

Schedule of Meeting Times:

WKAC 1080 AM Sunday 7:30 AM
Speaker, Robert Emerson
 Study Sunday 10:00 AM
 Worship Sunday Morn 11:00 AM
 Worship Sunday Eve 5:00 PM
Singing every 2nd Sunday evening
 Study Wednesday 7:00 PM

Preacher / bulletin editor:

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"...from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness..."
 —2 Timothy 3:15,16

**Servants during October/November:**

Songleader: Peter (10/31), Stanley (7), Larry (14), David (21), Peter (28)

Reading: Mike B; Mike M (Nov)

Announcements: Robert; Larry (Nov)

Table: David, Peter, Larry, Mike M; Marty, Stanley, Mike B, Peter (Nov)

Wednesday Lesson: Stanley (3), Kris (10), Larry (17), Stanley (24)

Lawn Mowing (week starting): Stanley (10/31), Robert (7), Larry (14), Kris (21), Marty (28)

Hays Mill church of Christ

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The Bible . Examiner

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

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I Can't Make You Read This

By Steven Harper

We are told within the revealed and written Word of God that God had established a plan for man's salvation through Jesus Christ even before the foundation of the world, 1 Pet 1:20; or, as Paul said it, "before time began," 2 Tim 1:9. We are also told within the revealed and written Word of God that this plan was hidden for a while from mankind, Eph 3:5,6, and even from the prophets who foretold it, 1 Pet 1:10-12. Within the revealed and written Word of God, we are further told that this plan was revealed by the Holy Spirit through the apostles and prophets at the appropriate time, Eph 3:5; 1 Pet 1:12. We are also told that when we read what is written within the revealed Word of God, we may understand it, Eph 3:4. We are also commanded to understand the will of God, Eph 5:17, and we are told that God desires that we all come to a knowledge of the truth, 1 Tim 2:3,4. If God desires we come to a knowledge of the truth, we can be assured it is possible;

since He commands that we understand His will, we can be assured it is possible; and since God said we could understand it when we read it, we can be assured it is possible.

...But not if you don't read it.

I have personally written more than 600 different weekly bulletin articles, written workbooks for each of the 66 books of the Bible (some of the books have multiple workbooks, with different levels of study for each), written class material for every age group from preschool to mature adults, and have preached close to 1000 sermons. And I'm not done writing or preaching yet! I still have a lot to go! And I know there are individual Christians out there who have written as much as I—and more—and who continue to write, too. There are a few dedicated Christians who have taken it to be their life's work to write material that will help anyone and everyone from the babes in Christ to the mature

Christian to attain to greater spiritual maturity.

Anyone who has written any kind of workbook for Bible class study will tell you that it takes a lot of thought, time, and energy to put a workbook together. I am sure I speak for all of them when I say I pour my heart out in those workbooks in the effort to try to make God's Word as plain and as relevant and as applicable as humanly possible. I don't even pretend to believe my words will "enlighten" anyone, but I never cease in my effort to try to get everyone to merely think about what God's Word says and how it applies to each and every one of us. And, like most writers, there are some writings we hope disappear and are never seen again, but there are some I wish I could get into the hands of many believing men and women in the hopes they will gain some important insights on God's revealed and written Word and that it will help them to gain spiritual strength enough to overcome every temptation and endure every trial. I have read others' material that I am confident would help many people do just that, but I often find that few have read those words. What's worse, I find many brethren have not even bothered to read the words revealed by God to men in what we now know as the Bible.

I strive to be able to put ideas and thoughts down and in such a way that others will pick up their Bibles and see for themselves what God has revealed, but I have to admit the sad fact that my writing often falls short of the intended goal. And, I also know that even the things I perceive to be beneficial are not read by everyone who gets it in their hands. I can spend hours upon hours thinking of the proper thing to write, put those thoughts together in near-perfect sentences that

properly convey the intended thought, type it out with no grammatical or spelling errors, print it in aesthetically-pleasing workbooks, and even personally put it in the hands of others who might benefit.

...But I can't make you read it.

And, lest you think this is an article meant to promote myself, let me get you to think about the whole point of this article: How must God feel when we do not read His writings? Think about it for a minute—or an hour or a day or a week. Think about what went into the writings we now hold in our hands when we pick up the Bible. Take some time to think about the effort put into getting this into our hands—and what do we do with it? God has gone far in getting the Bible into our hands, with the express purpose of giving us "words by which you and all your household will be saved," Acts 11:14; and when we believe those words, we can be saved from our sins, Mk 16:15,16.

...But God will not make you read it.

As stated previously, God established the plan for man's salvation before time began, and hid that plan from us until the right time. During the time it was hidden, more was being said about the plan, but in prophetic terms that could not be understood by those who spoke and wrote those words at the time. Those who spoke the truth suffered greatly for their efforts, and sometimes, those who received the words written by God's inspiration treated them with utter contempt and disregard, cf. Jer 36:21-23. Some were told even before they spoke God's Word that those who heard it would not heed, but they were told to speak the Word anyway, Ezek 2. Sometimes, those who spoke truth were treated very harshly and their very lives

were threatened, Acts 4:21. Some paid the ultimate price for speaking God's Word, Acts 7:54-60.

All along, God was with certain men who were given the task of writing or speaking His Word, ensuring His will was clearly and fully delivered, Ex 4:30,31, and understood, Neh 8:8. There may indeed be things that are hard to understand, cf. 2 Pet 3:16, but nothing that is necessary for our salvation is impossible to understand. There are many things of which we know nothing and can never know, Deut 29:29; but what God has revealed and has written down is for our spiritual good, Deut 6:24, and that is what we should study and attempt to comprehend with all seriousness. The things written within the revealed Word of God can lead us to believe in Christ and, thus, salvation from sins, Jn 20:30,31.

...But not if you don't read it.

Men and women who believed this plan of salvation have suffered at the hands of persecutors who wanted to make their lives miserable or to even take their lives, cf. Acts 26:10,11. When persecuted, some fled their homes and went to other cities, but they not only continued believing, they also preached that Word of God to others where they were, Acts 8:3,4. As the Word spread, we

find that there were some who were ready to hear it and—please note this—they "searched the Scriptures daily" to discover the truth, Acts 17:11. It was not a light matter! In the centuries since that time, many individuals have—at the risk of their own lives, and sometimes at the cost of their own lives—faithfully served the Lord, protected the written Word of God for the sake of those of future generations, and labored to have it translated into the common languages of their lands so all men would have access to the soul-saving Word of God.

We know the Word of God is "able to make you wise for salvation" and "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," 2 Tim 3:15,16, but only if we read it. God planned it far in advance, guided men through the centuries to make sure it was written down, and finally revealed it to men who wrote it or spoke it to those who were in need of the salvation it brought. To say a lot of work and effort went into its compilation would be a vast understatement! So when I am discouraged when others won't read what I wrote, I just think about how God must feel!

The Word of God is powerful... *but it won't help you if you don't read it.* 📖

🌀 Remember in Prayer 🌀

Robert is doing some better after a change in medication; **Buddy** continues to struggle with health issues, though. **Cindy Vilander's** mother is scheduled for surgery November 5th.

Please continue to remember **Madelene Britnell, Carolyn Dennis, and Tim and Dot Hice, and Joyce Smith.** 📖