knew there is no God, Thomas B. Warren presented a diagram in which he showed Flew's (or any atheist's) hopeless position. I have shared with you the diagram (on page 2) and some thoughts from the information presented by Thomas B. Warren. Know this at the outset, the diagram does not put forward a positive argument for the existence of God. The aim is to show the multi-layered prison into which the atheist locks himself that he cannot hope to escape logically. Warren said, "Anyone who sees the evidence and rejects its implication is being irrational. I call upon him to be rational, to accept only conclusions which follow from the evidence" (page 21). Some things presented in the diagram may be things atheists (or you) have not considered. However, when a person denies something, something else must stand as the alternative. When the atheist claims he knows God does not exist, he also is saying a whole lot more by implication

### I. Matter Is Eternal

If a person tries to take God out of the picture of the origin of the universe, he is left with positing what is responsible for the universe. This is quite a difficult conundrum for the atheist to answer. The only honest explanation will say he does not know. Even a vast majority of atheists believe there was indeed a beginning to our universe. We have observed through science that the universe is running down (2nd law of thermodynamics) and the universe is expanding from what seems to be from a point of origin. These things are evidence of a clear beginning. Since the universe had a beginning, it is an effect of something (or Someone) that stands as its cause. What is that cause? Though atheists claim the Big Bang theory, they do not posit any information of what (or Who) caused the Bang, and from where the materials of our universe came. The atheist must go back to dead matter or that the universe is eternal, even though he knows that is not true. The theist stands on solid ground according to Genesis 1:1, believing that God is the answer for our universe. There is no viable alternative.

### II. Life Came from Non-Life

Not only does the atheist find himself trapped in his explanation for the universe, he is also met with the question: How did life come into existence without God? Evolutionary thought would posit that over vast amounts of time and random chance, life simply found a way. While books try to put forward theories of how

life may have started in warm chemical pools or in deep ocean vents, no experiment has shown life can come from non-life. In the science world, it is called abiogenesis. One famously touted experiment by scientists Ulrey-Miller in 1952 tried to create life in a lab with chemicals they believed would have been present in Earth's early atmosphere. In all their attempts, they could not even produce all the basic amino acids (building blocks) necessary for life to exist. Though it was heralded as proof of abiogenesis, the mixing of chemicals in a laboratory does not explain the origins of life, nor has there been any further development despite scientific efforts. He who rests on Hebrews 3:4, "every house is built by someone but He who made all things is God," is on solid ground. The atheist cannot prove life can come from nonlife.

### III. Consciousness Came from That Which Was Not Conscious & Intelligent Life

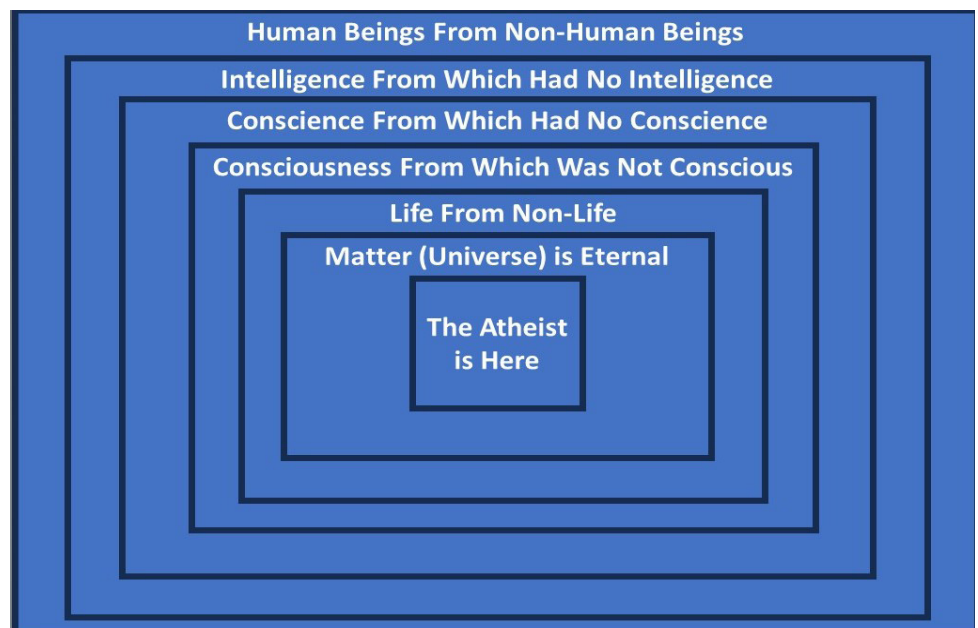
From nature, we observe varying levels of consciousness. From the smallest bacteria, plant, animal, or human being, what does it mean to be living? To look at rocks, water, dirt, etc. we know they are not alive. How did the materials from our universe come alive? While we have already posited that life cannot come from non-life, the atheist must answer how thought processes have come into being. One observer rightly concluded the reason why we think is so that our thoughts can die and not ourselves. How did this consciousness come about? Animals have instincts, but people do not reason with a shark when it smells blood in the water. People do not go to court over a poison ivy plant for giving them a rash. However, we do reason with our spouses. We can sit down and have an intelligent conversation with our doctor. The atheist has no answer for how dead rocks and other non-living material simply came alive. Flew, a renowned atheist philosopher's best answer for how living conscious beings came about said, "They just grew." The theist can stand boldly on God's word, "God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being" (Gen. 2:7).

### IV. Conscience Came from That Which Had No Conscience

Further, the atheist cannot explain the sense of oughtness humans feel. Was the murdering of millions of Jews wrong? In whose eyes was it wrong? Was it wrong according to an individual or group of individuals (subjective)? Was it wrong according to the laws set down by the country of Germany or some other man-made system? Some of the Germans used the defense they did not violate any laws of Germany, America, or Britain. By what law or by what authority were those people wrong for murdering innocent Jews? It must be a law that transcends the subjective. Though the atheist does not want to admit it, he does believe in real (objective) moral wrong. There is but one ultimate moral lawgiver—God.

### V. Human Beings Came from That Which Was Not Human

Finally, the atheist must show how rocks and dirt ultimately produced a human being. No atheistic scientist has produced the diligently sought-after "missing link." Examination of remains of fossils etc, has produced apes and humans. While apes and humans come in all different shapes and sizes, there are no transitional remains. No ape has ever given birth to a human being, and no ape has ever transitioned into a human being. When Moses wrote that each creature produces after its own kind, no alternative has been proven otherwise. *(continued on page 4)*



**PRAYER LIST**

**Current** : Casey Potvin is still struggling with bad migraines and is having tests

**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

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

Extended family and Friend are Emailed Weekly

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**: 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.

Lads to Leaders will have a Work Day this coming Sunday at 4:30 in the teen room. All participants are encouraged to attend!

*Thank You for all the calls, texts and delicious food! - Earl and Charlene Smith*

FLORIDA SCHOOL OF PREACHING

**LADIES' BIBLE STUDY**

Taught by  
Susan Stearsman

*One*  
John 17:20-26

**December 12, 2023**  
**7:00 PM**

Future  
Class Dates:  
January 15-18, 2024  
49th Annual Lectureship  
February 20, 2024  
March 12, 2024

Scheduled to Serve in December	
Designated Elder	Brian Kenyon
<b>Wednesday, November 29, 2023</b>	
Announcements	Stacey Paulin
Song Leader / Prayer	David Williams
Devotional / Invitation	Vince Daugherty
Closing Prayer	David Deal
<b>Sunday, December 3, 2023</b>	
10:30 am Sermon	Vince Daugherty
He Must Increase (John 3:27-35)	
6:00 pm Sermon	Joey Treat
Mission Report	
<b>Those to Serve 10:30 am</b>	
Greeters	Jeanelle/Bea
Song/Pray before class	Paul Sweeney
Announcements (both)	Rick Kenyon
Song Leader (both)	Terrance Dindy Jr
Bible Reader/Prayer	Brian Williams
Lord's Table (both)	George Beals
Closing Prayer	David Anderson
Open/Close Building	Bobby Sheumaker
Attendance Cards	Declan/Judah
Sound Booth (both)	Kyle B
<b>Those to Serve 6:00 pm</b>	
Greeters	Mccarters
Announcements	Rick Kenyon
Song Leader	Terrance Dindy Jr
Bible Reader/Prayer	Josh Potvin
Closing Prayer	Roberson L.
<b>Wednesday, December 6, 2023</b>	
Announcements	Bobby Sheumaker
Song Leader / Prayer	Kyle Faneuf
Devotional / Invitation	Woody K
Closing Prayer	Steve Tydings
<b>How We Are Giving</b>	
November 12	\$7,738.00
November 19	\$7,065.00
November 26	\$4,518.25
Contribution Average	\$7,021.39
<b>Weekly Budget</b>	<b>\$7,410.00</b>
<b>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!</b>	



(continued from page 2)

## Conclusion

Those who want to unshackle themselves from God will find the implications of that position a much more difficult pill to swallow. The atheist is hopelessly forced into taking illogical or contradictory positions. Atheism is not a tenable position. If you are a person who has rationally concluded faith in the God of the Bible, that faith is well grounded. I hope it is informative for you, and something you could share with those who may be trapped in a prison of their own choice. -- V. D.

### Upcoming Events

#### December

3 — "Walk Out of Darkness" event

9 — SFA Holiday Party (in fellowship room?)

16 — Youth group holiday caroling & party

#### January

5 — Fellowship bonfire @ Brian & Jagie's

15-18 — FSOP Lectureship

#### February

23-25 — YES Weekend (Valdosta)

Women of the Word

Olivia Smith

## The O Rings

All I have to say is "The Challenger," and I know what you probably think. This catastrophic event inevitably was caused by the malfunction of two tiny seals, called O rings. The tragedy could have been entirely avoided if they had properly prepared the O rings. We ourselves can avoid eternal condemnation if we properly follow what Mark 16:16 says through the inspiration of the Spirit. The word "and" is only a three-letter word, yet people in the denominational world want to overlook this word and believe they are rocketing off to heaven, when in reality they are plummeting to a fiery eternal destination, all because they didn't properly prepare their vessels. Let us pray we do not make the small but deadly mistake of ignoring a little word and misunderstand God's word!

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned"- Mark 16:16

### HOLIDAY PARTY- DECEMBER 9 AT 5:30 PM

Wear your most festive holiday attire, and bring a white elephant gift for a gift exchange!

There is a sign up sheet on the office door for the food.



[www.SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com](http://www.SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com)

Email us: [SFA.church@gmail.com](mailto:SFA.church@gmail.com)

For sermons and podcasts, find us here.



### South Florida Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST

1807 South Florida Avenue  
Lakeland, FL 33803-2653

Return Service Requested

"Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called the children of God!.."

1 John 3:1



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