

**Schedule of Meeting Times:**

WKAC 1080 AM Sunday 7:30 AM  
 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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“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them,”

—Ephesians 2:10

**Servants during August/September:**

**Songleader:** Larry (8/27) , Stanley (9/3), Larry (10), Stanley (17), Larry (24)

**Reading:** Larry (Aug); Stanley (Sep)

**Announcements:** Marty (Aug); Larry (Sep)

**Table:** Stanley, Mike M, Peter, Marty (Aug); Marty, Stanley, Larry, Mike M (Sep)

**Wednesday Lesson:** Larry (8/30), Stanley (9/6), Kris (13), Larry (20), Stanley (27)

**Lawn Mowing (week starting):**

Larry (8/27), Kris (9/3), Marty (10), Stanley (17), Larry (24)

**Area Meetings: Eastside**

**(Russellville),** Justin Roberson, 8/20-25; **Hillsboro Heights,** Ken Chapman, 8/27-31; **Gooch Lane,** Brent Hunter, 9/8-10

**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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## I Have a Friend...

I have a friend that is “out of duty” with the Lord. It is not hard to love him; he will do anything for you—he really would give you the shirt off his back. He hasn’t met with the church in years; there are just other priorities for Him—things that in and of themselves aren’t sinful. When I saw him the other day, I didn’t ask him about getting back with brethren; I asked when he would get back with the Lord... in context, implying that we were getting older, and shortly would be called to account: “...we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad,” 2 Cor 5:10.


You see, while he had done (and was doing) a lot of really good things, none of them would make a difference at the end of his life—his unforgiven sin has made a rift between him and his God. Fellowship with brethren in Christ is good, but he needed fellowship with Christ

Himself, and you don’t get that by doing good things. A Christian makes Christ the center of his life, and doing good will naturally follow. In fact, it is expected: “...by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them,” Eph 2:8-10.

My friend said that he thought about his situation a lot; nearly every day, in fact—but even so, he didn’t know that he would have lived any differently. However, you can’t simply “add Jesus” to your life; for the Christian, He is your life: Paul wrote, “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me,” Gal 2:20.

We are all getting older; we can't stop or even slow the passage of time. Swift changes in our nation, our homes, as well as our own health and that of our family should spur each one of us on to address our spiritual condition. King David long ago reflected, "Behold, You have made my days as handbreadths, and my lifetime as nothing in Your sight; surely every man at his best is a mere breath," Psa 39:5. God wants all of us to repent, and come back into fellowship with Him; but that patience has an end: "...the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up," 2 Pet 3:10.

Dear reader—friend—you don't know whether you have 50 years, five

years, or even five minutes until your personal meeting with the Lord. Either you will die, or He will return; as far as you are concerned, it doesn't matter which it may be. If you are not in fellowship with Him; if sin is still held to your account, that last day will be a time of absolute terror for you. Paul the Apostle expressed his concern, saying, "Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men..." 2 Cor 5:11a. You can continue to put off humbling yourself before your creator; but there will come a time, all too soon, when it will be too late, as it was for Esau, "For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears," Heb 12:17. Won't you prepare yourself to meet the Lord? 

# Water in the Wilderness

*by Matthew W. Bassford*

In both Old and New Testaments, the treatment of the story contained in Exodus 17:1-7 is uniformly negative. The original narrative of Moses really focuses not on God's miraculous provision for His people but on their grumbling. The same thing is true in Paul's reexamination of the story in 1 Corinthians 10:1-13. He lists the blessings that the Israelites received from God only to point out that they fell away regardless. He wants us to recognize that we too can fall despite our blessings.

Nonetheless, even this negative perspective contains imagery that is both beautiful and meaningful. Perhaps the most striking of these images is found in 1 Corinthians 10:4. There, he reveals that the rock from which the Israelites drank followed them, and the rock was Christ—not the rock was like Christ, but that the rock was Christ.

If this was true for the Israelites, rebellious and accursed, how much more is it true for us! The Scriptures compare Christians to the Israelites. We

too spend all of our days wandering in a desolate wilderness.

There are no hotels in the wilderness. Just as the Israelites did not encounter a Holiday Inn Express that served them a tasty complimentary breakfast, we cannot expect to find one either. However, Christ did provide them with water, and we can expect the same. We are in the wilderness, yes, but He will always provide us with what we need.

Problems arose for the Israelites when they paid more attention to the wilderness than to the water, and they will arise for us when we make the same mistake. Admittedly, the wilderness is pretty awful, both for us and for them. To this day, the Sinai Peninsula is uninhabited. Nobody goes there to sunbathe and relax in the 120-degree heat! As the hymn says, this world is a wilderness of woe. Awful things can happen even to faithful Christians, as I can testify.


Nonetheless, we must not spend our days wallowing in the awful. We must resolutely seek Christ through the awful, and He is always there. Indeed, He is never so present as when the wilderness is most hostile. A spring in Middle Tennessee is still lovely; a spring

in a rocky wasteland is incomparably wonderful.

I have found this to be true in my own life. These days, I don't spend much time praying for my life or my health. Instead, when I pray for myself, I am almost entirely concerned with the life of the spirit. I want to spend the rest of my days loving, serving, and encouraging others. I know that I could never accomplish this without the help of my Lord. I would be crushed by the despair of my situation instead.

However, He has helped me powerfully. During my recent clinic visit, my goal was to make everyone I encountered, even the ones who shocked me and poked me with needles, feel valuable and loved. By the grace of God, I succeeded.

At the end of my visit, the neurologist told me, "I love your spirit!" I don't think he knew how truly he spoke. His compliment does not speak well of me. It speaks well of Christ who strengthens me.

So too for all of us in our own personal wildernesses. The desert is miserable. Many of us have decades more in which we must endure it. However, the living water that springs up from our Lord is all we need to sustain us. 

## *Remember in Prayer*

**Mike B** still has tests and procedures to undergo; but with proper care, and, what is more, with prayer, he can continue here for a long time—for which we all thank God! So...

Please continue to pray for **Alice and Stanley's** grandson **Andrew; Betty; Carolyn; Dot; John, Sylvia, and Paige Pollard; Joyce; Mike, Deborah, and Serenity; Pam and Julie**—and the brethren in **Hawaii and California.** 