

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

“In Christ” Results From Gospel Obedience

Brian R. Kenyon

There are many “plans of salvation” in the religious world today. However, according to truth, there is only one way for people to enjoy spiritual blessings, including salvation from sin. Paul wrote, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ” (Eph. 1:3). Receiving the spiritual blessings necessitates that one be “in Christ,” who is the only “door” through which these blessings can be received (Jn. 10:1-3, 9-10). Although baptism is the only way a person can get in Christ (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27), there is a need to further explain God’s plan of salvation. Obedience to the Gospel is the only way one can begin, continue, and eternally enjoy the abundant life. God’s plan of salvation concerns two categories of accountable people: (1) those who are outside of Christ, and (2) those who are in Christ, yet still sin and “fall short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23).

Hear God’s Word

Those accountable souls who are outside of Christ must first hear the word of God. Paul confirmed that “faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17). There is no other source of information we need besides the Bible to know what we must do to be pleasing to God (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:3). However, hearing the word of God alone will not save us. There were many who heard God’s word on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-40), but only about three thousand souls repented and were baptized as God commanded (Acts 2:38 cf. Acts 2:41). Hearing God’s word without doing what it teaches will not save us nor give us the abundant life (Mt. 13:13-15; Lk. 6:46)!

Believe Jesus as the Messiah

Hearing God’s word must lead to faith. Again, Romans 10:17 teaches that true faith cannot come before nor “outrun” our knowledge of God. Biblical faith is not a blind leap in the dark! Furthermore, the Hebrews writer said that “without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him” (Heb. 11:6). One of the necessary things in which a sinner outside of Christ must have *(continued on page 2)*

faith is that Jesus is the Christ, or Messiah. He Himself said that “you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins” (Jn. 8:24). However, belief in Christ alone will not save. “Even the demons believe—and tremble!” (Jas. 2:19). John also confirmed, “Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, 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).

Repent of Sin

Faith must lead the sinner outside of Christ to repent of his or her sins. The basic meaning of repent is to turn. Thus, repenting from sin means turning away from sin and turning to God for Him to take care of it (cf. Acts 8:22). True repentance comes as a result of being confronted with the nature and consequences of sin (2 Cor. 7:7-8 cf. Isa. 59:1-2), and then having “godly sorrow” for that sin (2 Cor. 7:9-10). Seeing sin as God sees sin is the only way “godly sorrow” can be produced. God hates sin (Pr. 6:16-19), and so should we (Ps. 119:104; Pr. 8:13), especially in our own lives! Seeing sin as God sees it should melt our hearts to beg God for forgiveness (cf. Ps. 51:1-3, 14-19). True repentance results in the reformation of life—change for good that is evident to all (2 Cor. 7:11). However, repentance is more than just regret. Judas was “remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders” (Mt. 27:3), yet he did not turn all the way back to God. Instead, “Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place” (Acts 1:25). The terms “repentance” and “remorse,” or “regret,” are similar in that they each involve a change of mind. For example, both Peter (in denying the Lord three times) and Judas had a change in mind over what they did, but only Peter turned all they way to God in repentance (cf. the incident in Jn. 21:15-17). Thus, repentance not only involves a change of mind, but also involves a change of action that seeks God’s forgiveness!

Confess Faith in Christ

Repentance must lead the sinner outside of Christ to confess his or her faith in Jesus, the Son of God. Others will not know one’s belief in Christ and willingness to turn from sins and serve Him as Lord unless that person confesses that belief in Him. Paul wrote, “For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Rom. 10:10). As seen earlier, confession of Christ is necessary in letting others know of an individual’s decision to follow Him (Jn. 12:42-43). Furthermore, confessing faith in Christ implies that the one so confessing has repented of sins. Paul wrote, “Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: The Lord knows those who are His, and, Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity” (2 Tim. 2:19). However, confessing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, alone will not give one that abundant life. Demons verbally acknowledged, “Jesus, Son of the Most High God” (Lk. 8:28), but certainly were not saved!

Be Baptized

Confessing faith in Christ must lead the sinner outside of Christ to “be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38). Note the account of the eunuch from Ethiopia, who requested Philip to explain the person about whom the prophet Isaiah wrote (Acts 8:30-34 cf. Isa. 53:7-8). Philip, “beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him” (Acts 8:35). We know that Philip’s preaching included baptism because:

As they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, “See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?” Then Philip said, “If you believe with all your heart, you may.” And he answered and said, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” So he commanded the chariot to stand still.

And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. (Acts 8:36-38)

Note how hearing, believing, repenting, and confessing faith in Christ were all involved in the eunuch’s baptism. Though each term may not have been explicitly stated, we know from the total teaching of the Bible that each was involved.

Baptism alone, of course, will not save a person outside of Christ nor give him or her that abundant life. Because one is immersed in water, thinking that he or she is saved, does not mean that person is truly saved, or in Christ (cf. Acts 19:1-5). Biblical baptism must be preceded by hearing God’s word, believing that Jesus is the Christ, repenting of sin, and confessing faith in Christ. Not only are these the steps involved *(continued on page 4)*

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Sharon Washington is back in the hospital. Cheryl Barker had outpatient surgery. Wanda Bruno had a blood clot in her leg. Bob Cooper, Wayne Shearer, Faith West, Jim Turner, Bill Long, Ginny Hamby, and Margaret Coone.

Shut In Members: Carol Eason, Virginia Plumlee, Dick & Joyce Burbage and Sharon Edler.

Others: Harold Hooks (former member) has stage 4 stomach cancer. Lynn Stevens, Chrissi Fuesner, Joyce Stearsman, Ruth Brunson, Chip Bolding and Tim Wade (friend of the Kirklands).

Upcoming Events

Friday, August 10th: Youth Devo at 7:00 p.m. in the fellowship hall.

Sunday, August 12th: Elders & Deacons Meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Saturday, August 18th: Men's Breakfast at S. F. A. at 8 a.m.

Sunday, August 26th: Monthly Fellowship Meal. Wayne Shearer's team has set-up and clean-up.

Sunday September 2nd: Fellowship In Service after evening service.

Monday, September 3rd: Labor Day Lectureship, hosted by the Sixth Street church of Christ, 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Lunch will be provided.

Monday, September 3rd: Labor Day Cookout. Games for all ages! Games at 2:30 p.m. Dinner at 5:30 p.m. Bring your favorite side dish and dessert.

Placed Membership

George & Marion Beals have requested to place membership with us! Let us please welcome them into our family.

Hither, Thither and Yon

George Marion Beals and Michelle Paulin are traveling to Michigan. Dave and Nikki Williams are traveling to South Africa 8-11 thru 9-3.

Thank You's

Thank you for the flowers, cards, calls after the passing of my mother, JoAnn Chancey. Your example of love is an encouragement. Ginny Hamby. Thank you so much for all that made Ty & Heidi's wedding so perfect. You are great examples and my family was blessed by your service. In Christian love, Jason & Carol Rhymes.

Need for Meals

If you have a need for prepared meals after being hospitalized or having been ill, please contact Brenda Mask, Nona Williams or the office.

Visitors

Veda Roach, Page & Brooks Stayer, and Bill & Dana Robertson.

~ Communion to Shut-ins ~

Aug 12	Pratt
Aug 19	Pratt
Aug 26	McShane
Sept 2	Kemp
Sept 9	Pratt
Sept 16	help needed
Sept 23	McShane
Sept 30	Shearer

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

August

Frank Hamby **Table** Fred Strickland
Chaz Hine **Assist** Bobby Simpson

Sunday, August 12, 2018
9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Stacey Paulin
Prayer Ken Walker

10:30 A.M.

Announcements David Williams
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer David Anderson
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer David Deal
Sound Booth CJ Grimes

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Tucker Sweeney
Opening Prayer John McShane
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Kyle Bingle
Sound Booth CJ Grimes
Greeters McShanes (before) Grimes (after)
Att. Cards Paul/Sebastian
Open & Close Building Bob Pratt

Wednesday, August 15, 2018

Song Leader Steve Hunley
Opening Prayer John McShane
Closing Prayer Phil Fife

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

Sunday, August 19, 2018
9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Kyle Bingle
Prayer Josh Estridge

10:30 A.M.

Announcements David Williams
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Charles Paulin
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Tim Croson
Sound Booth Tucker Sweeney

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Tucker Sweeney
Opening Prayer Alex Parramore
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer David Deal
Sound Booth Tucker Sweeney
Greeters McCarters (before) Williams after
Att. Cards Willcut boy's
Open & Close Building Bob Pratt

Wednesday, August 22, 2018

Song Leader Casey Paulin
Opening Prayer Bobby Sheumaker
Closing Prayer David Deal

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

July 15	\$6,255.19
July 22	\$4,705.00
July 29	\$5,380.46
August 5	\$6,852.52
Contribution Average	\$5,804.37
2018 Weekly Budget	\$4,887.98

“In Christ” Results from Gospel Obedience (continued from page 2)

When the sinner outside of Christ is baptized into Christ, “he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new” (2 Cor. 5:17). However, baptism is not the end of conversion. It is actually the beginning, the “new birth” (cf. Jn. 3:3, 5; 1 Pet. 1:22-23). When Paul said “all things have become new” (2 Cor. 5:17), he followed up by saying, “Now all things are of God” (2 Cor. 5:18). Thus, when a person is baptized “into Christ,” he or she must “walk in newness of life” (Rom. 6:4), following God’s word, even if it results in physical death (Mt. 16:24-25; Rev. 2:10). When the person in Christ sins (1 Jn. 1:8, 10), he or she must repent and ask God’s forgiveness in order to remain saved (Acts 8:18-24; 1 Jn. 1:9), and continue being a recipient of the abundant spiritual blessings “in Christ”!

Conclusion

Jesus came to bless us spiritually! God “desires all men to be saved” (1 Tim. 2:4), and to enjoy abundant life in Christ! God has done his part (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25). Have we done our part through obedience? God invites us all to partake of the spiritual blessings in Christ (Eph. 1:3 cf. Mt. 11:28-30). Will you accept the invitation? ❤️ *Brian*



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 . . .



PEW PACKERS EVERY SUNDAY EVENING AT 5:45

Special thanks to those who organized the food pantry! We may not always realize the people we reach through benevolent help. Let’s keep the pantry stocked with user friendly cans and love!



By now our members should have received the “vision/ goal survey.” Please make sure to fill it out. Our elders want your feedback on the

kind of congregation you envision in 5, 10, or 20 years and beyond. A strong congregation in the future does not just happen. It takes faithful brothers and sisters planning and working together to deliberately reach goals conducive to glorifying God, encouraging one another, and leading outsiders to Christ (Acts 2:47). We appreciate our eldership for taking shepherding to this level. May we plan for the future and support the Lord’s work here!

BEYOND Tentatively
Our Best set to begin Monday,
August 27, is a ladies exercise class (in the SFA fellowship room) conducted by Destyni Dindy. Stay tuned. More details to come later.