

**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

*“Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you,”*

—John 6:27

**Servants during September:**

**Songleader:** Larry (1), Dwight (8), Stanley (15), Larry (22), Dwight (29)

**Reading:** Stanley

**Announcements:** Larry

**Table:** Mike M, Marty, Stanley

**Wednesday Lesson:** Kris (4), Larry (11), Stanley (18), Kris (25)

**Lawn Mowing (week starting):** Kris (1), Marty (8), Stanley (15), Larry (22), Kris (29)

**Area Meetings:**

**Market St,** 8-11, Roger Hillis;  
**Quinn,** 8-11, Brad Sullivan; **East Albertville,** 15-20, Steve Klein;  
**Jordan Park,** 15-18, Jonathan Reeder; **Pepper Road,** 23,24,26,27, Bruce Reeves;  
**Singing River (Florence),** 22-27, Greg Gwin; **South Cullman,** 29-1/1, Greg Kline

**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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# For What Am I Working?

*by W. Frank Walton*

*“Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness,” Mt 6:33.*

Labor Day is a welcomed holiday to pause and rest from our labors. It is a good time to reflect on, “For what am I ultimately working?” Do I live to work? Or do I just work to live?

Jesus’ teaching implies that each day we face a choice. Will I pursue God’s agenda or my own foremost? Truly, “choices are the hinges of destiny.” God’s “kingdom” is His reign over my life. Does God control my life? His “righteousness” is following the rightness of His will, which I can only know by study of His Word, Psa 19:8.


My attitude is a result of what I choose to focus upon. What I choose to focus upon depends on what I

deem most important. What I deem most important depends on whether I’m seeking God’s or my selfish desires above all. Jesus urges us to get in touch with the part of us that will live forever: “Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you,” Jn 6:27.

The world surrounds us with a multitude of distractions, like “worries” or “the deceitfulness of riches” or “the desire for other things,” which can “choke” God’s word and work in my life, Mk 4:18,19. A bumper sticker reads, “I owe, I owe, it’s off to work I go.” Am I making a living of temporary earthly stuff or making a life for God?

To be spiritually fruitful, I must focus upon and “welcome” God’s truth into my heart as life’s greatest priority, Mk 4:20. Each day, I must decide if I will listen to God, which alone can strengthen my soul. Or, will I listen to the babble of worldly

distractions, which will only delude and destroy my spiritual life, by consuming my life with earthly labor?

Let’s remember that our greatest labor is seeking and serving God. This work of faith endures forever! 

# A Religion of Good Deeds

by Edwin Crozier

James 1:26,27 (ESV) says: “If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person’s religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.”

Though I believe James is written to Christians whether Jews or Gentiles, it certainly uses Jewish language to portray its point. Thus, as we consider “religion” from a Jewish standpoint, these verses are somewhat shocking. They are iconoclastic, breaking down the molds and mindsets that Jews would have had. The words for “religion” and “religious” do not emphasize spirituality in general but the outward forms and ceremonies of worshipping God. Thus, these two verses make a startling contrast to what the common Jew would have thought.

To a Jew, religion in the sense of ceremony and outward forms would have consisted of traveling to the temple, offering sacrifices, keeping

the Sabbath and the feasts, etc. If Christians carried that mindset into their religion, they would picture gathering for their assemblies, taking the Lord’s Supper, singing, and praying. We might picture this as what many Christians commonly call the “five acts of worship.” In fact, many Christians today seem to think that pure and undefiled religion is bound up in accomplishing these five acts properly. Imagine how shocking it was to learn pure and undefiled religion is not really about these kinds of ceremonies at all.


Pure and undefiled religion does not mean making sure to say our prayers or sing hymns. It doesn’t even mean making sure to do these things in pattern approved ways (though certainly we want to worship God the way He wants to be worshiped). Pure and undefiled religion means letting those prayers and hymns be worthwhile because they impact the rest of our lives, letting our speech be good for building up and not for tearing down, Eph 4:29. We may say the right things “in church,” but if we

don’t bridle our tongues as we talk at work or school, what good did our religion do us?

Pure and undefiled religion does not mean merely “going to church” or even going into our private prayer closets to worship and praise God. It means getting our hands dirty in service to those who are in need. James highlighted the two groups God had always used as examples of the ultimate of good deeds—orphans and widows (cf. Ex 22:22; Deut 14:29; 24:17; 26:12; Isa 1:17). We may be getting “church” exactly right, but if we aren’t helping folks in their affliction or time of distress, our religion is impure and defiled. The purpose of religion is not to stand as a measure of how well we keep a set of rules and regulations. Rather, its purpose is to change us to be more like Jesus Christ. Jesus came to serve, not be served. He served us in our affliction. If “going to church” doesn’t change how we interact with the afflicted around us, what good is it?

Pure and undefiled religion does not mean offering sacrifices to atone

for sin, but keeping oneself unspotted from the world. Pure and undefiled religion is not about moments in time where we really worship God; it is about a life of service to Him, doing His will, serving His people, and glorifying Him through our every action. It is about growing to be like him by serving those who are in need as He has done for us. It is about thinking differently, behaving differently, acting differently. Sadly, for far too many Christians, the only difference between them and the world is the fact that they go to church. If the only difference between us and someone else is where we spend our Sunday mornings, what good is it?

We need to understand, we don’t get to live how we want and then have a few ceremonies that make everything okay. Pure and undefiled religion is not getting the forms and ceremonies right, it is using those right forms and ceremonies to change who we are every day. That is what God’s religion of good deeds looks like. 

## Remember in Prayer

**Mike B** plans for open heart surgery 10/1; the surgeon is confident, but there are inherent dangers specific to Mike’s case—let’s all be earnest in prayer for him and Deborah. **Stanley** continues to do well while undergoing radiation treatments for skin cancer. **Vicky**

continues to recover from a heart episode, and her husband **Mark** is still dealing with prostate cancer.

Please continue to pray for those other brethren we know and love, including **Carolyn; Betty; Hazel; Kathy Mitchell; Joshua V;** and **the Pollard Family.** 