

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 August:****Songleader:** Dwight (5), Stanley (12),
Larry (19), David (26)**Reading:** Chandler**Announcements:** Larry**Communion:** Stanley, Marty, Robert,
Mike**Wednesday Lesson:** Stanley (1), Kris (8),
Mike (15), Larry (22), Stanley (29)**Lawn Mowing (week beginning):**Larry (5), Kris (12), Billy (19),
Marty (26)**Singing:** The Broadus' (26)**Area Meetings:** Cartwright (Singing,
11; Meeting, 12-15)**Hays Mill church of Christ**

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**The Bible .
Examiner***"Examine everything carefully..." -1 Thessalonians 5:21 NASB*

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"DO I HAVE TO?"

"Do I Have To?" Anyone that has had children has likely heard this multiple times: the sound of an immature voice that doesn't yet understand what is best for them ("eat your vegetables"); what is a blessing to others ("let's go visit the nursing home"); or even what may be a simple expression of love ("write her a note to say 'thank you'"). When the question is asked, it reveals a problem of the heart: that one is thinking only of their own likes or dislikes, not mindful of what is really needful for them or others. We ought to have patience with children—they are growing, learning; yet, these are serious problems and have to be dealt with—for their good and everyone else's.

Paul was dealing with immature brethren both times that he wrote to the Thessalonians; they had been Christians for less than a year and a half or so. In 2 Thess 3:10, we read, "For even when we were with you,

we used to give you this order: if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either." This was a serious issue, too, so Paul was dealing with it sternly—and in context, with love and concern for all (v14,15).

But think for a moment: what if someone simply *could* not work? Whom would be condemned? Not the one who was *unable* to work, but the one who that was *unwilling* to work.

Sometimes we are asked if it is necessary for a Christian to meet with the church—sometimes it is frankly stated, "I don't need to." That the question is asked may reveal something of the heart of the questioner; even so, let me point out why it *is* necessary—unless the Lord excuses you.

The Holy Spirit chose to record for you and me in Heb 10:24,25 "...And let us be concerned about one another in order to promote love

and good works, (25) not staying away from our worship meetings, as some habitually do, but encouraging each other, and all the more as you see the day drawing near.” (HCSB)

Considering this verse, a primary reason to meet with the church is that it is commanded; and not only to do so faithfully, but for that meeting to be all the more important to us as time goes on!

Secondly, in that meeting, we inspire love for each another as well as others, push each other in a positive way to do good works, and encourage one another general. We all understand that even those things that are good for us can become a chore at times; but when we are part of a team, we are motivated in ways that we never would be by ourselves! God planned for the local church to act as a team: all serving the same Lord and Master, helping one another to press on to the same goal, Phil 2:1-4; 1:27.

A third reason is that the converse is true as well; when we choose not to meet (not that we cannot, but when we choose not to), it is a discouragement. It can cause other’s love to grow cold, and can dissuade them from doing good works. Moses called that kind of behavior sin: Num 32:6,23, “...Shall your brothers go to war while you yourselves sit here? (23) ...be sure your sin will find you out,” (Read the context). Each one of us is an example for someone—either good or bad; and particularly for the

young, both spiritually and physically. They will see our priorities and may well choose to adopt them... and we may find that we will have caused a “little one who believes” to stumble, Mk 9:42. That would be disastrous for all involved.

A fourth reason is that choosing not to meet exposes us as not “holding fast” to our hope in Christ; rather, we may be choosing apostasy—“shrink[ing] back to destruction,” Heb 10:23,39. That should be a frightening place for us to be.

I have known of folks that say that they just can’t get anything out of meeting with other brethren; that they are spiritually more mature, or know the scriptures better than others, so that they feel they benefit more from private Bible study—as for worship, they can do that right where they are. It may well be true that they are more knowledgeable (as for maturity, to make such a statement would argue otherwise); but what about the blessings of fellowship found in these verses from Hebrews, blessings both for themselves and for others? Meeting with the church is not simply about worship; nor is it simply about what we, individually, get out of it!

Paul was concerned that when he came to see the brethren in Corinth, he would find them behaving in worldly ways; so he charged them, “**Test yourselves** to see if you are in the faith; **examine yourselves!** Or do you not recognize this about

yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test?” (2 Cor 13:5). If you don’t meet with your brethren each opportunity available, why don’t you? If our text in Hebrews is any gauge, while the one unable to meet is not condemned, **the one that is unwilling certainly is.** Self-examination is urgent, so that you can make changes if you fail the test!

But the fact that we are to test ourselves doesn’t mean that others don’t (...or shouldn’t) ever make judgments based on our behavior. While we must be careful how we judge, we are known by our fruit (Lk 6:44)—which is why it is so hard on the brethren in a local work when they see some that choose to do other things rather than meet with them to study God’s word or to


worship Him. The truth is that the Lord knows what we are able to do, and what we cannot; he gives us every good thing we have, and allows every trial we endure—he knows our limitations. We can trust him to make the right decisions about our behavior every time. Yet, unlike God, we and our brethren are not omniscient—so we would do well to share with others our trials, and let them know if we are simply unable to meet with them, rather than unwilling.

Again, sometimes we are asked if it is necessary for a Christian to meet with the church—sometimes, we are even told, “I don’t need to.” Indeed, **it is necessary**—unless the Lord excuses you.

—Kris Vilander 

My Neighbor’s Bible

I am my neighbor’s Bible, he reads me when we meet;
Today he reads me in my home, tomorrow in the street.
He may be relative or friend, or slight acquaintance be;
He may not even know my name, yet he is reading me.

Everyone is an example: some good, some bad. Which are you? —Anonymous 

Remember in Prayer

Betty has had serious eye troubles related to her diabetes for some time; Cindy’s daughter Brooke Turner had her baby Thursday (a boy: Beckham Wyatt); Dwight had an MRI to evaluate numbness in his left arm; Hazel Teeples has had jaw surgery; and Herbert Sides has bone cancer; please pray for each one. Also, please don’t forget Lois Adams, Ruth Black, Carolyn Dennis, Tim and Dot Hice, and Polly McNatt.