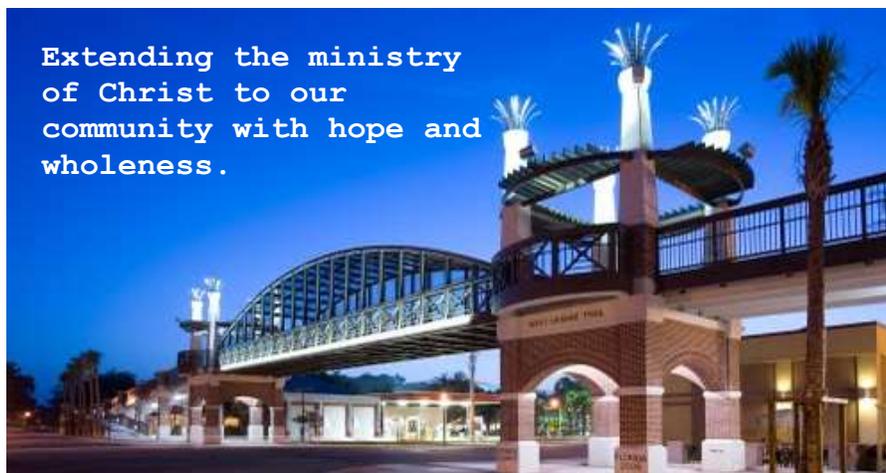


Newsletter

August 8, 2020

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Pastor's Message

Sometimes what we want to see isn't actually there.

I kind of feel that way when I re-study Revelation for what seems like the umpteenth time. If you grew up a Seventh-day Adventist, it was reinforced in you to know what this book says and what it is about, and for good reason. However, I have to admit to being more than a bit curious. Is everything I thought I knew really what is there, or have I believed what has been preached to me, or what I was hoping was there?

It may seem a minor thing now, but here's an example. I went in on Revelation 1:1-3. Now, what I want it to read (or what I want it to say) is, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ..." OK, it does say that, but whenever I have read it, I have read it to say "This book reveals Jesus." In English this makes perfect sense, and it could indeed be what is being revealed. However, upon closer examination, I am not sure this is what it actually says.

I had to go back to my undergraduate Greek studies to dig deeper on this, which isn't easy for someone who hasn't sat in such a class for over 20 years. Just a look at that first phrase is revealing. We get the word "apocalypse" from the same word we see in the beginning of this verse. However, we have really distorted its meaning. "Apocalupsis," as it would sound in John's language, means to "lay bare/naked," or to "reveal." It can mean a "disclosure of truth," or even "instruction." Whatever is being revealed in this book is something that wasn't seen before. I assumed this meant "the revelation of Jesus Christ." But "of Jesus Christ" doesn't quite match up this way. The way it is written points us to ownership and source... meaning the revelation belongs to Jesus Christ and it is coming from Christ! Jesus is revealed, but Jesus is also the owner and source of the revelation!

Here's a few takeaways I get from this. First, we need to let Jesus reveal whatever *He* wants to reveal to us.

I may want Jesus to tell me what I want Him to tell me. I may want His Word to fit my life. But it has to be the other way around. I cannot dictate His message to me. His message must tell me what I should do, how I should change, and what I should believe. His word isn't for my convenience or biases... it is for me to obey. So, the question may not always be, "How is Jesus revealed?" but may be "What is Jesus revealing?" It may be that He *is* revealing Himself. I wouldn't dismiss that Jesus's revealing of Himself is a major theme. However, I would hate to miss something else.

Second, His is a credible revelation. In Jewish thought, the witness of two or more people is what made it credible. So, when John writes that this is from God, to Jesus, through His angel, to His servant, we can see multiple sources. When John writes that He bore witness to the Word of God and the Testimony of Jesus, followers of Jesus who read this in his day would have assumed the credibility of this revelation.

Third, attentiveness + responsiveness (to what Jesus Christ wants to reveal to us) is what brings a blessing to anyone who reads it and to anyone who hears it. John was clear. Pay attention to this. Make it important in your life! Respond to what you read and hear. You will be blessed and happy for doing this, because everything you read in here about what's soon to come is *really* soon to come! It's not about escaping danger. It's about being

blessed. In our context today, especially in times of confusion and uncertainty, let us remember that it's not about knowing which individual specifically fits which prophecy, or what event specifically fits this thing or that thing we read. It is still about reading, hearing, taking it seriously, obeying, and being blessed!

Let Jesus tell us what *He* wants to tell us. Believe in its credibility. Pay attention. Respond. That's what Jesus teaches me.

Every blessing in Christ,

James Johnson

Lead Pastor

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This Week's Online Worship Services

- **Message: "Extend: To Our Community,"** by James Johnson.
- Scripture: Matthew 9:35-38, read by Elijah Bellevue.
- "My Next Step" – We encourage you to fill out our Online Connection Card after viewing this week's service. Go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/32TCJT9/>
- Featured Offering: COVID-19 Response brought to us by Larry Campbell. Please remember our "Build 7 – Building Fund." Thank you for your support of God's work in our community! You can give online at <https://adventistgiving.org/#/org/ANTBBB/envelope/start>
- Children's Story: Lianna Rivera
- Family Prayer: George Crawford
- **Online Sabbath School Options**
 - **Primaries:** Get together every Wednesday at 7 PM, <https://us04webzoom.us/j/77111838436?>, Password: 9njWKH
 - **Juniors:** Sabbath, 10 AM, <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82360827579?pwd=eTZPVngwNzZDQmdSdGZMN1Y5VXE4dz09>, Password: Juniors
 - **Earliteens:** Sabbath, 10 AM, at <http://us04webzoom.us/j/8751088252?>, Password: 293126
 - **High School:** Sabbath, 10 AM, at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84523787323?>, Password: 2PYKey
 - **Join Sabbath School for All Adults:** Open Sabbath, August 8 at 9:45 AM, program beginning at 10:00 AM, at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87120905863?pwd=RjNEekVSZS81Z3dkWDBJQVExUjluQT09>.
 - Meeting ID: 871 2090 5863; Passcode: 165743
 - You can also phone in to (929) 205-6099 and enter the Meeting ID and Passcode above when prompted.
 - **Journey Through the Word:** Wednesday, 7:00 PM. We have been enjoying going through "Gospel Fluency" in more detail, including learning to tell our stories as "Gospel Stories!" Last Wednesday, Brother Hugo Kennedy shared his powerful Gospel Story. We hope you'll join us! Click here, [Journey Through the Word](#), to join us!
- **Morning Prayer Line:** Weekday mornings, 7:30 AM. <https://zoom.us/j/150286450>

Children's Church

Every Sabbath at 2:30 PM, all are invited to our online "Children's Church," designed for kids and put on by kids! Go to <https://zoom.us/j/3999743097>. The Zoom link is also provided on the Church website.

Special Joint Sabbath School

We will be conducting a special Joint Sabbath School this week! Feel free to join as early as 9:45 AM to say hello. The program will be from 10:00 – 11:00 AM.

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87120905863?pwd=RjNEekVSZS81Z3dkWDBJQVExUjluQT09>. **Meeting ID: 871 2090 5863, Pass Code: 165743.** You may also call in by dialing (929) 205-6099 and following the prompts to enter the Meeting ID and Pass Code.

New Youth Pastor!

We have exciting news! The Pastoral Search Committee, working with the Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, chose to invite Freddy Rodriguez to become our new Youth Pastor. Last week, upon Pastor Freddy's acceptance of the invitation, it became officially approved by the Conference that he will be coming to Apopka Seventh-day Adventist Church effective August 15!

Pastor Freddy was born into a pastoral family in Colombia. When he was three years old, his family moved to Mexico, where his father served as a Youth Pastor in Montemorelos Adventist University. Inspired by his parents' example of service, he accepted God's calling into ministry after his junior year in high school in Medellin, Colombia. He has served as an Associate/Youth Pastor, Chaplain at Greater Miami Academy, and as the Associate Youth, Young Adult, and Pathfinder Director for the Florida Conference.

Freddy's purpose in life is to connect his family and others to Christ, church, and the community. He is married to Ruby Corniel, with whom he has two sons, Eduardo (13) and Alejandro (9). His hobbies include bicycling, triathlons, and any outdoor activity with his family that inspires and helps them connect with God. He loves to eat and share meals with family and friends, looking forward to the ultimate dining experience at Jesus' table in heaven!

Pastor Freddy will be our speaker next week, August 15! We will do our best to be more personal with our introductions in the very near future, but we welcome Pastor Freddy and his family to our Church family!



Re-Convening

Leadership is meeting every two weeks to discuss the trends and latest updates on the COVID-19 pandemic and how it is impacting Florida and, more specifically, Orange County. As a reminder, the "markers" we are watching are: (1) The number of hospitalizations decrease, and (2) The number of positive COVID-19 diagnoses are trending downward. New studies are also indicating the likely percentage of people who will carry COVID-19 in gatherings of various sizes. In late June, we presented an outline of what services would be like when we reconvene, which will remain applicable. Stay tuned, and continue praying for our church family and community who have been impacted by COVID-19.

“Total Community Involvement” (TCI)

Our next **COVID-19 Food Card Distribution** is scheduled for August 16, from 2:00 – 3:00 PM.



May we pray for you?

- Finances
- Illness in Family or Friends
- Children
- Emotional Support
- Loss of a loved one
- Overcoming Addiction: Alcohol, drugs, smoking, pornography, or others.
- Spiritual Blessing for yourself, family, or home.

Share your prayer request by...

- Text: (407) 988-5715
- Email: tcibuild7@gmail.com

In Our Prayers

God is Good!

- He is “YHWH Nissi,” meaning, “The LORD is My Banner!” This Name was first used when Moses erected an altar following their victory over the Amalekites in Exodus 17... “Moses built an altar there and named it ‘Yahweh-Nissi’ (which means ‘the LORD is my banner’).
- We praise our God for being the banner under which we live. Anytime we doubt or fear, His banner stands! As the song says, “His banner over us is love!”

We Lift Up Needs!

- We pray for the Sylvain family. Valensky Sylvain’s father passed away last week.
- We pray for Carl Caldwell, who is recovering from hip replacement.
- Continue praying for Wes Hall & Jean Wilson. Both are recovering at home. They are so thankful for the prayers, food, calls and cards which shared the love and concern from their church family." Praise God for his mercy and love!
- Please continue to pray Betty O’Ffill who is grieving the loss her husband, and is recovering from knee surgery. The O’Ffill family will pay tribute to Elder O’Ffill’s life in a private service later this year. Condolences and remembrances are welcome at the following page: <https://www.facebook.com/richard.offill.1>.
- Please continue to pray for Cindy Locke’s brother Tommy, who has just undergone heart valve repair surgery, and is home recovering.
- Tim McGuire is still going through many medical issues relating to his automobile accident.



Sunset Schedule

Friday, August 7: 8:12 Sabbath, August 8: 8:11