

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

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"Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him,"

—James 1:12, NKJV



Servants during October:

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

Reading: Stanley; Mike M

Announcements: Stanley

Table: Marty, Larry, Mike M

Wednesday Lesson: Larry (2), Stanley (9), Kris (16), Larry (23), Stanley (30)

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

Area Meetings:

Belgreen, 10/20-22, Don Miller; Hwy 157 (Cullman), 11/3-6, Lowell Sallee; Helton Drive, 11/3-7, Steve Klein

Hays Mill church of Christ

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The Bible . Examiner

"Examine everything carefully..." 1 Thessalonians 5:21 NASB

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Overcoming Habitual Sin

By Dan Gatlin

All sin condemns us before God. James wrote, "For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all. For He who said, 'DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY,' also said, 'DO NOT COMMIT MURDER.' Now if you do not commit adultery, but do commit murder, you have become a transgressor of the law," Jas 2:10,11. The Calvinist doctrine of the "continual cleansing" denies the force of this passages. Those with Calvinist leanings say that a single act of sin will not condemn us, only habitual sin will. But James points out that we will stand before God as either guilty of sin, or pronounced righteous by the mercy of God. This principle is recognized by every court system on earth. If one is found guilty of stealing, he will not successfully argue for his freedom because he has never committed arson, murder, or assault. The criminal stands before the court as innocent or guilty. We will stand before God as having all our sins forgiven or as "a transgressor of the law." There is no middle ground. A single act of unforgiven sin brings condemnation.

Sin is usually connected with some type of pleasure, Tit 3:3; Heb 11:25; if such were not the case there would be no basis for temptation. Satan uses our weaknesses to entice us to sin, "But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust," Jas 1:14. The word translated "enticed" is delezao, which means "to lure by a bait" (Gk 1185, Vine). The first time we succumb to temptation the easier it is to give in thereafter. Before we know it, sin becomes habitual. Jesus recognized this when He said, "Jesus answered them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin,'" Jn 8:34. The verb "commits" is present, active, which describes one who continues in sin. Being a slave of sin does not mean that it is impossible to break away (Col 3:5-7), but the task is much more difficult. There are things we can do to overcome habitual sin.

Repent and pray for forgiveness. This is what Peter told Simon to do (Acts 8:22), and it is essential whether we've committed a single act of sin or are involved in habitual sin. Every time a

Christian does this in sincerity of heart his sins are forgiven.

The word "repent" is often misunderstood. Strong defines it this way: "to think differently or afterwards, i.e. reconsider (morally, feel compunction)," (metanoeo, Gk 3340). Strictly speaking, repentance is a change of mind. There are other things that accompany repentance. Godly sorrow is not repentance, but precedes it: "For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death," 2 Cor 7:10. Many feel "the sorrow of the world." They are sorry for the consequences of their sin, but not for the offense that they have caused God or others. Their repentance is not valid because it is not accompanied by godly sorrow. Repentance is also not reformation of life. Changing the way we live is necessary after we repent (Mt 3:8; Acts 26:20), but a changed life alone does not indicate repentance. If one converts to Mormonism, he may change from a life of immorality to one that is morally upright. Yet, he would still stand opposed to God. God does not accept partial repentance. To repent is to make our thinking come in line with God's in all things.

Peter also told Simon to "pray the Lord that, if possible, the intention of your heart may be forgiven you," Acts 8:22. While God knows what we need before we ask (Mt 6:8), He still wants us to communicate that need to Him. And the greatest need man has is forgiveness.

Confess your sins. The New Testament speaks of two areas where confession is essential. First, we must confess our faith in Jesus, Rom 10:9,10; Acts 8:37. This is something Christians should do throughout our walk on this earth.

Second, we are to confess our sins. In the case of public sin, public confession is necessary: "Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much," Jas 5:16. The word confess (exomologeoo, Gk 1843) means "of a public acknowledgment or confession of sins," (Vine). Too often, men who commit public sins want their repentance and confession to be private. And too many brethren are willing to assume that repentance has taken place when there may be little outward evidence of such. The problem with these views is that they ignore the command for public confession.

But the Scriptures also teach us that we are to confess our sins to God. John wrote, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," 1 Jn 1:9. Here the word confess (homologeoo, Gk 3670) means, "to confess by way of admitting oneself guilty of what one is accused of, the result of inward conviction," (Vine). To acknowledge our sins to God is to recognize our reliance upon His grace and mercy and acts as a reminder that God does not overlook sin, Hab 1:13; Acts 17:30.

Study what the Bible says about the things that tempt you. "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness," 2 Tim 3:16. The reason two-thirds of the Bible is corrective is that God knows that man gives in to temptation easily. If we choose not to study we are rejecting God's correction.

We are far less likely to sin if we have a clear understanding of the Bibles teaching concerning those things that tempt us. Strength to overcome


temptation comes from God's word: "How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers! But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, Which yields its fruit in its season And its leaf does not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers," Psa 1:1-3. Those tempted by alcohol should have a clear understanding of passages like Prov 20:1; 23:29-35; 1 Cor 6:9-11; Eph 5:18-20, etc. Those addicted to sexual immorality need to see the physical, spiritual, and emotional damage that they do to themselves and others by studying Prov 5:3-14; 7:1-27; 1 Cor 6:15-20, etc. Remind yourself often, 2 Pet. 1:12-15.

Avoid tempting situations. Jesus clearly taught, "And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil," Mt 6:13. Notice that He did not say, "and do not lead us into sin," but "into temptation." Sin is less likely to occur where there is no temptation. James describes the connection between temptation and sin: "But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death," Jas 1:14,15. Satan (the tempter, 1 Thess 3:5) entices us through our weaknesses, but he has no power over us beyond what we allow him, Jn 13:2, 27;

Acts 5:3.

One of our greatest temptations is to flirt with temptation. We know that we must avoid sin, yet we are drawn by its pleasures. Jesus warned against allowing our minds to dwell on sin, Mt 5:21-48. And James tells us that doing so makes us double-minded: "Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you," Jas 4:7-10.

Turn to your brethren for support. "No man is an island," according to the old saying. And it's true! We often need encouragement to remain faithful: "Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called 'Today,' so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin," Heb 3:12,13. Those that are mature in the faith have the responsibility of helping and encouraging those struggling with sin, Gal 6:1,2; 1 Thess 5:14.

Remember, "Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him," Jas 1:12 (NKJV). 

Remember in Prayer

Marie is dealing with chronic illness; **Mike B** is recovering from heart surgery; **Kathy Mitchell** has cataract surgery scheduled for 10/22; **Donise** has it scheduled for

11/15. **Mark Horton**, will probably begin treatment for prostate cancer in November. Pray also for **Betty; Carolyn; Hazel; Barbara; Joshua V; Faye**; and **the Pollard Family**. 