

**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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*"...But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called 'Today,' so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.."*

—Hebrews 3:13

**Servants during December:**

**Songleader:** Stanley (5), Larry (12), David (19), Peter (26)

**Reading:** Larry

**Announcements:** Stanley

**Table:** David, Marty, Mike B, Mike M

**Wednesday Lesson:** Kris (1), Larry (8), Stanley (15), Kris (22), Larry (29)

**Area Meetings:** Gooch Lane, singing, 1/28 7pm

**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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## I Have No Excuse.

*By Gene Taylor*

I knew it was happening. I felt bad about it. I was gaining weight. I had lost some 55 pounds a little over a year and a half ago and now I had put back on about 20 of it. Others were noticing too. Some, being kind, didn't say anything. Others gently asked things like "Are you putting on just a little weight?" No one seemed to want to come out and say what needed to be said, "You should stop overeating, change your diet and habits and lose the pounds you have gained back. It's not good for you to be heavy." Many reasons could be given for my weight problem but my brother probably stated it best when he said, "I like to eat." I do too. But I know I should not eat as much as I do and I also know the things I like the best are not good for me. I didn't just need to change my habits temporarily. I needed to make a permanent change. Yet, I resisted such a change. Rather, I sought to

excuse the fact that the weight was coming back on me. And believe me, I could find many excuses.

I would measure myself against others instead of comparing my weight to the proper medical standard. "I'm a little overweight, but I'm sure not as heavy as him." It seems we can always find someone who is worse off than us.

I would minimize the problem. "It's not so bad. Yes, my clothes are a little tighter but you can expect that as you grow older. Everybody puts on a little weight as they age."

I was sincerely adhering to a false standard. I thought the scales in my bathroom were properly calibrated to give an accurate weight. I was wrong. They were weighing seven pounds light.

Food gives me a lot of pleasure. Anything that tastes that good can't be too bad.

In reality, I just lacked the will power to change.

But I did change. And, along with my wife's help, I have lost most of the pounds I had regained. It hasn't been easy, but it has been worth all the sacrifices I made.

You might, at this point, be wondering why I am sharing all of this. Believe me, it's not because I'm on some kind of ego trip. Rather, there is meaning to all that I have said so far when you apply the same attitudes and reasoning toward sin.

Many people deal with sin the same way I dealt with getting fat.

They dismiss it by measuring themselves against others. They will say things like, "I'm really not all that bad. I'm a much better person than he is and he claims to be religious." The apostle Paul said that this was not a good practice. "For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise," 2 Cor. 10:12.

They minimize sin. They think that it is not as bad as it really is. That is part of the deceitful nature of sin, Heb 3:13. Judas did not think that sin was as bad as it was. In the end, he took his own life because he was not able to deal with the sin he had committed.

They, with sincerity of heart, adhere to false standards. They measure their righteousness by the standards and creeds of men. They

may be honestly mistaken but they are still mistaken. It is not enough to have a zeal for righteousness. You must submit to the true righteousness of the Lord.

There is some pleasure to be derived from sin, Heb 11:24, but it is short-lived and in the end you must pay for it. The joy derived from being and doing right is everlasting. It is far better to set your mind on things that are above, Col 3:1-4, and change your thinking to enjoy good things, not to enjoy sin.

Many lack the will power to refrain from sinning. That power is available from Christ. You can do it with His help, Phil 4:13. As He drew power from the word of God when He was tempted, Mt 4:1-11, you can tap its reservoir of strength to resist temptation and overcome sin, cf 1 Cor 10:13.

Someone needs to tell those who are in sin that they need to stop sinning. They need to change their habits and desires. They need to repent. If we truly love them, we will seek to get them to do something about their sin problem.

There is no good reason for me to be fat. There is no good reason for you to be in sin. If sin is a problem to you, don't try to rationalize it, minimize it or explain it away. Rather, confess it, then repent of it and seek God's forgiveness. Your spiritual health will improve dramatically. 

# Unjust Criticism

By Robert Hines

Abraham Lincoln said, "If I were to read, much less answer all the attacks made on me, this shop might as well be closed for any other business. I do the very best I know how, the very best I can, and I mean to keep doing so until the end. If the end brings me out all right, what is said against me won't amount to anything. If the end brings me out wrong, then angels swearing I was right would make no difference."

Others have suffered unjust criticism. Hannah moved her lips as she was praying silently and the watching priest accused her of drunkenness, 1 Sam 1:14. Ahab said Elijah was a troubler of Israel, 1 Kings 18:17. Jesus was said of his enemies to have no regard for real religion or for the king, Jn 19:7,12.

There are so many Bible

characters that experienced unjust criticism. Have you? And what should you do when you've explained, yet the criticisms continue? Some of it may be vengeful "cheap shots" to keep you stirred up. What should you do?

"Honest Abe" may well be reminding us of the Bible answer—just keep going. There's too much good to do to look back. It may be like Nehemiah told his enemies seeking compromise. He knew it was a trick and said, "I am doing a great work and cannot come down," Neh 6:3.

Frankly, there are some things we are just going to have to let the Lord sort out at the end, and He'll do it right—don't worry. Our business is to get on and keep on with life, doing the best we can. 

## Remember in Prayer

**Cindy's husband, Dwight**, has both good and bad days, and is still undergoing tests for pain; **Pam and Buddy** are still experiencing health struggles, as are **Betty and Robert**. **Cindy V** is going to have carpal

tunnel surgery Wednesday; and **Faye** is recovering from outpatient surgery on her hand. Please continue to remember **Madelene Britnell, Carolyn Dennis, and Tim** and **Dot Hice, and Joyce Smith**. 