

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 December:****Songleader:** Larry (2); David (9), Chandler (16), Dwight (23), Stanley (30)**Reading:** David**Announcements:** Robert**Communion:** Larry, Chandler, Mike, Lakin**Wednesday Lesson:** Mike (5), Larry (12), Stanley (19), Kris (26)**Lawn Mowing (week beginning):**

On winter vacation...

Singing: TBD (30)**Area Meetings:**

The Bible . Examiner

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

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It Won't Wash Off!

By Dan S. Shipley

This early Friday morning finds it a perplexed governor that has come to sit on the judgment-seat just outside the Praetorium. Having already examined Jesus, Pilate has found him to be innocent. Now, he must face a hostile and prejudiced mob who wants to hear this innocent man declared guilty. Not only has Pilate found no crime in Jesus, he knows that "because of envy they had handed Him over," Mt 27:18. And, with all this weighing on his conscience, his wife sends unto him saying, "Have nothing to do with that righteous Man," v19. Pilate represented a powerful government that prided itself in its good laws and their equitable enforcement. For an honorable and just judge, the verdict should have been easy in this case. But placative Pilate was on the spot. And he responds by ignoring his wife, his conscience and justice to become history's best known coward.

"When Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing, but rather that a riot was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd, saying, 'I am innocent of this Man's blood; see to that yourselves,'"

Mt 27:24. What justice! The innocent man is scourged and delivered to be crucified (v26) while the man who decrees it declares himself innocent! Pilate wasn't on trial. Yet, he feels compelled to vindicate himself by washing his hands and saying, in effect, "I AM NOT RESPONSIBLE!"—even when no one cared. Pilate should have known that responsibility is not a disposable commodity. It cannot be transferred; it won't wash off. Yet, many before and since have imitated Pilate's wash-pan ethics.

Even in Eden we can see signs of this unwillingness to face up to responsibility. Adam says, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate." Eve says, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate," Gen 3:12,13. Like Pilate, each was saying, "I AM NOT RESPONSIBLE!" Their son Cain was saying the same thing in asking, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Gen 4:9. We see the Pilate problem in Aaron; we see it in King Saul; we even see it in the slothful one-talent man, Matt. 25:24. The Pilates of modern society blame guns, laws,

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poverty, affluence, heredity, environment—they are never without some kind of a “wash pan” with which to declare themselves “NOT RESPONSIBLE!”—not even in the spiritual realm where men need most to see self-guilt and face responsibility.

No man is without responsibility to God. Free-moral agency says it; stewardship says it, 1 Cor 4:2; knowledge says it, Jas 4:17; redemption says it, 1 Pet 1:18,19; and certainly judgment says that all have responsibilities that are inescapable. Like Pilate’s, they can’t be washed off.

Faith Is...

By Doy Moyer

“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen,” Heb 11:1.

The term used for assurance is also translated as substance or confidence, indicating that which provides the foundation for trust. The term for conviction is sometimes translated as evidence, indicating the proof or reality of something.

Such is the nature of faith. Faith stands under our hope, gives us the assurance and confidence that our hope is worthwhile. Faith is also our evidence of the reality of that which we cannot see. Paul said, “hope does not disappoint,” Rom 5:5, even though “hope that is seen is not hope,” Rom 8:24. Faith assures us that our faith is not in vain in the Lord, 1 Cor. 15:58.

In truth, we don’t yet see that for which we hope (ultimately, heaven), but our faith assures us that the hope is real. In the context of this treatise to the

Neither can they be blamed off; palmed off; regretted off; or ignored off! For the follower of Christ, it is a responsibility of freedom. We are saved to serve -- even if only with one talent. How inconsistent then, for Christians to stand where Pilate stood!—excusing ourselves when we ought to be facing-up and steadfastly doing those things we know to be right. As elders, preachers, teachers, parents, and concerned Christians, may God help us to see and say: “I AM RESPONSIBLE!”

-- Via **Plain Talk**, March 1976. 

Hebrews, this idea makes perfect sense. They were beginning to waver, wondering if it was worthwhile to stay in Christ. They were tempted to go back to their old ways, perhaps thinking that those ways were better somehow because the old ways weren’t so much accompanied by persecution. The writer has been making the case all along that they needed to remain faithful, for what we have in Christ is far superior to anything they could go back to or could ever have again. Their hope in Christ was waning because their faith was uncertain. That direct connection between faith and hope is vital to understanding our relationship to Christ. If our hope isn’t what it ought to be, we need to check our faith.

How can we be sure that what we hope for will come to fruition? Again, this is where faith steps in. Many might object that faith itself is without proof. Faith is often seen by the unbelieving

world as blind, gullible, and irrational. How can faith be the assurance of anything, if faith itself is under suspicion? While this issue is not directly the topic of Hebrews, it is something that bothers people from time to time, and that in itself can shake a person’s hope.


Such views of faith are missing the point about the nature of faith. There is nothing in the Bible to suggest that faith is some unreasonably blind and gullible concept, believing things in spite of or contrary to evidence. To borrow a phrase, may it never be! Faith is a measured step we take based upon the evidence provided by God Himself. This evidence comes in many forms, including creation (Psa 19) and the historical testimony to Jesus Christ, the resurrection evidence being the most significant, Jn 20:29-31; 1 Cor. 15:1-4. When Abraham followed God, he did it by faith even when he didn’t know exactly where he was going; nevertheless he still had good reason to trust that God knew what He was doing.

The Hebrews had plenty of reason to put their faith in God. Even though they had not yet witnessed the final outcome of their faith, they could trust that their allegiance to Jesus would not go unrewarded. For them, the Hebrew Scriptures should have been plenty of proof that God is faithful and would carry out His promises. Then, if those same Scriptures were fulfilled in Jesus Christ, then how could they abandon

Christ to go back to something inferior? The evidence was available to them; they just needed to follow that path.

The 11th chapter of Hebrews is filled with examples of what faith can do. The patriarchs “died in faith,” not having seen the fulfillment of all the promises. Even so, they were convicted that God is and that God rewards those who diligently seek Him, v6. These men “confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth,” making it clear that they were “seeking a country of their own.” This country they were seeking was a heavenly one, with a heavenly city prepared for them by God, v13-16. If they could have such faith before the coming of Jesus, why would it be such a stretch for us to have such faith after the coming of Jesus? We have the evidence of Jesus Himself! Dare we exercise less faith than they, who could only hope for the fulfillment of that seed promise in Christ?

Let’s not fall into the trap of thinking that all our hope is tied up in this earth. We, too, are seeking a country not of this world. With our faith securely in place, our hope becomes that much more real. For the patriarchs, God was not ashamed to be called their God. Will He be ashamed of us? Or will we, as with those of old, find approval through our faith, v39?

“For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart,” Heb. 12:3. 

Remember in Prayer

Billy has continued to suffer from a severe case of shingles; Pam had a perforated eardrum due to infection; and as of the time of this writing, Kenny Paul is not expected to live here much longer.

Please remember Lois Adams and her brother, Ted; Ruth Black, Carolyn Dennis, Tim and Dot Hice, Polly McNatt, and Hazel Teeple; as well as Buddy’s friend, Herbert Sides. 