

**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

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“...[T]he Son of Man  
 has come to seek  
 and to save that  
 which was lost.”

— Luke 19:10

**Servants during November/December:**

**Songleader:** Peter (11/27), Stanley (12/4),  
 Larry (12/11), Peter (12/18), Stanley  
 (12/25)

**Reading:** Peter (Nov); Stanley (Dec)

**Announcements:** Larry (Nov); Marty (Dec)

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

**Wednesday Lesson:**

Larry (11/30), Stanley (12/7), Kris  
 (12/14), Larry (12/21),  
 Stanley (12/28)

**Lawn Mowing (week starting):**

On Winter vacation...

**Hays Mill church of Christ**

21705 Hays Mill Road

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# The Bible . Examiner

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

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## Don't Prejudge the Soil

by Garrett Timmerman

My religious background could be summed up by saying there was almost none. My Baptist grandmother took me to the Methodist church when I was five years old and gave me a Bible that I still possess. When I was about twelve years old, because there was no Baptist church nearby, she begged the Methodist preacher to baptize me in an Assembly of God building, so I would later call myself a Methodist Baptist.

From that point, my life unraveled. My mother left my father for a young man, and my father remarried. I graduated from high school, joined the military and left God far behind. I smoked, drank, and used other drugs, and was surrounded by pornography. During three years in the military, I became sick of sin. My conscience always bothered me, which amazed me. While I was drinking or doing drugs, my friends would get frustrated because I would bring up God and want somebody to help me understand Him. But I was so confused and uninformed that I continually remained frustrated.

After leaving the military, I returned to work at International Harvester in Louisville, Kentucky. I began to associate with fellows affected by Vietnam and other things. I became friends with those like me: longhaired, beard-wearing, motorcycle-riding, drug using hippies.

Then one day a man boldly approached me on the assembly line. He asked me three questions: “Do you believe in God?” I did not want to answer, so I continued working as if I did not hear, but he just waited. When he persisted, I turned and said, “Yes sir, I do.” I hoped that would end the conversation, but then he asked “If you die right now, do you believe you would go to heaven or hell?” I didn't answer for a moment or two, and he just waited. Finally I said, “I believe I would go straight to hell.” I went back to work, but he raised the final question: “Does that bother you?” I pondered what to say, and finally just looked into his eyes and said, “Yes it does, and I'm going to do something about it.”

I did. I went home, shaved off my beard, cut my hair, threw my pornography in the garbage, flushed some drugs down the commode, and poured out all the whiskey I had in the house. And, I sat down on the couch and tried to read my Bible, but I had a big obstacle. I had graduated from high school without learning to read.

I sat and cried and thought about what to do. Soon I went searching for the Bible on tape, and I began to sit up until about three or four each morning and listen to it. I wanted to saturate my mind with just what the Bible said.

My next step was to attend different churches on Sundays and ask everybody that I could questions about the Bible, but the more I investigated, the more confused and discouraged I became, until I began to see that some religious groups were closer to the truth than others.

Eventually, learning from the Bible that I needed to believe, repent, confess and be baptized, I found my way to the Christian Church. I decided that I would be baptized and join their work, until I went to tell my grandpa. When I told him what I was planning, he kept pounding his Bible on my leg, saying "Don't do it, don't do it!" I was shocked and puzzled, because my grandpa had become a Christian at age 69 after being a Roman Catholic. I asked him why not; he then questioned me about instrumental music in worship, which I believed was nitpicking. He then asked, "Why will you nitpick about the plan of salvation and not nitpick about worship?" For the first time, I was learning about biblical authority, Mt 7:13-27.

I wasn't baptized that next Sunday, but kept searching. Finally I approached Bill Bryant at International Harvester. I asked him where he went to church. He said he was a Christian, a member of the Lord's church.

Bill opened a door I never knew existed. He brought me tracts on instrumental music, but I was too ashamed to tell I couldn't read. Finally he directed me to a church of Christ near where I lived, where Ken Green preached. I was determined to be baptized, so I went to services on Wednesday, and told Ken, "I'm here to be baptized and stuff like that."

Well, naturally, Ken thought I was a nut. He did not baptize me, fearing I did not have any idea what it meant. I went back on Sunday and during the invitation song I went forward, determined that if I had to, I would embarrass him into baptizing me. When he asked me what I wanted, I responded loudly, "I'm here to be baptized and stuff like that." He said "OK," and my journey as a man who had found a clean conscience began, 1 Pet. 3:21.

You may wonder about all the sinful habits I had. I thought the battle with tobacco was a mountain I would never climb, but I knew the only way I would was to take one step at a time. Instead of putting cigarettes in my shirt pocket, I put the little Bible from my grandmother. Each time I reached for a cigarette, I would pull my Bible out of my pocket, search for the shortest passage, ask somebody to read it and begin to memorize it. The more I began to replace the sin in my life with the sincere milk of the word, 1 Pet 2:2, the more I grew.

Here are some things I learned that may help you convert some long-haired hippies someday. First, most people believe themselves to be right. What we want to do with such a person is try to get him or her thinking. Jesus was the master at this kind of work, at being "wise as serpents, and harmless as doves," Mt 10:16.

Jesus used the same tool many times: asking simple questions. The man who made me think did not quote a passage; he just made the gears in my own mind begin to turn, and made me realize there was a hole in my thinking. People who know they're wrong and facing a terrible disaster will be bothered and want to change.


Second, in trying to reach people, we often fail to recognize their living consciences. While I was in the world, I was burdened because I knew I was a long way from God, Mt 11:28; Acts 17:27. This inner police force that each person has can be stirred by kindness, patience, and the right questions.

The third thing that will help us is understanding discipleship, Mt 28:18-20. I had decided I was going to be a disciple of Jesus. I knew that baptism was a part of it and that a lot of

other "stuff" went with that, but I did not care what the "stuff" was or what the cost might be, Lk 9:23. I was afraid my wife and I would divorce, because she saw me then as a religious nut. I lost all my friends because I kept talking to them about what I had learned.

I'm glad to tell you today that I had the pleasure to baptize my father, my step-mother, and my brothers and sisters, and even to see my wife obey the gospel. But all of that occurred because they could sense that I was a disciple of Jesus. That factor played a great role in my ability to reach others, even though I was still memorizing scriptures because I could not read.

I hope these points about my decision to leave the world help you as you reach out to others to save them, Jude 22,23. Good, honest hearts can be hiding under a beard or long hair, or sitting on a motorcycle beside you.

A lady in Kentucky told me that my conversion helps her every time she sees a hoodlum on a motorcycle. "I always roll my window down now and invite him to the gospel meeting," because, she says, "I just keep thinking, that fellow might make a good gospel preacher someday." 

## Remember in Prayer

**Joyce** continues to deal with cancer; last week was difficult. **Betty** has heard from her oncologist, and is pursuing the first of several options; **Robert** hasn't had any news following wearing a heart monitor. **Steve McNatt** is having heart issues. **Price McNatt** passed away Wednesday night. Please

continue to remember **Carolyn Dennis** and **Dot Hice**.

Pray for our national, state, and community leaders. Also, please pray for fruit from Bible studies, whether personal, or correspondence course; and courage for brethren in difficult places. 