

**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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“...the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen,”

—1 John 4:20

**Servants during July:**

**Songleader:** Stanley (6), Larry (13), Dwight (20), Stanley (27)

**Reading:** Mike

**Announcements:** Stanley

**Table:** Larry, Marty, Mike

**Wednesday Lesson:** Kris (2), Stanley (9) Kris (16), Larry (23), Stanley (30) ...Larry and Kris swapped 6/25 and 7/2

**Lawn Mowing (week starting):** Kris (6), Marty (13), Stanley (20), Larry (27)

**Area Meetings:**

**Pleasant Valley (Athens),** 7/6-10, Bill Hall;

**Truth Lectures,** 7/14-17, Various speakers

**Hays Mill church of Christ**

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Elkmont, AL 35620

# The Bible . Examiner

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

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## Brotherly Love— the Real Test

*By Bill Hall*

What kind of people were the Christians of the first century? Were they “super-Christians,” totally dedicated, so devoted to the Lord that they would put twentieth century Christians to shame? We tend to think so. And if we look only at the Christians of Jerusalem before the church was scattered, our conclusions will be well founded. But by the time Paul wrote the letter to the Philippians, the churches of his day were much like those of our day. His description of those with whom he was associated is given in this verse: “For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s,” Phil 2:21.

There were notable exceptions, however, among Paul’s associates, men and women whose devotion to the Lord and love for their brethren serve as wonderful examples. Paul himself was one: “Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy

and rejoice with you all,” Phil 2:17. Timothy was another: “For I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state,” Phil 2:20. Epaphroditus was yet another: “Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me,” Phil 2:30. Not regarding his life! There is the real test of brotherly love. This is the love manifested by Paul, Timothy, and Epaphroditus. These did not regard their own lives when their brothers and sisters were in need. The love which they manifested is the love required of all: “Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren,” 1 Jn 3:16.

The phrase, “Love... seeketh not her own,” 1 Cor 13:4,5, suddenly takes on new meaning. Love does not just send a card to the sick, or prepare a dish

for the bereaved. Love does not just do repair work for a widow, or carry a fruit basket to the aged. These are all good works and are manifestations of love. We do not mean to minimize the value of such works. But real love, if the occasion arises, goes beyond such acts of service. Real love does not seek to preserve even her own life. Real love willingly lays down her life for the brethren. Love gives more than material things; love gives herself.

Few Christians of the first century had that kind of love. And when we observe the selfishness, the petty jealousy, the greed, the desire for pre-eminence, the gossip, the backbiting, feuding, and quarreling that are characteristic of brethren of our day, we are sure that few have that kind of love today. Aquila and Priscilla once "laid down their necks" for Paul, Rom 16:3,4. Let the reader make a list of the Christians of his acquaintance for whom he would lay down his neck! It is easy to think that we would die for the

Lord if our faith were so tested, but "he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen," 1 Jn 4:20?

Doctrinal error that threatens the salvation of God's people must be fought. Sin must be corrected. But we have little doubt that many of the problems that trouble the church today result from our being like the "all" who "seek their own" rather than like those who "regard not their lives" for the sake of brethren.

How is this love developed? The same chapter of Philippians provides the answer: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus," Phil 2:5. Here is the great goal of Christians—becoming "conformed to the image of His Son." When we reach that goal, we will have found maturity in all aspects of Christianity, and we will have learned to love others as God would have us to love, even to willingness to die for them. 

# Christians with No Denominational Ties

*By Bill Hall*

God places great emphasis on names. He changed Abram's name to Abraham, Gen 17:5, Sarai's name to Sarah, Gen 17:15, and Jacob's name to Israel, Gen 32:38. He gave to John and Jesus their names before they were born, Luke 1:13,31. He has given to His people of this age the name "Christian,"

Acts 11:26; 1 Peter 4:16. He has given no sectarian or denominational names, but rather condemns them, 1 Cor 1:10-13. The great need of our day is for men and women to forsake their denominational ties, be nothing but Christians, and call themselves

"Christians," with no other religious names.

It is of interest to note that leaders in the prominent denominations, including some of their founders, recognized and preached this truth. N. B. Hardeman, (Tabernacle Sermons, Vol IV, pp216, 217), gives quotes from Charles Spurgeon, Martin Luther, and John Wesley in which they plead for unity.

Charles Spurgeon, a prominent Baptist preacher, is quoted as saying: "I look forward, with pleasure, to the day when there will not be a Baptist living. I hope they will soon be gone. I hope the Baptist name will soon perish; but let Christ's name endure forever," (Spurgeon's Memorial Library, Vol I, p168).

The quote from Martin Luther: "I pray you to leave my name alone, and call not yourselves Lutherans, but Christians. Who is Luther? My doctrine is not mine. I have not been crucified for anyone. The Apostle Paul would not let any call themselves after Paul, nor of Peter, but of Christ. How then, does it befit me, a miserable bag of dust and ashes, to give my name to the children of God? Cease, my dear friends, to cling to these party names and distinctions: away with them all; and let us call

ourselves only Christians after Him from whom our doctrine comes," (Stork, The Life of Luther, p289).

Brother Hardeman's quote from John Wesley, founder of the Methodist church: "Would to God that all party names and unscriptural phrases and forms which have divided the Christian world were forgot; that we might all agree to sit down together as humble, loving disciples at the feet of a common Master, to hear His words, to imbibe His spirit, and to transcribe His life into ours."

We cannot help but wonder what changes would have taken place in religious history had the followers of these men heeded their pleas. The pleas, however, went unheeded.

Denominationalism with its religious division exists and will continue to exist until our Lord comes to "root it up," Mt 15:13. But meanwhile, no one has to be a part of the denominational system; no one should be a part of it. Today, one can be just a Christian—as was Paul, or Peter, or James, or John with membership in nothing but a local church made up of other Christians. Faithful churches of Christ, with no denominational affiliations, meet throughout the world. 

## *Remember in Prayer*

Please continue to pray for **Barbara; Betty; Carolyn; Deborah and Serenity; Hazel; Kathy M; Pam B, Julie, Kaylee and Violet; Mark Horton; Pam McNatt; and John, Sylvia, and Paige Pollard.** Thank you for your prayers for **Joshua and Kayla V,** also. We thank God

that, as I understand it, Larry and Shane's newborn granddaughter, **Callie,** appears to be doing much better! Please pray for those affected by flooding and other recent disasters; and for those in authority making decisions on our behalf. 