

**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 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday evening*  
 Study Wednesday 7:00 PM

**Preacher / bulletin editor:**

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“A good name is to be more desired than great wealth, Favor is better than silver and gold.”

— Proverbs 22:1

**Servants during April/May:**

**Songleader:** Stanley (24); Larry (5/1), David (5/8), Peter (5/15), Stanley (5/22), Larry (5/29)

**Reading:** Larry; Mike B (May)

**Announcements:** Stanley; Larry (May)

**Table:** Peter, David, Robert, Marty; Stanley, Marty, Mike M, Peter (May)

**Wednesday Lesson:** Kris (27); Larry (5/4), Stanley (5/11), Kris (5/18), Larry (5/25)

**Lawn Mowing (week starting):** Larry (24); Kris (5/1), Marty (5/8), Stanley (5/15), Larry (5/22), Robert (5/29)

**Area Meetings:**

Killen Park, 6:30pm, Shelter #3 (25); Eastside, Athens (24-27); Marion Street, Athens (24-27); Market Street (24-27); New Georgia (24-27); Piney Grove (5/1-5/4)

**Hays Mill church of Christ**

21705 Hays Mill Road

Elkmont, AL 35620

# The Bible . Examiner

“Examine everything carefully...” —1 Thessalonians 5:21 NASB

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## Building Character, Building Reputation

By Bill Hall

A good reputation is valuable. To know that people love us, appreciate us, think highly of us, and expect the best of us can spur us to greater and greater achievements. “A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches,” Prov 22:1.

But character is of far greater importance. We must be people of honesty and integrity, genuine, whose word is our bond, whose morals are beyond reproach, proceeding from clean, pure hearts. That’s character. The Lord was looking for such a person when He said through Jeremiah: “Run to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem; See now and know; And seek in her open places If you can find a man, If there is anyone who executes judgment, Who seeks the truth, And I will pardon her,” Jer 5:1. We fear that such people are as rare in our generation as they were in Jeremiah’s.

Reputation is what people think we are. Character is what we really are.

### Building Reputation through Good Character

A good reputation can sometimes be gained without being truly earned. We might build a good reputation by associating with the right people. We might just inherit our reputation from our parents. Or, like the Pharisees, we might impress people with our outward show of piety and humility, Mt 6:1–18. But the only way a good reputation can be earned is to build the kind of character God wants.

Jesus said of Nathanael, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile,” Jn 1:47. Nathanael rose above the typical Israelite of his day. He was an Israelite indeed. His character truly reflected that of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel. His reputation was built upon character, character that was without guile.

In contrast, there were the people of Sardis, to whom the Lord said, “I know your works, that you have a name that

you are alive, but you are dead,” Rev 3:1. These people had built a reputation, but their character did not come up to their reputation.

Seeking to build reputation without character leads to hypocrisy. This is what brought about the downfall of Ananias and Sapphira, who wanted the reputation of being as benevolent as others, but who were not as benevolent in character. So it was with the Pharisees and rulers of Jesus’ day, who “loved the praise of men more than the praise of God,” Jn 12:43. These were more concerned for reputation than for the kind of character that results in God’s praise.

Can this happen to us? Indeed! If we are not careful we will find ourselves just “playing church.” We go through all the motions that enable us to maintain our reputations, but our hearts may not be in it. What is coming forth is not action that is rooted in character.

When we are primarily concerned for reputation we will be very cautious when in the presence of others, but will throw off all caution when we are alone. But when we are people of genuine character, we are cautious at all times, seeking to be what we ought to be when no one will see or know. In fact, this is one of the true tests of character. Character looks to God for approval, while reputation looks to man.

## **Sacrificing Character for Reputation**

There are those who will sacrifice character in order to maintain their reputations. We are all too familiar with politicians who sacrifice convictions to


do that which will get them elected. Unfortunately, many preachers and elders have done the same to maintain their position in the brotherhood. Not so with those of true character. Such people will remain true in character, whatever the consequences. The words of Frederick Faber come to mind:

*Our fathers, chained in prisons dark, / Were still in heart and conscience free.*

They might have been chained in prisons dark, they might have been “made the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things,” 1 Cor 4:13, but they refused to sacrifice character. Like them, we must have character that is not for sale; that will accept damaged reputation rather than compromise character.

## **Character Prepares for Judgment**

It is not reputation that prepares us for judgment, but character combined with doing God’s will, Mt 7:21–23. There no doubt will be many surprises when the Lord in the judgment “will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts” of certain ones who have deceived us, 1 Cor 4:5. Their reputation within the brotherhood will not suffice.

Let us not neglect our reputation—it is valuable—but let us make sure that our reputation is rooted in character. Away with hypocrisy! Away with seeking to please men! Build character! This is the way that pleases God and brings us into good reputation with right thinking people. 

# **Positively No Visiting!**


*By Bill Hall*

Recently, While visiting patients in a hospital, we observed several signs saying, “No Visiting.” Then we came to a sign that said, “Positively No Visiting.” I suppose some day we will find one that will read, “Absolutely Positively No Visiting.” If only we could learn to respect authority so that “No Visiting” would just mean no visiting.

The attitude of many toward the Lord’s authority is the same as it is toward a “No Visiting” sign. They somehow feel that they are an exception to the rule or that somehow the Lord will overlook this one instance of flouting His authority. But the same

God who would not overlook Nadab and Abihu’s strange fire, Lev 10:1,2, David’s new cart, 2 Sam 6:1-7, or Ananias and Sapphira’s cover-up tactics, will not overlook our disregard for His authority.

The words “positively” and “absolutely” are not found in the King James Version of the Bible. But they are inferred in every statement and command found in the scriptures. One cannot hope to go to heaven while disregarding Christ’s authority.

*--via Two Men: Articles on Practical Christian Living, p197 *

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## **Come hear the gospel of Christ!**

*Our meeting is going on now: April 24 through 29!*

*Speakers: Sun, Tim Sutton; Mon, Stephen Russell; Tues, Glenn Hamilton; Wed, Kevin Chancellor; Thurs, David Wheeler; Fri, Marshall McDaniel*

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## *Remember in Prayer*

**Pam** is recovering after having one of her knees replaced; unfortunately, **Buddy** has strained his back while caring for her. Please remember them both, as the **Emerson’s** and **Beddingfield’s** often suffer health issues. Please continue to pray for **Carolyn Dennis, Dot Hice**

and **Joyce Smith**, and **Betty’s sister, Dean**, as well.

Pray for our meeting, those preaching, and those in our community that may visit us, Eph 6:19. Please pray for or leaders, and the upcoming elections in the U.S., 1 Tim 2:1,2. 