



SOUTH FLORIDA AVENUE CHURCH OF CHRIST MESSENGER



1807 S. Florida Ave.,
Lakeland, FL 33803

Vol. 74 No. 51 December 21, 2021

ELDERS

David Anderson
Brian Kenyon
Bobby Sheumaker

DEACONS

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Rick Kenyon
Stacey Paulin

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ASSOCIATE MINISTER

Vince Daugherty

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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.

WEB PAGE

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Florida School of Preaching
since 1969

Huron, SD Mission Work
Casey & Emily Paulin

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.

The One Who Bears Witness

(Part 1)

Vince Daugherty

In John 8:18 Jesus stated, "I Am One who bears witness of Myself, and the Father who sent Me bears witness of Me." John records several "I am" statements from Jesus's public ministry to clue in the hearer that Jesus was in fact of the same substance as the "I Am" of the Old Testament. Jesus was making the statement that He is a witness for Himself. In the court of law in our country taking the stand for oneself is a risky proposition, it is rarely done and typically counseled against. When one thinks of a witness he is right to conjure images of a courtroom scene. The Son of God was more than able to take the stand for Himself, and His witness stands as testimony to which all must grapple.

However, mankind has not always needed a witness. In the days of Adam, God walked with humanity together as with a friend in a garden. God always intended humanity to be in a close relationship with Him. Since the advent of sin and the separation of humanity from God there emerged the necessity for faithful witnesses to tell of God's nature and character. From old, God has called upon witnesses to reveal Himself to humanity. He then called forth His expert witness when He sent for Jesus. Finally, God still calls upon witnesses who will take the stand in His defense today. This week will be the first part of a two-part series on God's calling forth of witnesses. This week we will examine the witnesses of the Old Testament who served as types for God's expert witness, Jesus. Next week we will look at God's expert witness and how He continues to call His next witnesses today.

Examples in Ancient Cultures

In Genesis 31 Jacob separated with his family from the house of Laban. Laban pursued his son in law thinking that Jacob had committed some error or unrighteousness. When Jacob was found innocent, the two families separated and used a pile of stones as a marker or dividing line between the two families. Genesis 31:43-55 tells of the covenant Jacob and Laban made and the use of the stones being a witness. "This heap is a witness, that I will not pass beyond this heap to you, and you will not pass beyond this heap and this pillar to me, for harm." (v. 52) In the book of Ruth, when Boaz made claim to be the kinsman-redeemer it had to be witnessed by individuals in the community that this transaction was made. (See Ruth 4:1-12) "And Boaz said to the elders and all the people, "You are witnesses to this day that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Malon's, from the hand of Naomi... And all the people who were at the gate, and the elders, said, "we are witnesses." (v. 9,11) People in the ancient world understood the purpose and use of witnesses for what they attested to. God in turn used this term to reveal Himself to humanity by way of witnesses.

The Natural World

Psalm 19:1-6 tells of the natural world, especially the starry hosts of heaven. "Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard." (v. 2,3) Romans 1:20 states, "For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead..." Acts 14:17 Paul stated, "He [God] did not leave himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." From the natural world, one can examine the witness that it bears, pointing that which is created to its Creator.

Moses

Moses became one of God's special witnesses. Exodus 20:18-21 tells of Moses drawing near to Mt. Sinai when the people were afraid and shrank back. Exodus 33:11 states, "the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to a friend." Finally, when Moses was in the Lord's presence, his face would shine (Exo. 34:29-35) Moses enjoyed a unique relationship with God, one which makes him a great witness for us to examine.

The Law

The law which was given to Moses stood as a witness between God and Israel. Deuteronomy 31:26 states, "Take this Book of the Law, and put it beside the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there as a witness against you." One of the ten commandments stated, "do not bear false witness" (Deut. 5:20) Deuteronomy 19:15-21 detailed the severity of punishment for one who bears false witness.

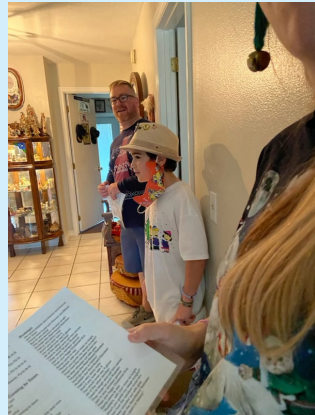
The Children of Israel

The Law code was to help be a reminder to Israel, but even it could not prevent them from wandering. God's calling Israel should have been a slam dunk expert witness; they themselves had witnessed God's miraculous signs and wonders in Egypt, the exodus, in the wilderness wanderings, and entry into the land of Canaan. When Joshua brought them into the Promised Land, he challenged them to remain faithful. (Josh. 24:14-27) "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the Lord for yourselves to serve Him." and they said, "we are witnesses!" Yet Israel's history was one of sin, idolatry, apathy, and ritualism. The Children of Israel became a compromised witness.

The Prophets

Despite Israel's overall failings, God sent special witnesses among the people that would defend His character and actions. "I have also spoken by the prophets, and have multiplied visions; I have given symbols through the witness of the prophets." (Hos 12:10) Yet often, the prophets harshly rejected. In turn, the prophets acted as God's mouthpieces to witness against them. "Hear all you peoples! Listen, O earth, and all that is in it! Let the Lord God be a witness against you, The Lord from His holy temple." (Mic. 1:2) For all of the sending and preaching, Israel would not return, so they were taken into captivity. "Yet the Lord testified against Israel and against Judah, by all His prophets, every seer, saying, 'Turn from your evil ways, and keep My commandments and statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent you by my servants the prophets.'" (II Kings 17:13)

Youth Group caroling & party



Senior Saints Christmas Party



SFA FAMILY MATTERS

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." James 5:16

Our Members:

Bob Pratt - health
 Carol Edmonson - health
 Bernetta Green - health
 Brian Smith - heart
 Bobby Simpson - health
 Margaret Coone
 Annett Phillip - health
 Vanessa Palmer - health
 Janie Wise - health
 Neil Entwistle - heart attack
 Melody Baxter - rehab for leg
 Neyome Brunson - strength

Recent requests:

(Please update the office of any changes)

The **EXTENDED FAMILY** and **FRIENDS** prayer requests are emailed every week and posted on the bulletin board

PRAYER LIST

John & Linda McShane
 Ron & Judy Ford - health
 Jim Turner - health, tests
 Fred & Kathy Strickland - health
 Debbie Bush - health
 Sharon M. Washington - health
 Antoine & Marcella Swain - health
 Stacey Paulin - health
 Brenda Mask - health
 Darlene Thompson - health
 Jeanelle Thrower - pain; blood clot
 Virginia Walker - back pain

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

December

Designated Elder - Brian Kenyon

Wednesday, December 22, 2021

Announcements Stacey Paulin
 Song Leader/prayer Vince Daugherty
 Devo Zach Jones
 Closing Prayer Paul Sweeney

Sunday, December 26, 2021

10:30 A.M.

Sermon Vince Daugherty
 "With God All Things Are Possible"
 Luke 18:24-27

6:00 P.M.

Sermon Rick Kenyon
 "2021: Year in Review"

10:30 A.M.

Open/Close bldg (both) David Anderson
 Greeter Waldon
 Song/prayer before class Terrance Dindy, Jr.
 Announcements Bobby Sheumaker
 A.M. Song Leader Brian Kenyon
 Scripture reading/Prayer Paul Sweeney
 Lord's Table Josh Potvin
 Closing Prayer Jimmy Sweeney

6:00 P.M.

Greeters Fife
 P.M. Song Leader Brian Kenyon
 Scripture reading/Prayer Wesley Brunson
 Lord's Table Josh Potvin
 Closing Prayer Jeff Stewart

Wednesday, December 29, 2021

Announcements Rick Kenyon
 Song Leader/Prayer Terrance Dindy, Jr.
 Devo Bobby Sheumaker
 Closing Prayer Jimmy Sweeney

Upcoming Events

December

24 - Office closed
 25 - Christmas
 31 - Annual bonfire
 31 - Office closed

January

2 - fellowship in-service
 9 - Elders meeting
 17-20 - FSOP lectureship



~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Dec 5	\$7,709.00
Dec 12	\$6,854.00
Dec 19	\$7,980.00
Contribution Average	\$6,945.53
Weekly budget	\$7,663.43

Pray for our Shut-ins

Joyce Burbage Carol Eason Ellen Shearer

Updates & Prayer requests

George Davis is experiencing pain in his right hip.



Let's remember all those traveling during the holidays

Thank You!

Thanks to all you contributed and helped with the stocking project! We were able to make 18 stockings and gifts!! Special thanks to the Kenyon's for helping with the wrapping.

'TIS THE SEASON FOR CARD GIVING!

Our youth and helpers will be hand delivering your cards throughout December. A basket is on the foyer table. Simply drop your cards in the basket, and they will be delivered for you.



The Power of His Resurrection

Brian R. Kenyon, Director ♦ Broadcast Live at fsop.net

January 17-20, 2022



Pantry Request:

\$5 gift cards from fast-food restaurants (will be used in an upcoming opportunity to serve - more details soon)



He loved me so - **Ephesians 5:2** " And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma."

Jesus gave His life for me - **Romans 5:8** " But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us"

I have been baptized into Christ - **Galatians 3:26-27** "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

I want to be a worker for the Lord - **James 2:14,17** " What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead."

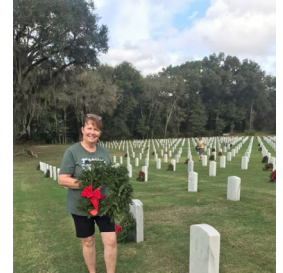
I want to be an example to my family and others - **Joshua 24:15** " And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

There's a mansion waiting for me - **John 14:2-3** " And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

To hear the Lord say, "Well done" - **Matthew 25:23** " His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

To have eternal life - **John 3:36** " He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

This past Saturday SFA was able to participate in the "Wreaths Across America." The event was to honor deceased veterans by laying wreaths on the headstones of graves. To see row upon row of headstones and wreaths made for an emotional morning. It made me think about the idea of sacrifice. In Steven Spielberg's historical fiction "Saving Private Ryan," a small band of soldiers execute a mission to bring home a young private whose mother had already lost three sons in the war. In the end, many of the soldiers tasked with the mission pay the ultimate sacrifice to save the private. The captain of the group, in his dying breaths, whispered the phrase, "earn this" to private Ryan. As an old man, the character remembered back and wondered if he had lived a life worthy of the dying captain's orders? A nonfictional retired navy seal commander was asked what his motivation was as to why he wanted to live life to the fullest. He understood that the life he had was a gift and one in which his fallen teammates could no longer enjoy. The gift he has was paid for by the lives of others who paid the ultimate sacrifice. What motivates him is to live a life that honors their sacrifice. For the Christian, the idea of sacrifice should be one we are familiar with. Christians owe their lives to the ultimate sacrifice that was made on our behalf. The reality of Jesus's sacrifice is even one in which while we were yet sinners, Christ still died for you and me. A sobering question-- what am I doing to honor His sacrifice?



www.SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com

Email us: SFA.church@gmail.com

For sermons and podcasts, find us here.



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Return Service Requested

**"Whoever pursues
righteousness and
kindness will find life,
righteousness, and
honor"**

Proverbs 21:21

