

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
since 1969

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

Isaiah's "New Heaven and New Earth"

Brian R. Kenyon

The expression "new heavens and a new earth," or something similar, occurs in four passages in the Bible, two in the Old Testament (Isa. 65:17; 66:22), and two in the New Testament (2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:11). As with all other Biblical topics, when the total teaching of the Bible is not allowed to define the meaning, confusion results. When the total teaching of the Bible is considered, the "new heavens and a new earth" in Isaiah refer to the Messianic kingdom, while the expression in the New Testament refers to heaven, the eternal home of the righteous.

Background of the Phrase

In Isaiah 65:1-16, the prophet gave a contrast between the Jews, God's chosen people who rejected Him, and the Gentiles, who did not initially seek God yet found Him. The chapter opens, "I was sought by those who did not ask for Me; I was found by those who did not seek Me. I said, 'Here I am, here I am,' To a nation that was not called by My name" (Isa. 65:1 cf. Rom. 10:17-21). God's chosen people were described as "a rebellious people, Who walk in a way that is not good ... A people who provoke Me to anger" (Isa. 65:2-3). The main reason Isaiah gave as to why God's chosen people made Him angry was because of their idolatrous ways (Isa. 65:3-4). Their deceived attitude toward others was, "Keep to yourself, Do not come near me, For I am holier than you" (Isa. 65:5). God's justice and loyalty to the covenant could not allow the rebellious people to continue. God promised them, "Therefore I will number you for the sword, And you shall all bow down to the slaughter; Because, when I called, you did not answer; When I spoke, you did not hear, But did evil before My eyes, And chose that in which I do not delight" (Isa. 65:12).

A New Dwelling Place Needed

After pronouncing judgment on the rebellious people, God, through Isaiah, said of the faithful remnant:

Behold, My servants shall eat, But you [rebellious ones] shall be hungry; Behold, My servants shall drink, But you [rebellious ones] shall be thirsty; Behold, My servants shall rejoice, But you [rebellious ones] shall be ashamed; ¹⁴Behold, My servants shall sing for joy of heart, But you [rebellious ones] shall cry for sorrow of heart, And wail for grief of spirit. ¹⁵You [rebellious ones] shall leave your name as a curse to My chosen; For the Lord God will slay you, And call His servants by another name. (Isa. 65:13-15)

Because a new relationship will exist between God and His people, there must be a new dwelling place. Thus, the Lord says, “For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind” (Isa. 65:17). In the Old Testament, future spiritual blessings were often either preceded by the promise of physical blessings (cf. Joel 2:18-32), or they are spoken of in physical terms (Ps. 37:3, 9, 11, 22, 29, 34). Since the new relationship under consideration was spiritual, the new dwelling place must also be spiritual. “Create” is something that only God can do (Gen. 1:1; Ps. 51:10). The “former” state (i.e., old heavens and old earth) being no more remembered indicates a total change of state from anything that was formerly known.

In place of the sorrow and shame associated with the former condition (Isa. 65:1-6), God’s new people will be a joy and a reason for rejoicing. “But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing, And her people a joy. ¹⁹I will rejoice in Jerusalem, And joy in My people; The voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, Nor the voice of crying” (Isa. 65:18-19). “Jerusalem” and “my people” are used synonymously in these verses. Note also the frequency of “glad,” “rejoice,” and “joy.” God rejoices in the success and well being of His people (cf. Deut. 30:9; Isa. 62:5; Zeph. 3:17). “Jerusalem” would be made a place of joy (cf. Isa. 51:3; 60:15; 61:7); thus, weeping and crying would be past (cf. Isa. 25:9).

God’s People Will Be Blessed

God will bless His new people, and they will enjoy the fruit of their labors. First, they shall live a full life (as opposed to being cut down like the rebellious, Isa. 65:17). “No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, Nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; For the child shall die one hundred years old, But the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed” (Isa. 65:20). “No more ... an infant ... live but a few days” suggests no untimely deaths. A child dying at one hundred shows fullness of age. Even if one died seemingly untimely, it would not be truly untimely because he would have fulfilled God’s purpose (cf. Stephen, Acts 7:54-60).

Second, God’s faithful remnant’s labor will be rewarding. “They shall build houses and inhabit them; They shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. ²²They shall not build and another inhabit; They shall not plant and another eat; For as the days of a tree, so shall be the days of My people, And My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands” (Isa. 65:21-22). One of the curses for breaking the covenant was that covenant-breakers would not enjoy the fruit of their labors (Lev. 26:26; Deut. 28:15-46). Covenant obedience, however, would result in the enjoyment of their labors (Deut. 28:1-14). “As the days of a tree” is symbolic of longevity, permanence, and fruitfulness (cf. Isa. 61:3; Jer. 17:8).

Third, God’s faithful remnant’s labor will not be in vain. “They shall not labor in vain, Nor bring forth children for trouble; For they shall be the descendants of the blessed of the LORD, And their offspring with them” (Isa. 65:23). All futility will be cancelled. In the past, they labored for that which did not satisfy (Isa. 55:2), and they

wearied themselves in following their own way (Isa. 57:10), but now it will be different. The reason why futility would be cancelled is because “the descendants of the blessed of the LORD” (cf. 1 Cor. 15:58)!

So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. ¹⁸But I say, have they not heard? Yes indeed: “Their sound has gone out to all the earth, And their words to the ends of the world.” ¹⁹But I say, did Israel not know? 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.” ²⁰But 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.” ²¹But to Israel he says: “All day long I have stretched out My hands To a disobedient and contrary people.” (Rom. 10:17-21)

Conclusion

The background of Isaiah’s detailing the new spiritual relationship and the blessings promised indicates that the “new heavens and a new earth” is ultimately fulfilled in the Messianic kingdom (cf. Rom. 10:17-21). God’s people in the Old Testament could only look forward to God’s promised remnant, but people living today can be a part of that kingdom now through obedience to the Gospel (Mk. 9:1; Lk. 24:49; Acts 2:41-47 cf. Col. 1:13; 1 Thes. 2:12). When this world is no more, only those who have obeyed the Lord can dwell with God forever! Have you obeyed the Gospel? Are you spiritually dwelling in God’s kingdom, the church? ♥ Brian

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Wanda Bruno, Wayne Shearer, Sharon Washington, Dorothy Trice, Faith West, Jim Turner, Ginny Hamby and Margaret Coone.

Shut In Members: Carol Eason, Virginia Plumlee, Dick & Joyce Burbage and Cheryl Barker.

Others: Wayne Shearer's parents, Paulisky Irizarry (Jagie's brother), Lynn Stevens, Chrissi Fuesner, Bobby Cole, Ruth Brunson, Chip Bolding, Tonya Mathis, Connie Jordan and Maureen Nichols.

Upcoming Events

Sat. Dec. 8th: Youth Group devo and service project, 10:30 am in the fellowship hall. See Jessica Anderson for details.

Sunday Dec. 9th: Elders/Deacons Meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Saturday Dec. 15th: Men's breakfast at North Lakeland at 8:00 a.m.

Sunday Dec. 16th: FSOP Graduation after evening service. Potluck fellowship meal afterward honoring C.J. Grimes.

Sunday Dec. 16th: We will be stuffing stockings for a local ladies' shelter. Items needed will be for boys and girls ages 11-16 and also for ladies. There is a basket in the foyer to put your donated items. We will also take cash to do the shopping. Give your money to Rene' Bingle by Dec. 12th.

Tuesday Dec. 18th: Senior Saints dinner at Fred's restaurant and then going to look at Christmas lights. Meet at the building at 5:00 p.m.

Saturday Dec. 22nd: We will be Christmas Caroling. Please meet at the building at 12:45 p.m. Let Jagie Kenyon know if you plan to come.

Saturday Dec. 22nd: Our Annual Holiday Party at the Sweeney's at 5:30 p.m. If you plan to attend please add your name to the sign up sheet and indicate what food you will bring. Remember your white elephant gift for the gift exchange.

Monday Dec. 31st: 2nd Annual Chili Cook-Off at 6:00 p.m. Judging will be by a panel of experts chosen by your deacons. Please bring a side dish, drinks and dessert. Please sign up if you are bringing a pot of chili. Games and a Senior Citizen ball drop to follow the meal.

Thank You

Brothers & Sisters, I have no words to express our deepest thanks to all of you! The prayers, calls, cards and yes even texts, have been overflowing. Our God is good!! Life is Awesome! In Christian love, Wayne & Anita

Congratulations

Alberto Labrador was baptized into Christ on Friday Nov. 30th. He has been studying with Debra Pavlovic and was baptized by George Beals. He lives in Tampa but plans to worship with us for now. Please let us welcome Alberto!

Visitors

Janet Moore, Jerry Green, James Shearer, Eric Bunch, Kyomi and Nevaeh Irizarry, Johnny Davidson, Barbara Farmer, Gary & Cathy Garland, Zach & Brian, Mary Moore, Alicia Beltron, Charles & Bergeda Minnis, Pamela Dunlap and Lourdes Allen.

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

December

Wadi Khoury **Table** Josh Estridge
Bobby Simpson..... **Assist**Dustin Walling

Sunday, December 9, 2018
9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class.....Jim Turner
Prayer..... David Anderson

10:30 A.M.

AnnouncementsJimmy Sweeney
Song Leader.....Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer..... John McShane
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer..... Tim Croson
Sound Booth..... Tucker Sweeney

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader..... David Williams
Opening Prayer..... Steve Hunley
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer..... David Deal
Sound Booth..... Tucker Sweeney
Greeters Fifes/Sweeneys
Att. Cards..... Caelen and Cam'ron Bailey
Open & Close BuildingBob Cooper

Wednesday, December 12, 2018

Song Leader..... Steve Hunley
Opening Prayer..... Kyle Bingle
Closing Prayer..... Charles Paulin

Please meet in the library. If you cannot serve, please call Stacey Paulin so he can get a replacement - (863) 838-8911

Sunday, December 16, 2018
9:30 A.M.

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

10:30 A.M.

AnnouncementsJimmy Sweeney
Song Leader..... Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer.....Kenny French
Sermon.....Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer..... Ken Walker
Sound Booth.....Casey Paulin

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader..... David Williams
Opening Prayer.....Fred Strickland
Sermon.....Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer..... Jim Turner
Sound Booth.....Casey Paulin
Greeters McShanes/Bingles
Att. Cards..... Colby/Sawyer
Open & Close BuildingBob Cooper

Wednesday, December 19, 2018

Song Leader..... Jim Turner
Opening Prayer..... Steve Hunley
Closing Prayer..... Alex Parramore

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Nov. 11.....\$6,202.17
Nov. 18.....\$6,204.30
Nov. 25.....\$5,194.77
Dec. 02.....\$7,331.10
Contribution Average.....\$5,940.38
Weekly Budget.....\$4,887.98

~ Communion to Shut-ins ~

Dec 09..... Kenyon
Dec 16..... McShane
Dec 23..... Kemp
Dec 30.....Kenyon



New Member Spotlight
Veda Roach



Veda is originally from Trinidad and Tobago, from where she recently migrated. She currently works as a career development specialist. Her greatest memories are from her childhood, "being carefree and playful." Her greatest accomplishments are giving her life to Christ and completing her BS degree in social work during difficult times. She likes to fellowship with God's people, travel, and relax on the beach. The best advice she's ever been given was from her mom, "Serve the Lord." Welcome, Veda, to SFA! Read more about her on the bulletin board.



Member Spotlight
Tonya Anderson



Tonya was born in Gadsen, Alabama. Her first job was as a salesclerk at JC Penney. From the time she was a child, she wanted to be a teacher. She fulfilled this goal and taught several years for the Polk County School Board before her retirement. She was awarded as Teacher of the Year at Lawton Chiles Middle Academy. She likes to play with her grandchildren, and she enjoys reading and relaxing on the beach. She and her husband, David (one of our elders), have two children and twin grandchildren. Read more about Tonya on the bulletin board.



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 . . .



We rejoice with the angels that Alberto Labrador (center) was baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of his sins (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38) on Friday, November 30, 2018. He is a friend of Debra, who introduced him to George for further Bible study. We thank these two Christians for their part in bring Alberto to Christ. Most of all, we thank God for His love and offer of salvation (1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9)!

'Tis The Season when many people in our area are in need of food! Our pantry continues to be a good opportunity to show the love of Jesus. Help us keep it supplied with easy open canned goods!



Make Plans Now To Attend

Feb. 22-24, 2019

Another Great Opportunity To Grow Spiritually

SAVE THE DATE	
PTP SPARK	3.10-3.13 2019
	ORANGE PARK, FLORIDA Lakeside church of Christ