

Schedule of Meeting Times:

WKAC 1080 AM Sunday 7:30 AM

Speaker, Robert Emerson

Study Sunday 10:00 AM

Worship Sunday 11:00 AM

Worship Sunday 5:00 PM

Singing every 2nd Sunday evening

Study Wednesday 7:00 PM

Preacher / bulletin editor: Kris Vilander**Phone:** (256) 472-1065; (256) 472-1042**E-mail:** kris@haysmillchurchofchrist.org**Website:** www.haysmillchurchofchrist.orgCome study
with us!**Servants during July:****Songleader:** Dwight (1), Stanley (8),
Larry (15), David (22), Chandler (29)**Reading:** Stanley**Announcements:** Robert**Communion:** Lakin, Mike, David, Marty**Wednesday Lesson:** Stanley (4), Kris (11),
Mike (18), Larry (25)**Lawn Mowing (week beginning):**Kris (1), Billy (8), Marty (15),
Stanley (22), Robert (29)**Singing:** TBD (22)**Area Meetings:**

The Bible . Examiner

"Examine everything carefully..." - 1 Thessalonians 5:21 NASB

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Local Church Membership

By Roger M. Hendricks

Must each Christian be a member of a local congregation? Like so many questions, this one cannot be properly answered either yes or no without considering existing circumstances. The reason for this is that the essentialness of local church membership is contingent upon two important factors: (1) being where other Christians are and (2) their walking according to truth in their congregational practices. I would certainly deny that one is obligated to be a member of a local church when such is impossible due to there being no others with whom he could unite or when those who compose the church are engaged in unauthorized congregational activities. But granting these two conditions, membership is essential!

The local church of Christ is a relationship (fellowship) between

individuals. This fellowship is designed for those who are partakers of the common salvation, dedicated to the common service of God, subjects of the common authority of Jesus Christ, and renderers of common worship. In view of man's gregarious nature it seems only natural that God would make provision for Christians to enjoy fellowship (mutual, active participation in common interest) in the fulfillment of their work and worship. The Lord has made such provision in His Word. The local church is the result of that provision. If God gave the local church, membership is necessary. There can be no church without members thereof. There can be no members thereof without membership therein.

Those who are to oversee the churches of Christ (elders, pastors, or bishops) are often mentioned in

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the New Testament (Acts 11:30; 14:23; 15:23; 20:17). Their duties are discussed (Acts 20:28-31; 1 Pet 5:1-9). These scriptures set forth the fact that elders function in the local church. For them to guide and oversee there must be someone or something or both for them to oversee. This oversight, then demands a local church, which demands members, which demands membership.

Christians are to be, not only a part of, but, to some extent, amenable to a local church. This is seen in the responsibility of local church discipline. The Lord expects of us purity of life and teaching (Gal 1:6-9; 5:19-23). He also demands that the congregation exercise corrective discipline in cases of impurity (2 Thess 3:6,14; Rom 16:17,18; 1 Cor 5). Local church discipline demands a local church

and a local church demands membership.

The example of the early disciples indicates that Christians are to be members of local congregations. When Paul went to Jerusalem, he “assayed to join himself to the disciples” and eventually “was with them” (Acts 9:26-28). In Antioch he and Barnabas “assembled themselves with” the church over a period of one year (Acts 11:25-26). They were “in the church that was at Antioch” (Acts 13:1). In fact, when Paul and others found no local church in existence, upon the conversion of souls, they established one (See also Acts 18:27; Rom 16:1f).

Are you a faithful member of the local body of the Lord’s church?

—Roger preached in Colorado when I was a young man, and was a great influence on me and my thinking. via *The Exhorter*, Volume 23, Number 6, March 19, 2000 

by a bumper sticker we have seen: “God said it; I believe it; that settles it.” In fact, he would agree that God’s word “settles it” whether he believes it or not.


The second man relies on several sources for his religious beliefs. He believes the Bible and many of his convictions are based on what the Bible says. But he also is convinced that he has been “led” into certain beliefs by the Lord.

Some of those beliefs he could not defend by the Bible, and in fact, some of them seem to contradict the Bible, but he is sure that they are true, for the Lord would not have so “led” him had they not been true. One man frankly said to this writer, “I read the Bible, but I mostly just depend on the Spirit to lead me in what I believe.” He has also had his beliefs verified by knowledgeable preachers, who might not be right in everything, but would hardly be wrong on any serious question of truth.

The first man reads the Bible seeking for answers from God. **The second man** reads the Bible for the same reason, but his perception is affected by what he has been “led to believe.” He has difficulty being objective, and, in fact, he might hold to what he has been “led to believe” ahead of plain teaching of scripture. He frankly finds his likeness in the man of Col 2:18,19 who takes “his stand on visions he has seen” and is “not holding fast to the head” (NASV). His religious practices may be different from the man described in Colossians, but his approach to authority in religion is the same.

We do not hesitate to side with the first man in his approach. God indeed “leads” us into truth, but He does so through His inspired word. Consider the following passages: “Your word is like a lamp to my feet and a light to my path” (Psa 119:105); “Sanctify them by Your truth, Your word is truth” (Jn 17:17); “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Tim 3:16,17).

The two men of our article will come to remarkable agreement when they both approach the scriptures as the final word of God, but not until then. Religious differences are not the product of scripture, but of varying attitudes toward what constitutes final authority in religion. True unity is desirable, and it can be enjoyed by those who humbly submit to God’s word and will.

—Bill is well known in this area, and for good reason. via *Two Men*, 1998 p1,2 

Two Men Can’t Agree on Religion

By Bill Hall

Two men are religious, and both seem to be sincere, but they never seem to agree on religious questions. A brief look at their applications of the Bible helps to explain their problem.

The first man views the Bible as the complete and final answer to all religious questions pertaining to salvation. For him, a clear statement from the Bible ends all controversy. His simple approach is well stated

Remember in Prayer 

The Beddingfield’s son-in-law, Ruth Black, Carolyn Dennis, Dot and Scotty, had arm surgery... And please don’t forget Kenny Paul Mitchell, as well as Lois Adams, Tim Hice, Polly McNatt, and Hazel Teeples...