

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 2nd Sunday evening
 Study Wednesday 7:00 PM

Preacher / bulletin editor:

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“Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment,”

—John 7:24

**Servants during January:**

Songleader: Dwight (4), Stanley (11), Larry (18), Dwight (25)

Reading: Mike

Announcements: Stanley

Table: Larry, Marty, Mike

Wednesday Lesson: Larry (7), Stanley (14), Kris (21), Larry (28)

Area Meetings:

Eastside, 2/15-17, Scott Smelser;

Oakland, 2/21-25, Stephen Rouse;

Pepper Road, 2/21-25, Jesse Flowers

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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GOD'S END OF THE STICK

By Robert F. Turner

Recently a lady asked what she should tell a friend who had proposed the old “died-on-way-to-baptistry” question. I answered, “Don’t tell her the subject is lost.” She looked a bit surprised, but I was not finished. “And don’t tell her the subject is saved.” Now she was even more puzzled so I added, “We have no right to whittle on God’s end of the stick!”

Truth is, God promised remission of sins at the point of genuine submission to Christ in baptism, Mk 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Rom 6:4ff. We have no part in setting up the rules, nor in making final judgments. That is God’s end of the stick. All we can do is teach what God’s word says; and trust the Holy Spirit, through that instrument, to generate in the hearer an obedient faith. It is rank presumption to suppose man can make exceptions, or do a better job of

judging than can God. We are completely “out of our league” in such matters.

If we say the subject is lost we often play into the hands of a prejudiced querist who wanted such a reply as justification for rejecting “those Campbellites who play God.” If we say the subject is saved the same prejudiced person may think this is justification for “faith only” or the like. Far better we take the discussion back into the scriptures, and make it clear that this is all we, or anyone, can know about God’s business.

Exactly the same attitude must be taken toward questions about sinning, and dying before one can recognize, repent, and ask forgiveness for sins. Our end of the stick calls for a present active walking in the light, involving a present active confessing of our sins, 1 Jn 1:7-9. The grammatical

construction, as well as the general context, point to a habitual course of conduct; as in 1 Jn 3:5-9. Contingent upon this, God promises the blood of Christ “cleanseth (present active) us from all sin.” This is what **God’s** word says, and I teach it. But God must judge the validity of one’s baptism, and **God** must judge the validity of one’s life. I must not try to whittle on His end of the stick. It seems significant that in the very middle of these inspired statements John says, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”

There are times when, on the basis of “fruits,” we must judge one’s baptism and life—to determine those with whom we can have the kind of fellowship inherent in congregational

activities, Acts 19:1-5; 1 Cor. 5:1ff. There is no way, nor reason, to avoid such judgments. But there is every reason to strive for righteous judgments, Jn 7:24; and, to realize **our** judgments are not infallible. We may reject one whom God receives, or receive one whom God rejects. Final and irrevocable judgment is God’s end of the stick, and we must not try to whittle on that end. Remembering this should keep us humble while rendering such judgments as are necessary.

There is nothing more foolish than for brethren to try to shape God’s end of the stick—unless it is for brethren to make a “brotherhood issue” over the shape we should give it. Little children, grow up!!

—via *Plain Talk*, v18n3, May 1981 

God-Consciousness

By Bill Hall

A truly godly man is one who lives with a constant realization of God’s divine presence. He is God-conscious. When he awakes in the morning, there is God. As he dresses for work, there is God. As he goes in to breakfast with his family, as he drives to work, as he works through the day, as he drives home, as he spends the evening hours, as he lies down on his bed at the close of the day, there is God.

Enoch was a man who was God-conscious, for he “walked with God,” Gen 5:24. He enjoyed constant companionship with God. Wherever Enoch went, God went with him, and Enoch was always aware that He was there. He could not flee from God’s presence, Psa 159:7, nor did he seek to do so. He was a godly man.

How fortunate is that man who has developed within himself this God-consciousness. It is easy for him to pray, for God is to him a close, ever

near, companion whose “ears are open to [his] prayers,” 1 Pet 5:12. His talking with God is as natural as his talking with any companion.

He does not fear, for he just places his hand in God’s in his times of trouble. “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear...” Psa 46:1-2. Even when walking “through the valley of the shadow of death,” he can “fear no evil,” for God is with him.

The power of temptation is greatly reduced, for he never forgets that “all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account,” Heb 4:15. His desire to please his ever-present God is greater than the power of temptation.

He is thankful, recognizing God, with whom he walks, to be the source of “every good gift and every perfect gift,” Jas 1:17.

He loves God. He talks to God. He walks with God. He is always conscious of God’s presence. He is never without God. Yet, this relationship never degenerates into a “buddy-buddy” relationship, for he

reverences God; he recognizes His awesomeness; he gratefully acknowledges his own personal unworthiness of such a relationship with Almighty God.

This is the very essence of godliness. Someone years ago, observing the similarity between “godliness” and “God-like-ness,” assumed that the two words meant the same. That false assumption was passed to others, and has now gained a strong foothold in the thinking of a great number of people. W.E. Vine says that godliness “denotes that piety which, characterized by a Godward attitude, does that which is well-pleasing to Him.” A godly person, then, is one who has a Godward attitude, and whose constant consciousness of God leads him to be obedient to Him.

While visiting in a hospital, recently, we observed this sign, “Have you said *Thank you, God* today?” A godly person probably would have done so. Have **you** said, “thank you, God” today?

—via *Two Men*, p67,68 

Remember in Prayer

Please pray for **Kris’ sister Sandra**, and continue to pray for **Betty; Carolyn; Deborah** and **Serenity; Hazel; John, Sylvia**, and **Paige Pollard; Joshua** and **Kayla V; Pam B, Kaylee, Julie** and **Violet**; and **Pam McNatt**.

Pray also for our president and his advisors, and for brethren in foreign nations—perhaps especially Israel, Iran, and other middle-east nations. 