



South Florida Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST MESSENGER



1807 S. Florida Ave.
Lakeland, FL 33803

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

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Do We Live “By the Spirit” Or “By the Flesh”?

Brian R. Kenyon

Freedom in Christ does not mean anything goes! Christians are not to use their “liberty” to be “entangled again with a yoke of bondage” or as an “opportunity [occasion, KJV] for the flesh” (Galatians 5:1, 14). The way to properly use our Christian freedom is live according to the Holy Spirit. Paul instructed the Galatians, “Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law” (Galatians 5:16-18). Let us consider three important aspects of living according to the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit and Lust of the Flesh Are Incompatible

If we are living by the Spirit, we cannot live according to the lusts of the flesh, for the two “are contrary to one another” (Galatians 5:17). Elsewhere, Paul confirmed:

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. ⁶For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. ⁷Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. ⁸So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. ⁹But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. (Romans 8:5-9)

These verses are not teaching, as Calvinists insist, that flesh is inherently evil or that people are not answerable to the gospel. It is teaching that if our focus is on the flesh, we will serve the flesh, but if our focus is on the Spirit, we will serve the Spirit. It is impossible to serve the Spirit while being focused on the flesh (Matthew 6:24). Christians are “in the Spirit” because they have obeyed the gospel (1 Corinthians 12:13), which results in the Holy Spirit dwelling in them (Romans 8:11; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19). Our conduct must be in harmony with God’s will. “Walk” is translated from a word (*peripateo*, περιπατέω) that, aside from its literal meaning, carries the idea of a habitual way of life (cf. Ephesians 2:2; 1 John 1:6-7). “In [by, NAS] the Spirit” means to habitually live according to the Spirit, who has revealed God’s will in the written, God-breathed Scriptures (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21). Note Paul’s connection between the Holy Spirit, Christ, and law of the Spirit, “There is therefore now no condemnation to those

who are in Christ Jesus ... For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death” (Romans 8:1-2). The work of Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit are inseparable! Staying in harmony with God’s will keeps us from doing our will (Romans 12:1-2). “Shall not” in “You shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh,” is emphatic in the Greek text, a strong construction saying, “No way!” Fulfilling the “lust of the flesh” is the opposite of fulfilling the law of love by serving one another (cf. Galatians 5:13-14).

A Constant Battle Between Flesh and Spirit

“For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish” (Galatians 5:17). The Spirit and the flesh are in a constant battle with one another. Since we are weak through the flesh, we do not always choose what is right (cf. Matthew 26:41). This conflict is not the same as Paul spoke of in Romans 7:14-23. That passage deals with the struggle that takes place in the mind, not between serving God through the gospel (i.e., Holy Spirit) versus the Law of Moses, as in Galatians. The individual under consideration in Romans wills the good (i.e., being released from the guilt of sin), but is helpless to accomplish it because he is “sold under sin,” and, as a matter of fact, “sin ... dwells in [him]” and he is brought “into captivity to the law of sin” (Romans 7:14, 17, 23). These traits seem to indicate Paul was not literally talking about himself as a Christian but perhaps role playing as a Gentile seeking forgiveness without knowing Christ. The individual in Romans 7:14-23 is on his own, without the blood of Christ or the indwelling Spirit. In Galatians 5:17, however, Paul has already given assurance of victory if we walk according to the Spirit (Galatians 5:16). The Christian who walks “by the Spirit” is not engaged in a battle on equal terms where the outcome is indecisive, but as long as he continues with the Spirit, he will emerge triumphant (cf. Romans 8:31-39).

The flesh and the Spirit are completely opposed to each other. “Lusts [desires, NAS]” is from a word (*epithumeo*, ἐπιθυμέω) that means to long for, desire; covet; lust for. This word occurs in several passages (Romans 7:7; 13:9; 1 Corinthians 10:6; 1 Timothy 3:1; Hebrews 6:11; James 4:2; 1 Peter 1:12). “Against” (from *kata*, κατά), in this construction, means against, or what is contrary (see also Galatians 3:21; 5:23; James 3:14; Revelation 2:4). “Contrary [in opposition, NAS; opposed, ESV]” is translated from a word (*antikeimai*, ἀντίκειμαι) that means oppose, be against; to lie opposite (1 Corinthians 16:9; Philippians 1:28; 2 Thessalonians 2:4; 1 Timothy 1:10; 5:14). Paul’s whole point was that without “walking in the Spirit,” we cannot fulfil God’s law by doing what is right (cf. Romans 8:5-8).

Living by the Spirit Brings Freedom

“But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law” (Galatians 5:18). Throughout the Book of Galatians, “the law,” unless otherwise qualified, refers to the Law of Moses (Galatians 2:16; 3:2, 5, 24-25). Some in Paul’s day were teaching that parts of Moses’ law (such as circumcision) were still required for salvation (Galatians 1:6-9 cf. Acts 15:1, 5). The Law of Moses, however, was powerless to save if the sufficiency of Christ upon which it relied was rejected (Galatians 2:21; 3:10-11; 5:3-4). Those who are led by the Spirit are not under that meritorious law keeping principle. The same word translated “led” is also found in Romans 8:14, where Paul revealed, “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.” This “leading,” of course, is not some miraculous guidance inconsistent with God’s written word and/or human free-will, but is done through God’s written word (cf. Ephesians 3:3-5; 2 Timothy 3:16-17). Since the law principle is associated with the flesh (cf. Romans 7:18, 23, 25), and since living for the flesh is in total opposition to living by the Spirit (Galatians 5:17), there is no way that a person walking by the Spirit can be in bondage to the law principle (Romans 8:1-4). That person is free (cf. John 8:32)!

Conclusion

It is not up to us to live anyway we want. Unrestrained freedom enslaves (John 8:34)! The Spirit and the lust of the flesh are at odds with one another. The Spirit must win in our lives if we are to please God and reach eternity with Him. It is completely up to us as to whether we will accept His word and obey it. If we are outside of Christ, we must “crucify” self (Galatians 2:20) and obey the gospel (Mark 16:15-16). If we are in Christ, we must continually “seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God” and “Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth” (Colossians 3:1-2).

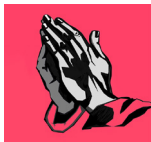
PRAYER LIST

Current: Fran Gabaldon will have surgery on June 24. Annett Phillip fell and broke her hip, Rachel Zapata is having knee pain and her daughter Patricia Perez is in the hospital and needs our prayers

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); 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!



Our Sympathy goes out to the Kenyon family in the passing of Brian's father, Rich Kenyon, last Wednesday. Services are still pending.

Toddler Craft Time

Friday June 28 at 10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

All toddlers are invited to participate

Senior Saints are encouraged to join in the fun as well!

See Nasheka Medley for details.

Lads to Leaders/Leaderettes

Time to sign up if you want to participate in this great program this year! We also need adults to sign up to mentor and help in various areas! We can't do this without your support! Sign up in the notebook by the doorway into the auditorium.

See Becky Sheumaker with any questions!



There will be an important Bible class teachers meeting on Sunday, July 28, at 5:00 pm. All teachers for the fall quarter are requested to be there. We would benefit greatly from your input.

Thanks for the Wonderful Singers Who Participated in the FSOP Promo Video!



Scheduled to Serve in June

Designated Elder	Brian Kenyon
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Wednesday, June 19, 2024

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

Sunday, June 23, 2024

10:30 am Sermon	Brian Kenyon
TBA	
6:00 pm Sermon	Brian Kenyon
TBA	

Those to Serve 10:30 am

Greeters	Brenda/Darlene
Song/Pray before class	Terrance Dindy
Announcements (both)	Frank Hamby
Song Leader (both)	David Williams
Prayer / Bible reading	Joseph Faulk
Lord's Table (both)	Jeff Stewart
Closing Prayer	Jimmy Sweeney
Open/Close Building	David Anderson
Attendance Cards	Declan
Sound Booth (both)	Jason

Those to Serve 6:00 pm

Greeters	Sweeneys
Announcements	Frank Hamby
Song Leader	David Williams
Prayer / Bible reading	Paul Sweeney
Closing Prayer	Mike Van Allen

Wednesday, June 26, 2024

Announcements	Bobby Sheumaker
Song Leader / Prayer	Frank Hamby
Devotional / Invitation	TBD
Closing Prayer	Tim Croson

How We Are Giving

June 2	\$6,911.00
June 9	\$6,259.52
June 16	\$19,655.00
Contribution Average	\$6,898.54
Weekly Budget	\$7,410.00

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!

Bill Long passed away Tuesday morning, June 18, 2024. The tribute below was written by his son, Barry. Let's pray to the God of comfort for this family.



My dad was an amazing man. Though his life was normal in most respects, at the age of sixteen his life was changed forever. Before he could even drive a car, my dad earned his private pilot's license. From that time on the aviation industry would always be a part of his life in one way or another.

At eighteen he joined the Navy and served for a short time on the Coral Sea and then finished his tour on the USS Oriskany.

Because Dad did not have a bachelor's degree he was not allowed to be a pilot so he became a parachute rigger. He was very good at his job and one of his chutes saved the life of a pilot whose plane developed engine problems. He always told the pilots, "If the chute doesn't work, just bring it back."

Dad finished his four years in the Navy with part of it being during the Korean War. After his tour, planes were still in his future but so was a young lady, Carlene, whom he met and then married in 1952.

The aviation industry is never boring. Some of Dad's jobs and positions changed but he never stopped flying ... and sometimes we never stopped moving. I remember as a young child we even lived upstairs in an old, renovated Navy airplane hangar. Lots of stories there.

As a teenager we moved to Orlando, Florida. Dad was still flying as part of his job, and we lived near the airport where he worked. Because we lived so close to the airport's landing pattern, Dad could fly very low directly over our house and throttle the plane's engine and "flap" the wings to let us know he was coming home. Standing outside the house, I would excitedly point to the plane and exclaim to my neighborhood friends, "That's my dad!"

Over the years jobs changed, retirement took place, and health issues eventually became a very limiting factor in Dad's life. He "lost his wings," as they say, but planes and flying were always a part of his life.

Well, now, Dad has a new set of wings, and he's coming home again. He's "soaring on high" with the angels where God is wait is waiting for His children.

You know, we've always had a Heavenly Father, but now I also have a father in heaven. Love you Dad!

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; ¹²While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. ¹For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. ²For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: ³If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. ⁴For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. ⁵Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. ⁶Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. ⁷(For we walk by faith, not by sight.) ⁸We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

(2 Corinthians 4:17-5:8)

At the time of this printing, memorial arrangements were still pending. Please keep in touch for further announcements.

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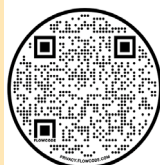
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CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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Return Service Requested

**"Commit your works to the Lord,
And your thoughts will be established."**

Proverbs 16:3



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