

**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:**

Kris Vilander, (256) 472-1065

**E-mail:** kris@haysmillchurchofchrist.org

**Website:** www.haysmillchurchofchrist.org

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.”

—2 Timothy 4:3,4

**Servants during November:**

**Songleader:** Stanley (11/30),  
 Larry (12/7), Dwight (14), Larry  
 (21), Dwight (28)

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

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

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

**Wednesday Lesson:** Larry (11/26) , Stanley  
 (12/3), Kris (10), Larry (17) , Stanley (24),  
 Kris (31)

**Hays Mill church of Christ**

21705 Hays Mill Road

Elkmont, AL 35620

# The Bible . Examiner

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

Volume 8

November 30, 2025

Number 23

## My Sermons: Then and Now

*By Mark White*

I took a trip down memory lane recently by looking at sermon outlines and manuscripts I developed over 35 years ago. No, I didn't throw them away but kept them—because they were too hard to produce in the first place! I was amazed when I looked carefully at them. In some ways, I feel sorry for the brethren who patiently listened to them. I hope what I said was better than what was on paper. Maybe, just maybe, this shows I have grown some as a preacher. Perhaps I have learned a thing or two along the way which has made a better preacher of me than when I first began. I still preach the same truths I did back then, but maybe a little better.

The old sermons I reviewed did reveal something rather startling, however. I noticed that the sermons I preached more than thirty-five years ago for those who were outside of

Christ must now be preached just as fervently to members of the church. Let me give you some examples.

Sermons once preached on unity based on the Scriptures were once aimed at sectarians but must now be directed to brethren who are not sure such unity can be obtained. Some leading voices among brethren now advocate fellowship with denominations. Some are calling for reestablishment of fellowship with brethren who compromised truth. The cry is for us to compromise some valid Bible principles, to achieve such unity. We must remind ourselves that we are not separated from erring brethren or denominations just because we want to be apart. We are separated because someone left the faith, Jude 3.

Sermons formerly preached on morality to folks in the world are desperately needed by many in the

church now. Time was when divorce was uncommon among us, but not today. Modesty was upheld as a virtue for Christians, but many members now decry any attempt to teach about it. "Social" drinking was once unheard of among us, or at least denounced in our teaching, but is now encouraged and practiced by some preachers and elders. It looks like it is past time to dust off some old sermons and preach them to a "church" audience! There are immoralities now named among the saints which should not be, Eph 5:3.

There was a time when my sermons on the purpose of baptism were directed primarily to denominational people who were caught up in a "faith-only" salvation. But now, some churches of Christ have preachers who say that baptism is optional. Or they say that a person being immersed doesn't necessarily have to know why they are being baptized. This being the case, it looks like we need some more substantive sermons on baptism in most congregations.

Years ago, my sermons on the work of the church and the work of the individual Christian were devoted primarily to helping brethren avoid the pitfalls which institutionalism created for us. Now, it appears that "we" need such teaching again for ourselves. Read the church bulletins and listen to the announcements at services in many churches. Social affairs, secular endeavors, educational options and political issues are frequently featured. Do we not know nowadays the difference between what belongs to the home and what belongs to the church, 1 Cor 11:22?

Those old sermons have been re-worked, expanded, revised and preached repeatedly through the years. It doesn't appear that I can throw them away just yet. They are still just as needed as ever. My task is to work hard at "clothing old truths in new robes."

May God help me be true to Him and His Word. May the audience be filled with those who want truth! 

There is a grand procession welcoming Him to town and, here, He is in the temple talking to the crowds about the good news of the kingdom. The day previous He had driven out those who were making merchandise of the occasion and Matthew tells us that He was healing the lame and blind, Mt 20:14. There is a real sense of anticipation and excitement conveyed in the text, and that attention given to Jesus catches the attention of the establishment. Thus, the chief priests, scribes, and elders demand that the Lord offer His credentials. "By what authority are you doing these things? Who gave you this authority?" While they already had the answer (in the miracles and teaching of Jesus) and would show their unwillingness to deal honestly with that authority, their questions are good questions. They are very good questions.

**Where is the authority behind my service?** I have been recently reminded of how quickly people can become defensive when their religious practices/preferences are questioned. Suggest that some particular teaching has been dismissed or twisted and prepare yourself for the dismay and accusations which follow. People

quickly march out the "your interpretation" charge and take offense that anyone might suggest that they offer biblical authority for their activities. In such instances, it is not uncommon to hear such justifications as "the Bible doesn't say it's wrong or that I can't do it". The issue with such reasoning is that it does not provide authority for my actions - there is no clear approval from God, but merely the absence of disapproval. Silence, if it authorizes anything, authorizes everything. In truth, silence authorizes nothing. As those who claim to be followers of Jesus, it is our obligation to offer clear teaching for what we do and don't do. The opponents of Jesus may have been dishonest with the truth, but they asked the right questions. And they are questions which are desperately needed in our day.

The only way that I can know I am pleasing God is if I can show from the scriptures His will and my compliance. Period. Otherwise, discipleship is not really discipleship by proper definition, but rather a self-centered and subjective substitute.

**Can I supply biblical authority for the things I do and believe?** 

# Where is My Authority?

*By Russ Bowman*

"Now it happened on one of those days, as He taught the people in the temple and preached the gospel, that the chief priests and the scribes, together with the elders, confronted Him and spoke to Him, saying, 'Tell us, by what authority are You doing these things? Or who is he who gave You this authority,'" Luke 20:1,2?

**Can I supply biblical authority for the things I do and believe?** It is obvious in the gospel narratives that opposition to Jesus grew in proportion to His popularity among the multitudes. The Lord is now in Jerusalem and will be crucified this very week. But early in the week, the throngs of people present for the Passover are fascinated by Jesus.

## *Remember in Prayer*

**Alice** still suffers from vertigo. **Shirley's** foot feels is no longer swollen, but continues to heal. **Shane** has been dealing with a sinus infection. **Faye** has something settling in her chest, and may need a 2<sup>nd</sup> round of antibiotics.

Please also continue to pray for **Carolyn; Cindy; Deborah and Serenity; Hazel; John, Sylvia, and Paige Pollard; Joshua and Kayla V; Pam B, Kaylee, Julie and Violet; and Pam McNatt.** 