



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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What Shall a Man Give In Exchange for His Soul?

Brian R. Kenyon

When the tomb of Charlemagne (King of the Franks, 766-813) was opened in the year 1000, he was said to be wearing a purple robe, holding a scepter in one hand, and the withered finger of his other hand pointed to a passage in an opened Bible. That passage was what we know as Mark 8:36-37, where Jesus said, “For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?” These sobering words of Christ give us occasion to remember some important truths about the human spirit/soul and the tragedy of its loss.

The Spirit /Soul Is Immortal

The prophet Zechariah stated that “the LORD, who stretches out the heavens ... forms the spirit of man within him” (Zec. 12:1). The word translated “forms” means to fashion, or shape, as like what potters do while making vessels of clay (cf. Jer. 18:1-4). Humans, male and female, are exclusive among God’s creation in that they are the only ones said to be made in the “image ... [and] likeness” of God (Gen. 1:26-27). The body was formed from the dust of the ground (Gen. 2:7a). It is physical and returns to dust at death. The spirit/soul of humans is not physical (cf. Lk. 24:39). The spirit/soul is from God (Gen. 2:7b; Eccl. 12:7), the “Father of spirits” (Heb 12:9).

Human nature can be viewed as three-fold: “spirit and soul and body” (1 Thes. 5:23). Although the “spirit” and “soul” are distinguishable (Heb. 4:12), they are inseparable and make up the human’s “inner man” (Eph. 3:16). Thus, they can be spoken of as a spirit/soul unit. There are three inescapable truths about the human spirit/soul. First, it is not subject to death. Jesus taught that people could kill the body but not the spirit/soul (Mt. 10:28). Death occurs when the spirit is separated from the body (Gen. 35:18; Jas. 2:26). Second, since the spirit/soul lives eternally, so do all humans (Gen. 25:8; Jn. 5:28-29). Third, the spiritual place humans will exist eternally is determined by the choices made by our “inner man” (Jn. 20:29-31; Rom. 10:9-10; 1 Thes. 5:21-22).

The Spirit /Soul Is Unique

In the Book of Job, Elihu spoke of the uniqueness of mankind, “But there is a spirit in man, And the breath of the Almighty gives him understanding” (Job 32:8). There are some major differences between mankind and animals. First, in the lineage of Christ, Adam was called, by creation, “the son of God” (Lk. 3:38). Nothing in the animal world was called the son, or offspring, of God. Second, at

death, the human spirit/soul “goes upward, and the spirit of the animal ... goes down to the earth” (Eccl. 3:21). This is another way of saying at death, “the dust will return to the earth as it was, And the spirit will return to God who gave it” (Eccl. 12:7). Animals have a different nature than humans! Third, humans are self-conscience. They can examine themselves (1 Cor. 11:28; 2 Cor. 13:5; Gal. 6:4) and discern right from wrong (Deut. 13:15-19), good from better (1 Cor. 7:36-38). Animals have no such ability. Fourth, human actions are self-determined by free will (Josh. 24:15; Mt. 7:13-14). Animal behavior is determined by instinct and physiological impulses. Fifth, humans are worshiping beings in that they will look to something, real or imagined, as an object of worship (Ex. 20:3-5; Jn. 4:23-24; Rom. 1:23). Animals are not worshiping beings. Sixth, humans are created to love God and voluntarily do His revealed will (Isa. 43:7; Eph. 2:10). Other than the role for which God created them (Col. 1:16), animals have no capability of loving God and/or understanding and doing His revealed will.

The Spirit / Soul Is Priceless

The human spirit/soul is more valuable than the sum total of all this world’s riches (Mk. 8:36-37)! This world and all its riches will all be gone one day (Mt. 24:35; 2 Pet. 3:10-12; 1 Jn. 2:17). Why is the human spirit/soul more valuable? First, it was given by God (cf. in His “image”); thus, made to survive death and live forever (Gen. 1:26-27; Eccl. 12:7). Second, Jesus shed His blood for our spirit/soul. Jesus did not come to give eternal physical life (Heb. 9:27), but eternal spiritual life (cf. Jn. 11:25-26; Heb. 2:9).

Although the spirit/soul is the most priceless possession, it can be and, unfortunately, is sold out by many people. Here are some of the more common reasons why people sell out their spirit/soul. First, some place more value on possessions, like the rich young ruler (Mt. 19:21-22) and the foolish farmer (Lk. 12:20-21). Second, some place more value on the pleasures of this life, as illustrated by the seed that fell among thorns (Lk. 8:14) and as exemplified by the once faithful Demas, who forsook the cause of Christ, “having loved this present world” (2 Tim. 4:10). Third, some place more value on popularity, like the Jewish leaders who believed, “but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God” (Jn. 12:42-43). Rest assured, however, whatever people may get in exchange for their spirit/soul, they have made a foolish trade! Neither the world nor all its riches can satisfy (1 Tim. 6:9-10 cf. Eccl. 12:13). Neither the world nor its treasures will endure (Mt. 6:19-20). Neither the world nor its treasures can be taken into eternity (Job 1:21).

The Spirit / Soul's Loss Is Most Tragic

Not only is the loss of the human spirit/soul tragic because of its inherent value described above, but there are also other tragic consequences that make this loss the most tragic. First, the loss of one person’s soul may be responsible for the loss of other souls. Consider the rebellion Korah, Datham, Abiram. It was not just those three spirit/souls who were lost but a total of 14,700 souls were lost as a consequence of that incident and the people who murmured against Moses and Aaron because of it (Num. 16:1-46). Even the rich man was afraid his brothers would be eternally lost because of his example (Lk. 16:27-28). Second, lost souls tragically pay dearly in this life as well. They are separated from any spiritual blessing (Eph 1:3), which means they have no mediator in prayer, no fellowship with God and His children, no comfort from above, and no hope of eternal salvation! Third, the loss of the spirit/soul is an entire loss, irreversible (Lk. 16:25-26), forever (Mt. 25:46), and without compensation (2 Thes. 1:8-9).

Conclusion

Charlemagne is to be commended for having his dead body buried so as to point to the value of the spirit/soul. Only God knows his eternity. The good news for us is that our soul need not be lost! God’s plan of salvation has been from eternity, and He cannot lie (Titus 1:2). What is the condition of your soul today?

Upcoming Events	
December	
12	FSOP Ladies class 7:00 pm
16	— Youth group holiday caroling & party
January	
5	— Fellowship bonfire @ Brian & Jagie's
15-18	— FSOP Lectureship
February	
23-25	— YES Weekend (Valdosta)

PRAYER LIST

Current : Bobby and Linda Simpson have had Covid but are doing better, **Ron Ford** is home now but still has bronchitis and Afib (no visitors please), **Chip Bolding** is now home but is on IV antibiotics for 6 weeks, **Carlene Long** is home from the hospital, **Fran Gabaldon** was in an auto accident and has pain and bruising on her legs, **Sharon Mathis Washington's** sister Jewel Lock passed away-remember the family in your prayers

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

Allen and Rachel Grimes has placed membership with us again! We are happy to have them back serving among us!

We have a new sister in Christ! **Elizabeth Pate Cebrian** was baptized into Christ by Joseph Faulk. He has been studying with her and we are happy to hear of the good news!! She lives in Jacksonville, FL

Marissa Estridge & Toney Wilson

both responded on Sunday and asked for prayers for forgiveness and strength to do better in the future. Let's keep these sisters in our prayers.

Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed... (James 5:16)

Scheduled to Serve in December

Designated Elder	Brian Kenyon
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Wednesday, December 13, 2023

Announcements	Brian Kenyon
Song Leader / Prayer	David Williams
Devotional / Invitation	Terrance Dindy
Closing Prayer	Jimmy Sweeney

Sunday, December 17, 2023

10:30 am Sermon	Vince Daugherty
"It's a Wonderful Life" (Psalm 73)	
6:00 pm Sermon	Joseph Faulk
"Wrestling for the Blessing" (Genesis 32:26)	

Those to Serve 10:30 am

Greeters	Patty and Lou VanAllen
Song/Pray before class	Frank Hamby
Announcements (both)	David Anderson
Song Leader (both)	Tucker Sweeney
Prayer / Bible reading	Andre Medley
Lord's Table (both)	Nigel St Bernard
Closing Prayer	Terrance Dindy
Open/Close Building	David Deal
Attendance Cards	Ellis/Sean C
Sound Booth (both)	Brian W

Those to Serve 6:00 pm

Greeters	D & N Williams
Announcements	David Anderson
Song Leader	Tucker Sweeney
Prayer / Bible reading	Rick Kenyon
Closing Prayer	George Davis

Wednesday, December 20, 2023

Announcements	David Anderson
Song Leader / Prayer	Brian Kenyon
Devotional / Invitation	Bobby Sheumaker
Closing Prayer	Tucker Sweeney

How We Are Giving

November 26	\$4,518.25
December 3	\$10,600.58
December 10	\$7,967.49
Contribution Average	\$7,119.77
Weekly Budget	\$7,410.00

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



Thank you to all who decorated, helped and participated in this year's Holiday Party! Everyone seemed to enjoy the food and fellowship with our family at SFA!



The Youth Group will be going Christmas carolling this Saturday to our shut ins. They will be going at 2 PM sharp. After carolling they will be going to the Daugherty's home for pizza and a party. Please let Vince know if you will be attending.

What a Wonderful World

What a wonderful world this would be if there were no frogs, lizards, snakes, and all the other icky bugs & stuff that I don't like. I could walk around without the fear of creepy things or scary animals. It would be a wonderful world—or would it?? I do not understand the function or contribution that each living thing makes to this world that we live in, but they all play a part.

I am so thankful that God was the creator of the world because He created it perfectly!!! "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." "Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good." (Genesis 1:1, 31)

David speaks of our wonderful world:

Psalm 8:3 "When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon, and the stars, which you have ordained." Psalm 19:1 "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork." Psalm 24:1-2 "The earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein. For He has founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the waters." Also read Psalm 104.

"All things bright and beautiful,
all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful,
the Lord God made them all.
God gave us eyes to see them,
and lips that we might tell
how great is God Almighty,
who has made all things well."

Cecil Frances Alexander

Christian Apologetics

Dino Records

According to the Bible, Noah took all kinds of animals upon the ark. That would have included dinosaurs. So it would mean that dinosaurs and man lived together after the flood. Question: Shouldn't we have a record of dinosaurs living with man? Yes, and we do have records of dinosaurs existing with man.

- The legend of Saint George and the dragon. (the "dragon" description matches triceratops
- Marco Polo in 1271 A.D. reported the emperor of China used dragons to pull his chariots in parades
- Dinosaur of Ta Prohm a rock relief from clearly depicting a stegosaurus from the 12th Cent. A.D.-VD



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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.