

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

Bible Study Gone Wrong

Hiram Kemp

All who sincerely seek to please God and obey Jesus Christ would agree that there is a necessity to know what the Bible says (2 Tim. 3:16-17). In a day when pop-psychology, storytelling, and philosophy are passed off as preaching, there is a heightened importance for us all to study God's word for ourselves and be sure that we are pleasing to God. However, once I know a diligent study of the Bible is necessary to know God's will, how can I be sure I am doing it correctly? When can I know that my Bible study has gone wrong?

Most people bring a Bible to the assembly on Sunday and on Wednesday for Bible Study, but if this is the only time I pick up the Bible to study, I am not going to get as much out of the lesson as I should. While I agree that a public reading and studying of the scriptures is important, one must not limit his or herself by studying the Bible only when at the services of the church. If those engaged in worldly pursuits recognize the need to put the proper time into preparation, how much more should those who desire to receive a much nobler prize (1 Cor. 9:24-25)?

If I only study my Bible when I am in the church assembly or when I am preparing for a lesson to teach, my Bible study has probably gone wrong. In order to get the most out of Bible study, it must become a personal endeavor. To get the most out of lessons and sermons heard, one should study the lesson beforehand if they know what will be taught and familiarize themselves with the material. The assembly often just whets the spiritual appetite of the Bible student.

Further, personal study must take place to ensure what is being taught is accurate (Acts 17:11-12). Let's not limit our Bible study to studying God's word only when we are among other Christians and when it is convenient. Personal Bible study is not always easy, but it is rewarding as one will personally see what God desires of His creation. Also, we will be able to better align our life with God's righteousness (Ps. 119:9-11).

Nonetheless, there are those of us who study the Bible throughout the week and perhaps even on a daily basis, but for one reason or another, we are still not getting all that we should out of our study of the scriptures. To be effective in our study of the Bible we must not only read in order to gather the correct information and "handle the word of truth aright" (2 Tim. 2:15), but we must also study the scriptures for the necessary information to help us in the area of transformation (Rom. 12:2).

(continued on page 2)

One can study the Bible from a purely academic and intellectual standpoint and have many facts from the Bible committed to memory; however, if the student of the scriptures is not challenged to change his or her life and better align it with that of the Savior, then efforts in Bible study have gone wrong. When we come away from our study of the scriptures with facts that we feel are far distant principles that no longer apply to us or helpful moral suggestions that cannot really be lived out today, there has been an extreme misunderstanding and failure in our Bible study.

In a more specific sense, what are some of the ways that we get Bible study wrong as it relates to our living out what we read and getting the information off of the pages and into our hearts? Let's examine a few ways in which we can identify whether or not our Bible study has gone wrong as it relates to transformation.

Worry

Do you ever study the scriptures and still wrestle with the devil's weapon of worry? Why do we allow worry to overcome us as Christians though we have read many times of the care and providence God supplies his people? Maybe we have read the passages that discuss God's love and care for us, but we have not sincerely put these truths into our hearts. Perhaps it is time we look back at passages like Matthew 6:25-34, Philippians 4:6-7, and First Peter 5:7. Read these passages again and take refuge in God to fulfill the promises that he has vouchsafed in his word. If we are overcome by worry, even if we have read and even professed our belief in God and his promises, perhaps our Bible study has gone wrong.

Filthy Speech

It is easy to often speak the "religious language" when surrounded by those of identical beliefs. However, even among those who study the Bible regularly, there is often a disconnect between the things that the scriptures teach about speech and the things that flow from the mouths of those who study the Bible. Do you ever find yourself saying less than Christ-like things to the individual that cut you off in traffic? Or do you snap at your spouse when you do not feel like he or she is responding to you the way you like? Or what about the way we talk to those with whom we disagree? Maybe it is time we go back and look at passages like Proverbs 18:21, Matthew 12:34-37, James 1:26, and be sobered by the truths connected to our tongues. If we let our tongues get out in front of what we know from the study of the scriptures, our Bible study has gone wrong.

Love

Many people talk about love as it relates to Christianity, but they often misunderstand the biblical concept of love. When we come away from our Bible study and we do not have the love that Christ had for individuals in our hearts, our Bible study has gone wrong. Do you find yourself thinking the worst of people or judging others based on unfair assumptions (Mt. 7:1)? Though one may study the Bible daily, to be out of step with the love of Christ makes one's efforts void. Do you fail to properly correct those that are in sin for fear of social awkwardness or hurting their feelings (Gal. 2:11-14, Eph. 5:11)? How can I love my friends and not tell them when they are out of step with God? Is this a loving response? If we get love wrong, we are definitely getting Bible study wrong.

Conclusion

We all need to become better students of the scriptures as God would have us to better know his will and how we should live (Ps. 119:103-105). Hopefully, we can all examine ourselves and see whether or not we are failing in our Bible study due to a lack of application of the text to our lives. The Bible is full of information, but the scriptures are meant for far more than merely filling our heads with historical information. They are meant to transform us more into the image of Christ (2 Cor. 3:18).

Let your study of the scriptures empower your faith in God, rid your heart of frantic worry and anxiety, purify your speech, and fill you with more love for your fellow man. God wants us to get Bible study right so that we might better understand him. Maybe all that has been said so far can be summed-up best by James: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves" (Jas. 1:22).

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Jenna Hendrix and Virginia Walker were home sick. It was good to have Bill and Carlene Long with us today. Also remember Faith West, Ginny Hamby, Jim Turner, Brenda Mask, Evelyn Wyatt, Margaret Coone, Carol Eason, and Bert and Gloria Allen (seasonal members).

Shut In Members: Virginia Plumlee, Dick & Joyce Burbage, Don Starks and Sharon Edler.

Others: Lynn Stevens, Jack Pinckert, Chrissi Fuesner, Bob McAnally, Rea Rice, Doris Smith, Joyce Stearsman, Paul Shearer, James & Ellen Shearer, JoAnn (Ginny Hamby's mother), Ruth Brunson, (Wesley Brunson's mother), Chip Bolding (bettye bolding's son) who has an aggressive form of bladder cancer, Triase Deblis (friend of Flo Duffy), Ray Parker and Warren Lane (friends of the Kirklands).

Prayer Request

Debra Okolichany requests prayers.

Upcoming Events

Sunday June 3rd: Fellowship In Service after evening services. Bring finger foods.

Sunday June 10th: Elders/Deacons meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Friday June 15th: Wedding Shower for Heidi Bingle and Ty Rhymes at 6:30 p.m. Please bring a side dish to go with Barbeque. They are registered at Target. If you would like to contribute to the money tree see Kelcey Grimes.

Saturday June 16th: Men's Breakfast at Central church of Christ in Haines City

Tuesday June 19th: Senior Saints Meeting at 9:30 a.m.

Tuesday June 21-23rd: WWCC K-5 Camp for ages 5 thru 5th grade.

Tuesday June 26th: Trip to Bok Tower. Meet at the building at 8:30 a.m. The cost is \$14.00 per person. All are invited! Sign up sheet on the bulletin board.

Thank You

Dear Lads & Leaderettes: I want to congratulate you on your accomplishments at the convention this year. I am so proud of all of you. To the young men who led the singing, prayers, and sermon, you are to be commended. I pray as you grow in Christ that he will always be first in your lives. Bless you all, Ms. Walker

Visitors

Rick & Stephanie Kenyon, Klark & Karissa, Tiffany Hash, Megan & Sam, Roy & Sharon Hibbert, Modline Valnor, Becky & Kimberly Borders, Jim & Lynn Grimes, George & Marion Beals, Peter Saunders and Johnny Davidson.



Tune into AM 1330 (station WWAB) with your friends and neighbors every Monday from 5:00-5:30 p.m. for the "Way of Truth" program. Let's influence Lakeland!

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

June

Bobby Sheumaker **Table** C.J. Grimes
Wayne Shearer **Assist** Alex Parramore

Sunday, June 3, 2018
9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class..... Jim Turner
Prayer..... Ken Walker

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... Frank Hamby
Song Leader..... Vince Daugherty
Opening Prayer..... Matt Willcutt
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer..... Tim Croson
Sound Booth..... Alex Parramore

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader..... David Williams
Opening Prayer..... Charles Paulin
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer..... Jeff Bingle
Sound Booth..... Alex Parramore
Greeters..... Edmonsons
Att. Cards..... Cody/Ian
Open & Close Building..... Tim Croson

Wednesday, June 6, 2018

Song Leader..... Vince Daugherty
Opening Prayer..... Charles Paulin
Closing Prayer..... Ken Walker

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

Sunday, June 10, 2018
9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class..... Ken Walker
Prayer..... David Anderson

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... Frank Hamby
Song Leader..... Vince Daugherty
Opening Prayer..... Jim Sweeney
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer..... Paul Romine
Sound Booth..... Tucker Sweeney

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader..... David Williams
Opening Prayer..... John McShane
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer..... Tim Croson
Sound Booth..... Tucker Sweeney
Greeters..... Debra/Melissa
Att. Cards..... Paul/Ian
Open & Close Building..... Tim Croson

Wednesday, June 13, 2018

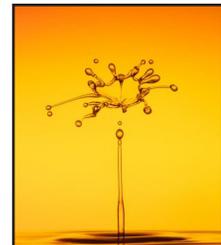
Song Leader..... Steve Hunley
Opening Prayer..... John McShane
Closing Prayer..... David Anderson

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

May 6	\$7,588.61
May 13	\$6,681.74
May 20	\$4,828.36
May 27	\$5,695.27
Contribution Average	\$5,801.76
2018 Weekly Budget	\$4,887.98

Are "Silent Drips" Keeping Us from Heaven?

Recently, I became aware of a drip in the shower stall. Usually, a leaky shower fixture is obvious. The constant, nagging "drip, drip, drip" sound in the quietest part of the night is enough to get the leak fixed and sleep restored. However, this particular drip made no sound. The water drops landed in such a way that noise was unnoticeable. Yet, because of the constant moisture, the ugliness of mildew was constantly present. This reminded me of sin. Sin is ugly enough (Isa. 59:1-2; Rom. 6:23), but when we hide it, sin becomes even more destructive. David learned this the hard way after hiding the sins surrounding his adultery with Bathsheba (2 Sam. 11-12). He was so deceived, it took Nathan's parable of the ewe lamb and his revealing "You are the man!" (2 Sam. 12:7) to wake-up David. The man after God's heart later reflected, "When I kept silent, my bones grew old Through my groaning all the day long. For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was turned into the drought of summer" (Ps. 32:3-4). David not only suffered separation from God, but holding the sin in his heart also affected him physically! No wonder David would write, "Cleanse me from secret faults" (Ps. 19:12)! Although we can successfully hide our sins from our family, neighbors and/or church members, we cannot hide them from God, "For He knows the secrets of the heart" (Ps. 44:21). Like that "silent drip," *(continued below)*



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 . . .



Our mission team will leave this Friday, June 1, for Boquete, Panama. Our young people and their chaperones will be giving out tracts, inviting people to a Gospel meeting, and conducting Bible studies. We thank our eldership and the value they place on carrying the Gospel to "all the world," while at the same time teaching our young people to be evangelistic! Please pray for a successful trip and safe return on June 9, 2018.



A Memorable Memorial Day Weekend

We appreciate our young people who conducted services Sunday afternoon, including Alex, who preached. We also thank John, Linda, and all those who made the Memorial Day cookout and corn roast successful! God blessed us with great fellowship!

(continued from above) sin will continue to stain the heart. God, however, is "near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit" (Ps. 34:18). We must not "rationalize" sin and deceive ourselves into thinking we can hide it. Sin not repented of will keep us from heaven! However, God will forgive any sin if we truly repent! When David's heart was crushed, he "said to Nathan, 'I have sinned against the LORD.' And Nathan said to David, 'The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die'" (2 Sam. 12:13). Likewise, when God's people repent, confess their sin, and pray for God's forgiveness, He will always forgive their sin (cf. Acts 8:18-24; 2 Cor. 7:8-11). Let us not allow "silent drips," or hidden sin, to keep us from being everything God intends us to be. Rather, let us individually ask the Lord to "Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me" (Ps. 51:10). ❤️ *Brian*