



# South Florida Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST MESSENGER



1807 S. Florida Ave.,  
Lakeland, FL 33803

Vol. 77 No. 52 December 26, 2023

### ELDERS

David Anderson  
Brian Kenyon  
Bobby Sheumaker

### DEACONS

Tyler Anderson  
Jason Hendrix  
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

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

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## The Need for Parents To Train Their Children

Brian R. Kenyon

Solomon wrote, “Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it” (Pr. 22:6). While we know that biblical proverbs, like secular ones, are not absolute, “money-back guarantees” they will *always* be true. For example, Jesus certainly used a “soft answer,” but it did not “turn away wrath” toward Him (Pr. 15:1 cf. Lk. 23:1-12). Likewise, Ahab definitely “found a wife,” but she was not a “good thing” (Pr. 18:22 cf. 1 Kgs. 21:25). However, biblical proverbs are generally true, and must be put into practice for God’s people to truly be wise and pleasing in His sight (cf. Hos. 14:9).

Agur, the son of Jakeh (Pr. 30:1), wrote:

There is a generation that curses its father, And does not bless its mother. <sup>12</sup>There is a generation that is pure in its own eyes, Yet is not washed from its filthiness. <sup>13</sup>There is a generation—oh, how lofty are their eyes! And their eyelids are lifted up. <sup>14</sup>There is a generation whose teeth are like swords, And whose fangs are like knives, To devour the poor from off the earth, And the needy from among men. (Pr. 30:11-14)

Although this was written about three thousand years ago, does it not describe many in our current culture? Unfortunately, this would also describe some who were “brought up” in the church of Christ. The fact that churches of Christ in this country are losing their youth once they leave home is attested by the numbers in several studies and simply by observing the local congregation’s young people after high school graduation. The purpose of this study is to encourage parents to properly train their children by examining the Book of Proverbs and putting into practice the wisdom found in it.

## Parental Obligations

All parents, especially Christians, have a serious obligation to properly train their children. This training involves not only the proper verbal instruction, but even more importantly, it must involve the proper example. Solomon wrote, “My son, give me your heart, And let your eyes observe my ways” (Pr. 23:26). This should be sobering to parents. The wise man invited his son to “observe my ways,” which implies the parent’s example is what it ought to be! Parents, are we exemplifying the way God wants our children to live (cf. Eph.6:4)?

Further, wisdom shows the entire family is involved in the proper training of children (Pr. 14:1; 31:10-31): fathers (Pr. 1:8; 4:1; 6:20), mothers (Pr. 14:1; 31:1, 10-31), and even grandparents (Pr. 4:1-4). One way grandparents effect the training of their grandchildren is by first having properly trained their children

before their children became parents. Another way grandparents affect the training of their grandchildren is by teaching them directly (cf. 2 Tim. 1:5). This is especially needful in contemporary American culture because of the many single parent and/or broken homes. Too many children have little or no stability at home; thus, if positive family values are going to be taught and exemplified, it is going to have to come from godly grandparents going the “second mile.”

## What Parents Must Do

There are some general things that all parents must do to properly train their children. First, they must trust in God’s wisdom. Although Proverbs 3:5-8 is often memorized by children in their Bible classes, it is the parents who must first put this passage to practice. How many parents “trust in the Lord” enough to diligently search His will and practice it, especially in the area of training children? Sometimes parents place more trust in the so called “experts” in child rearing rather than in God’s instruction. A person’s entire being must be immersed in the wisdom of God for true success (cf. Pr. 4:20-27). If parents are to teach their children to be immersed in God’s wisdom (and they are, Pr. 4:20-27), and if parents are to be a positive example to their children (and they are, Pr. 23:26), then parents must themselves be immersed in the wisdom of God so they can successfully teach it to their children. When parents and grandparents fail to value God’s wisdom in the home, the children and grandchildren will most likely fail to value God’s wisdom!

Second parents must properly discipline their children. There is tremendous value in discipline. Parents who truly love their children will lovingly correct them when they need correcting, even if it may involve spanking (Pr. 3:11-12 cf. Heb. 12:7-11). As administering chastisement is an inherent part of being a loving father, so receiving chastisement is an inherent part of being a child in good standing with his or her father (Heb. 12:7-8). Parents who properly chastise their children gain their children’s respect (Heb. 12:9) and promote godly characteristics, such as holiness and righteousness (Heb. 12:10-11). All that it takes to see the failure of parents’ disciplining their children is a casual observance of society as a whole, and even in some church services. It is important for children to receive the proper discipline while they are very young because it is possible that given too late, discipline will not have the most positive effect (Pr. 19:18). Recent studies have shown children’s brains are in development at very young ages, at times when they act out undesirable behaviors. This does not mean it is best to tolerate that behavior until their brains are fully developed, which is not until their mid to late-twenties. Rather, this is the precise time proper training should be applied, so their brains can develop a recognition of acceptable behavior. Many parents truly love and want the best for their children, but they do not know God’s will. Some parents think they harm their children if their children get upset and cry, while others think no discipline will make their children happier. Both extremes are wrong! Parents must realize God, who created us, knows what is best. Proverbs does not justify child abuse but represents wisdom. “He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him promptly” (Pr. 13:24). “Do not withhold correction from a child, For if you beat him with a rod, he will not die. You shall beat him with a rod, And deliver his soul from hell” (Pr. 23:13-14).

Third, parents must train their children in “the way they should go” (Pr. 22:6). This, or course, is not to say that every Scripturally trained child will always remain faithful. Not even God Himself could have that guarantee (Isa. 1:2). Again, proverbs are not meant to be absolute (cf. Pr. 15:1; 18:22). Thus, a child, because of his or her free will, may choose not to follow godly instruction (cf. Adam and Eve; Ezk. 18:20). However, the fact that the Proverbs are general truths is no excuse. Many parents, even among churches of Christ, are failing to properly train their children!

## Conclusion

Parents are to “bring [their children] up in the training and admonition of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4). When this does not happen, not only do families suffer, but the entire church suffers. It is not always easy to properly respond to our children’s undesirable behavior, but we must save them and strengthen the church!

Upcoming Events
<b>December</b>
31 - Fellowship in Service 5:30 pm
<b>January</b>
5 — Fellowship bonfire @ Brian & Jagie's
9 — Senior Saints meeting
15-18 — FSOP Lectureship
<b>February</b>
23-25 — YES Weekend Valdosta

**PRAYER LIST**

**Current :**

**Continual:** Fran Gabaldon knee fx, Debbie Bush (struggles); Antoine & Marcella Swain (health); Bill & Carlene Long (health & strength); Ron Ford (health); Bobby and Linda 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

**Congratulations!!!**

- Tyler Anderson was promoted to Sergeant with the Lakeland Police Department!
- Landon Willcut received a Jack Zorn Scholarship to Faulkner University where he will be majoring in Bible!
- Tucker Sweeney and Anna-Clair Ross got engaged on Sunday December 24!!

**Starting in January our Wednesday evening services will begin at 6:30!**

Julani Harper and Jeff Stewart both responded to the invitation on Sunday asking for prayers. Julani wants prayer to be a better example to his children and for upcoming travels. Jeff asked for prayer for forgiveness.

Fellowship In Service will be on Sunday December 31 at **5:00 PM** before our evening service. Please join us to sign cards for those of our number who need encouragement or who are celebrating a special occasion next month. If you are unable to attend you can still sign the cards at your convenience.

**Youth Section**

**Wisdom**

Science looks for answers as to how or why things work as they do in the universe. One thing Science cannot shed light on is how to use the information. Science cannot give you answers in terms of morality--determining right or wrong. While knowledge is very powerful, wisdom, more specifically Godly-wisdom, is needed to know how best to navigate this world. That is why Solomon asked God for wisdom (1 Kings 3:9). That is why Solomon said, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Prov. 9:10). May you too be wise, and seek after Godly wisdom. -VD

**Scheduled to Serve in December**

Designated Elder	Brian Kenyon
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**Wednesday, December 27, 2023**

Announcements	Stacey Paulin
Song Leader / Prayer	Landon Willcut
Devotional / Invitation	George Beals
Closing Prayer	Kyle Bingle

**Sunday, December 31, 2023**

10:30 am Sermon	Vince Daugherty
Grace: God's Free Gift (Romans 5:15)	
6:00 pm Sermon	Vince Daugherty
Solomon Requests Wisdom (1 Kings 3:4-10)	

**Those to Serve 10:30 am**

Greeters	Estridge's
Song/Pray before class	Stacey Paulin
Announcements (both)	Tyler Anderson
Song Leader (both)	Kyle Faneuf
Prayer / Bible reading	Paul Sweeney
Lord's Table (both)	Lou Van Allen
Closing Prayer	David Deal
Open/Close Building	Bobby Sheumaker
Attendance Cards	Judah/Ellis
Sound Booth (both)	Jason

**Those to Serve 6:00 pm**

Greeters	Rogers
Announcements	Tyler Anderson
Song Leader	Kyle Faneuf
Prayer / Bible reading	Joseph Faulk
Closing Prayer	Matt Willcut

**Wednesday, January 3, 2024**

Announcements	Bobby Sheumaker
Song Leader / Prayer	Tucker Sweeney
Devotional / Invitation	Vince Daugherty
Closing Prayer	Jeff Stewart

**How We Are Giving**

December 10	\$7,967.49
December 17	\$5,624.60
December 24	\$8,598.10
Contribution Average	\$7,119.42
<b>Weekly Budget</b>	<b>\$7,410.00</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!**





## How's Your Vision? Do you have "I" trouble?

*Rene Bingle*

As we age our physical vision tends to grow worse. How about spiritually? Is your vision improving as you grow in Christ, or is it growing dim. Many of us continue to have "I" trouble because we let pride creep into our hearts and cloud our vision.

1. "I" want it my way- We often want things the way we want them, when we want them and how we want them. Scripture tells us that even Jesus prayed "...not My will but yours be done" (Luke 22:42). We seem to have a plan for how we think things should play out but God is the one who plans all things. Proverbs 16:9 tells us that "In their hearts humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps."

2. "I" thought it would be different- So many times our thoughts make us doubt God. Our thoughts tell us things should be different or that bad things should not be happening to us. God tells us that "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways declares the Lord" (Is. 55:8). God can see the future and He can use even the bad things in our lives to work to glorify Him. We need to remember that this world is not our home. It is temporary and if we remain faithful to God even when times are tough we will receive a greater home in heaven one day.

3. "I" think God wants me to be happy- No, my friend, God wants you to be holy (1 Peter 1:16). When we obey Christ and become a child of His we can have peace and joy no matter our circumstances, but that doesn't mean that we will always be happy. Paul and Silas were cast into prison for following Christ and many have been killed for their faith. I doubt they were happy at the time but they chose joy. In Hebrews we read that Moses chose to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season (Heb. 11:25). These examples show us we can choose joy even when the circumstances around us seem hard. One day we will be overjoyed when we see the Lord if we are found faithful, just as the disciples were overjoyed to see him in John 20:20.

*"Where there is no vision, the people perish; but he that keepeth the law, happy is he."  
Proverbs 29:18*

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### **South Florida Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST**

1807 South Florida Avenue  
Lakeland, FL 33803-2653

Return Service Requested

**"Look to the Lord and His strength:  
seek His face always"**

**1 Chronicles 16:11**



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