



# South Florida Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST MESSENGER



1807 S. Florida Ave.  
Lakeland, FL 33803

Vol. 78 No. 24 June 11, 2024

## ELDERS

David Anderson  
Brian Kenyon  
Bobby Sheumaker

## DEACONS

Tyler Anderson  
Jason Hendrix  
Stacey Paulin

## MINISTER

Steven Ford

## ASSOCIATE MINISTER

OFFICE PHONE  
(863) 682-4702

## EMAIL

[SFA.church@gmail.com](mailto:SFA.church@gmail.com)

## 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.....6:30 p.m.

## WEB PAGE

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

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YouTube & Facebook

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Florida School of Preaching  
since 1969

Missionary - Huron, SD  
Casey & Emily Paulin

## MISSION FIELDS

Dub Hill ..... Russia  
Don Iverson ..... India  
Marc Veary ..... Malawi, Africa  
Graham McDonald ..... Scotland  
J. Paguaga ..... Honduras  
Ted Wheeler ..... Ghana, W.A.

## “Freedom” Has Restrictions!

Brian R. Kenyon

Sometimes, people misconceive “freedom” as meaning anything goes. Perhaps the popular line in a song a few decades ago, “Freedom’s just another word for nothing left to lose,” has contributed to that notion. However, when people start claiming “freedom in Christ” when it comes to justifying unscriptural practices, we must realize “freedom in Christ,” like all freedom, has limitations. In the Book of Galatians, Paul defended his apostleship against those who wanted to undermine his apostolic validity (cf. Galatians 1:1), mainly because he preached against circumcision and keeping the law of Moses as a requirement of salvation as they taught (cf. Galatians 3:10-12, 24-25; 5:2-6; Acts 15:1, 5). Paul told the Galatians, “For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another” (Galatians 5:13). From this verse, we will examine what “freedom in Christ” allows and does not allow. This will help us better serve the Lord by helping us live according to His word (Matthew 4:4; 7:21; Luke 6:46).

## Freedom Is Not For Serving Lusts

Christians have been called to liberty (cf. Galatians 2:4; 4:26, 31; 5:1), through the gospel (2 Thessalonians 2:14), but that freedom in Christ is not to serve as a springboard for fulfilling fleshly desires. “Liberty [freedom, NAS]” is translated from a word, *eleutheria* (ἐλευθερία, that means “freedom,” or “liberty.” The word is found in several New Testament verses (Galatians 2:4; 5:13; Romans 8:21; 1 Corinthians 10:29; 2 Corinthians 3:17; James 1:25; 2:12; 1 Peter 2:6; 2 Peter 2:19). Our freedom in Christ is not an opportunity to the flesh. “Opportunity [occasion, KJV]” is from a word, *aphorme* (ἀφορμή), that originally meant “the starting-point or base of operations for an expedition;” then it came to mean, “the resources needed to carry through an undertaking” (Bauer, 127). Paul was saying that members of the Lord’s church should not let their Christian freedom “become a beachhead for the armies of indulgence to gain a foothold in this life” (Boice, 492-493). The word is used several times in the New Testament (Romans 7:8, 11; 2 Corinthians 5:12; 11:12; 1 Timothy 5:14).

The word “flesh” is often misunderstood as teaching that “flesh” is inherently evil, which, of course, it is not, for Jesus was in the same flesh as we are (John 1:1, 14 cf. Hebrews 2:14). The word from which “flesh” is translated (*sarx*, σάρξ) has a variety of meanings: flesh, physical body; human nature, earthly descent; human being, person; earthly life, human realm of existence (Galatians 1:16; 2:20; 3:3; 4:14; 5:13; 6:12-13; Romans 2:28; 7:5, 18, 25; 8:3, 8-9, 12; 1 Corinthians 7:28; 2 Corinthians 4:11; 10:3). Most of the denominational world assumes that flesh, or human nature, is inherently sinful. This deception is perpetuated by

some translations, like the NIV, which translates the word as “sinful nature” (as it also does in a host of passages, including Galatians 5:16-17, 19, 24; 6:8; Romans 8:3-9, 13; Ephesians 2:3), and by misapplying such passages as Psalm 51:5 and Romans 5:12; 7:18. The Bible teaches that human nature is inherently good (Ecclesiastes 7:29; Ezekiel 18:20). After all, as already noted, Jesus came in flesh (John 1:14; Hebrews 2:14).

In the first century pagan world (as well as today), people were “accustomed to an unrestrained indulgence of their desires;” thus, Paul was reminding the Galatians that “Christian freedom does not mean the end of all moral restraints” (Johnson). Paul also wrote, “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?” (Romans 6:1-2). Freedom in Christ does not give license to live how ever we want!

## Freedom Is For Serving One Another

Rather than using Christian liberty to fulfill the lusts of the flesh, this freedom should be used to serve one another “through love” (Galatians 5:13b). “Through [by, KJV; *διὰ*] love” is to characterize all Christian service (cf. Galatians 5:6; 1 Corinthians 13:4-7; Colossians 3:14; 1 Peter 4:8). The verb translated “serve [be servants, ASV]” is from a word (*douleuo*, *δουλεύω*) that means to serve as a slave; be a slave, be enslaved. This word appears several times in the New Testament (Galatians 4:8-9, 25; John 8:33; Romans 6:6; 7:6, 25; Ephesians 6:7; Philippians 2:2; Colossians 3:24; 1 Thessalonians 1:9; 1 Timothy 6:2; Titus 3:3). The Galatians were not to be slaves to the law principle (Galatians 4:8; 5:1), but they were to be slaves to one another in the Christian sense of service (cf. Ephesians 5:21). This slavery is not like the worldly kind that was forced upon the weaker by the stronger, but was a kind of bond service that was based on voluntary enslavement to the Lord (cf. Galatians 1:10; 1 Corinthians 7:22). The analogy is comparable to the Old Testament slave who was freed but refused to leave the household of the master he loved, deliberately volunteering to remain a slave forever (Cole, 2006). According to Exodus 21:1-6, “if the servant plainly says, ‘I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,’ then his master shall bring him to the judges. He shall also bring him to the door, or to the doorpost, and his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him forever.” This voluntary service to one another is the natural outcome of our volunteering to make Jesus our Master (Matthew 6:24; Ephesians 6:6). Peter taught that Christians were free, “yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice,” but to live as “bondservants of God” (1 Peter 2:16)!

## Conclusion

Freedom is a great blessing, especially where it concerns our relationship to Christ and His church. We must always be vigilant, though, to make sure we are not misusing that freedom once again to become enslaved to sin. We must remember we “were dead in trespasses and sins in which you once walked ... But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:1-6). Thus, as Paul urged, let us “stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage” (Galatians 5:1).

## Works Cited

- Bauer, Walter. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. 2nd rev. ed. by William F. Arndt, F. Wilbur Gingrich, and Frederick W. Danker. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1979.
- Boice, James Montgomery. “Galatians.” The Expositor’s Bible Commentary—Vol. 10: Romans, First and Second Corinthians, Galatians. Ed. Frank E. Gaebelin. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1976.
- Cole, R. Alan. The Letter of Paul to the Galatians: An Introduction and Commentary. Rev. ed. Tyndale New Testament Commentaries. Vol. 9. Ed. Leon Morris. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989.
- Johnson, Robert Lee. The Letter of Paul to the Galatians. The Living Word Commentary. Ed. Everett Ferguson. CD-ROM Version. Abilene, TX: ACU Press, 1999.

**“For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men—as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God” (1 Peter 2:15-16).**

**PRAYER LIST**

**Current:** Jenna Hendrix broke her foot; Fran Gabaldon will have surgery on June 24. Bill Long is in LRH. Bobby Sheumaker is sick at home.

**Continual:** Jim Turner (his cancer has returned and is now in his lymph nodes) Sharon Mathis Washington (Health & family); Stacey Wilson (health); Debbie Bush (struggles); Bill & Carlene Long (health & strength); Ron Ford (health); Annett Phillip (health); Janie Wise (health); Margaret Coone (health); Melissa Craft (health); Kathy Nester (health); **Shut-ins:** Carol Eason, Kenny & Reba French, Barbara Jones, Charles Paulin, Helen Perrin, bettye bolding, Sharon Roy, Nellie Anderson

Also continue to pray for those on the extended family and friends list!

Many from our congregation will be at CFBC this coming week. Keep them in your prayers as well that the will have a fun and safe time and that much good will come from this week.

**VBS**

Eagle Lake church of Christ  
Saturday June 15, 2024 - 8:45 am til noon

\*lunch will be provided\*

**Kevin Patterson** will teach adult class.

Let's be supportive of this great work!

**If you would like transportation,  
let Brian or the office know ASAP!**



**WWCC K-5 CAMP**  
Entering Kindergarten- Finishing 5th Grade  
**July 25 - 27th, 2024**

\*Register by July 11th to be guaranteed a T-Shirt\*

Register @ <https://forms.gle/SH3jF6HvfdszQzqH8> or scan QR code

If you have any questions please contact  
Chad ( 863.412.0022) or Sabrina Tagtow (863.268.5811)

**Scheduled to Serve in June**

Designated Elder Brian Kenyon

**Wednesday, June 12, 2024**

Announcements	FrankHamby
Song Leader / Prayer	Terrance Dindy
Devotional / Invitation	Josh Potvin
Closing Prayer	Camron Bailey

**Sunday, June 16, 2024**

10:30 am Sermon	Will Vann
TBA	
6:00 pm Sermon	Joseph Faulk
"When Emotions Lie"	

**Those to Serve 10:30 am**

Greeters	McCarters
Song/Pray before class	Frank Hamby
Announcements (both)	Jimmy Sweeney
Song Leader (both)	Brian Kenyon
Prayer / Bible reading	George Beals
Lord's Table (both)	Brian Williams
Closing Prayer	David Anderson
Open/Close Building	Bobby Sheumaker
Attendance Cards	Sawyer
Sound Booth (both)	Jason

**Those to Serve 6:00 pm**

Greeters	Williams
Announcements	Jimmy Sweeney
Song Leader	Brian Kenyon
Prayer / Bible reading	Tyler Anderson
Closing Prayer	Bobby Sheumaker

**Wednesday, June 19, 2024**

Announcements	David Anderson
Song Leader / Prayer	Tucker Sweeney
Devotional / Invitation	Josh Potvin
Closing Prayer	Allen Grimes

**How We Are Giving**

May 26	\$9,595.62
June 2	\$6,911.00
June 9	\$6,259.52
Contribution Average	\$7,227.05
<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!**

**Hello It's Me Again**

Do you ever feel that way when you are talking to God? I sure do. Especially when I need something from Him, I seem to call Him over and over again. I'm so glad we never have to worry if His phone is charged or if He's got signal. God is available for us 24/7. What a blessing!! In Jeremiah 33:3 God told Jeremiah " Call to Me, and I will answer and show you great and unsearchable things you do not know". Psalm 116:2 states "Because He has inclined His ear to me, Therefore I shall call upon Him as long as I live". Just as our earthly father loves to hear from us, God our heavenly Father does too. He wants to hear when we are happy (thankful) and when we are sad (needful). He will never be too busy to take our call and won't put us on hold. We don't have to worry if will be able to hear Him or if He will speak in a foreign language (Psalm 119:130, Romans 1:19).

In a world where we never go anywhere without our phone and we are constantly in touch with our friends and family, let's not forget to stay in communication with the One who really matters. He has all the answers and is ready to be there for us no matter what we need. "The Lord is near to ALL who call upon Him To all who call upon Him in truth."(Psalm 145:18)

Don't "ghost" God after your prayers have been answered either. I really dislike being "ghosted"- which in modern terms means someone is talking to you and then just stops responding without any explanation or indication. Make sure you don't forget to "call again" and say thank you. We often forget God after our prayers have been answered. Just as only one leper returned to thank Him for healing him and the nine did not in Luke 17, we need to be sure to say thank you when we see that our prayers have been answered. God needs to always be number one on our frequently called list.

ORANGE STREET CHURCH OF CHRIST PRESENTS:

**A Summer Series on  
the Names of God**

- 6/5 **Elohim (God)** – Brian Kenyon
- 6/12 **Yahweh (The I AM)** – Chad Tagtow
- 6/19 **EI Roi (The God Who Sees)** – Bob Bauer
- 6/26 **EI Shaddai (God Almighty)** – Jonny Singh
- 7/3 **Yahweh Yireh (The Lord Provides)** – Carlton Hyde
- 7/10 **Adonai (Lord/Master)** – Kenneth Hill
- 7/17 **Yahweh Rapha (The Lord Heals)** – Rusty Hilliard
- 7/24 **Yahweh Nissi (The Lord Is My Banner)** – John Allen
- 7/31 **Congregational Devotional**
- 8/7 **EI Kanaa (Jealous God)** – David Stearsman
- 8/14 **EI Elyon (God Most High)** – Marcus Grayson
- 8/21 **EI Sali (God My Strength)** – Ken Schauer
- 8/28 **Immanuel (God With Us)** – Isaac McLaurin

WED. NIGHTS AT 7PM | 310 ORANGE ST AUBURNDALE, FL | 863.967.1757

**"Study to shew thyself approved unto God" (2 Timothy 2:15)**

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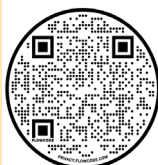


**South Florida Avenue  
CHURCH OF CHRIST**

1807 South Florida Avenue  
Lakeland, FL 33803-2653

Return Service Requested

**"Do not withhold Your tender mercies from  
me, O LORD;  
Let Your lovingkindness and Your truth  
continually preserve me."  
Psalm 40:11**



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