

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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“...God demonstrates
 His own love toward
 us, in that while we
 were yet sinners,
 Christ died
 for us,”

—Romans 5:8

**Servants during March/April:**

Songleader: Dwight (29), Stanley
 (4/5), Larry (12), Dwight (19),
 Stanley (26)

Reading: Stanley; Mike (Apr)

Announcements: Larry; Stanley (Apr)

Table: Stanley, Marty, Larry; Larry,
 Mike, Marty (Apr)

Wednesday Lesson: Larry (4/1), Stanley
 (8), Kris (15), Larry (22), Stanley (29)

Lawn Mowing (week starting): Stanley
 (3/29), Larry (4/5), Marty (12), Kris
 (19), Stanley (26)

Area Meetings:

Ardmore, 29-4/1, Lowell Sallee;
Market Street, 4/12-15, Leon Mauldin;
Jordan Park, 4/19-22, Joe Greer

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

March 29, 2026

Number 37

A Living, Transforming Hope

By Paul Earnhart

It is reported that several years ago researchers did a study to determine the effect hope has on those undergoing hardship. Two sets of laboratory rats were placed in separate tubs of water from which they could not escape unaided. The researchers left one set in the water and found that within an hour the exhausted rats all drowned.

The other rats were periodically lifted out of the water and then returned. These animals swam for over 24 hours. Why? Not because they were given rest, but because they had hope! They had come to believe that if they held out just a little longer, someone would reach down and rescue them. Without defending what seems to have been a rather cruel experiment, we simply observe that if this is the effect of hope on unthinking rodents, what must its power be in the lives of human beings?

There is nothing so critical to the success of gospel teaching as that it gives genuine hope to sincere hearers.


Any supposed teaching of Christ which drives honest searching hearts to despair is a subversion of God’s gracious purpose. “In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us,” Heb 6:17,18.

We do not speak here of the proud, the insincere, the worldly hearers. The gospel is designed to cause them to stumble in their lusts. But genuine and humble souls should be made to rejoice at the implications of the story of the cross. However much tempered with sobriety, the response of such people to the preaching of Jesus should always, at last, be joy.

This is not to deny that the gospel begins with a profoundly painful indictment of sin, but it is easy to say that such should not be the final impact of the message. If the preaching of

Christ begins by driving us to our knees in repentance, it must end by lifting us to our feet in confident faith and hope. Paul says that we are saved “in hope,” Rom 8:24, and truer words were never spoken. It is the confidence we feel in God’s gracious promises and the assurance He gives us of our power to obtain them by faith that keeps us going and growing, serving God through good times and bad.

And there is every reason that

those who have trusted in Christ should have a bright and confident hope. The most wonderful thing has already happened. God, in the cross, has demonstrated His love for us so powerfully that we can never again have cause to doubt the depth of His commitment, Rom 5:8; 8:31. As Paul wonderingly asks, if that is what God is willing to do for His enemies, what would He be willing to do for His friends, Rom 5:10,11? It is beyond imagining! 

How Faith Behaves

By Dee Bowman

Faith is the foundation on which the Christian system rests. Without faith, there is no Christianity, no Jesus Christ, no salvation for man. “Without faith it is impossible to please him, for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him,” Heb 11:6. It’s a passage with which nearly every Christian is familiar and to which every Christian subscribes. Faith is necessary, we all know that.

But the passage doesn’t stop at that point: it doesn’t quit when it says, “without faith it is impossible to please him.” Nor does it stop when it says, “for he that cometh to God must believe that he is.” It goes on to say, “and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” Now, that part gets left out most of the time. And yet, it’s just as much a part of the verse as is the first part.

What that says is that belief, by itself, is not sufficient. There’s just more to faith than mental assent. There must be some

action to demonstrate that faith, some activity that supports the contention that God is and that He rewards the faithful. Faith must behave itself.

Well, how does faith behave?

First, it behaves obediently. True faith does not question God. It does, without question, what God says to do. And it does not do what He prohibits. True faith has such abiding confidence in Who and What God is that there is never any question about what He requires. For instance, if He says we should be baptized for the remission of sins, Acts 2:38, there is no hesitation about that: we just say, “here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized,” Acts 8:36. If He says, “forsaking not the assembling of yourselves together,” Heb 10:25, we don’t hesitate about that or ask why, we just assemble with the saints. When He says that the “disciples came together on the first day of the week to break bread,” Acts 20:7, the true believer doesn’t question why that is required, he just


comes together with the saints every first day of the week to observe the Lord’s supper. Real faith obeys.

Secondly, faith behaves consistently. That is, it doesn’t vacillate; it stays steady all the time. There is no such thing as a part-time faith, one you put on and take off when it’s convenient. You either have faith full-time or you don’t. And to just say you have it is not tantamount to having it, either. Faith is not something that you put on and put off, it’s something you embrace for the duration. “He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven and tossed,” we are told, Jas 1:6. Faith is firm. Faith is fixed. Faith is secure. Faith is consistent, enduring, established and uncompromising. That doesn’t mean that faith is mean-spirited; but it does mean that you can’t bend it to fit the society or change it to accommodate the masses.

Faith behaves with hope. In fact, faith and hope are just about inseparable. Faith, for instance, believes all that God has said on a matter; and it puts its confidence in that so firmly that hope is the result. For instance, when the Hebrew writer gives us a characteristic definition of faith he says, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Hope, you see, rests on a man’s faith. Without faith, there isn’t any real hope. Faith firms hope; hope is supported by faith. Both the desire and expectation of heaven are the product of an abiding faith, 1 Pet 1:3. And

when there is a coupling of faith and hope, based on the assurances and promises of God, it becomes “a lively hope,” one that includes “an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away,” for those who are “kept by the power of God through faith,” 1 Peter 1:4,5. Just as surely as those verses are connected contextually, so is the faith and hope of which they so eloquently speak.

Finally, true faith is not misplaced. Faith in God is stronger than anything man can imagine. Look at the ancients described in Hebrews 11. By it “the elders obtained a good report.” Enoch’s faith pleased God and because of it, he was “translated.” Noah believed God and saved the people. Abraham went out “not knowing where he went,” but knowing that by doing so, he was pleasing God. Sarah, Moses, Joseph, Gideon, and a host of lesser lights, pleased God by their faith and all “obtained a good report by faith,” Heb 11:39. Faith caused all of them to receive the blessings of God. The fact is, faith works. And it is the same for us. Believe Him, do what He says, and be blessed. It’s as simple—and yet as difficult—as that.

What about your faith? Is it there? Is it active? Is it real or imagined faith? Only you and God know for sure. Remember, “faith without works is dead, being alone,” Jas 2:17. So, “be ye doers of the word and not hearers only,” Jas 1:23. 

Remember in Prayer

Marie’s sister, Betty Goodin King, passed away last week. **Betty’s brother in law, Steve**, is in the midst of chemo treatments; and **Stanley** has been undergoing radiation treatments for skin cancer on his face for a few weeks, now.

Dwight and **Shirley** continue to deal with infirmity from advance age. Please continue to pray for **Betty; Carolyn; Deborah** and **Serenity; Hazel; John, Sylvia**, and **Paige Pollard; Pam, Kaylee, Julie** and **Violet**. 