

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:

Kris Vilander, (256) 472-1065

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

"...Chasten your son
while there is hope,
and do not set your
heart on his
destruction,"

—Proverbs 19:18

**Servants during August:**

Songleader: Dwight (2), Stanley (9),
Larry (16), Dwight (23), Stanley (30)

Reading: Stanley**Announcements:** Larry**Table:**, Marty, Stanley, Larry

Wednesday Lesson: Larry (5), Stanley
(12), Kris (19), Larry (26)

Area Meetings:

Piney Grove, 2-5, David Thacker;
Gooch Lane, 9/6, Bill Hall;
Market Street, 9/13-16, Jason
Shackleford

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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Empty Pages

By Gilbert Alexander

When children are born, they are like books full of empty pages. Some have more pages than others, but we don't know how many pages each one has. What we must understand is that we as parents and their elders are helping write each page in each book. Each page is filled with something—things trivial and/or things of value. Somebody is going to write those pages. Especially in the early years, someone other than the child will have the predominant place of writing each page. An infant does practically nothing for himself. Someone teaches him how to eat, how to go to sleep, how to sit up, how to drink, and a little later how to talk and walk.

The pages are empty at the start. Like soft clay, children are molded, shaped, and refined in all particulars by those who care for them. Indifference to a child's needs means that little is written that will be constructive. If television is the shaper, one should not be surprised

at the very undesirable traits that are developed. Children have to learn everything except those things that nature controls, and those things must be refined and controlled. It is far easier to shape a child aright at the first, than to have to reshape to eliminate bad habits and behavior that are unacceptable. We have a very short time to do the writing over which we have control. Once that time is gone, we have little power to change the product that has been entrusted to our care and that we have shaped.

We need to be reminded of just how empty the pages are at the start. Children must learn eating habits, choices of food and drink, to sleep in their own bed, to share, to be patient, to be respectful of others, to obey, to know when and how to use the restroom, to be still and listen, to read and write, to understand danger and what is dangerous, to control desires that are a part of their nature. They must learn about God and origins of

all things, about the purpose of life, about pleasing God and revering Him, about God's punishment for the disobedient and His reward for the obedient, about duty how to work, the joy of giving and the value of service to others, the value of prayer and how to pray, how to sing wholeheartedly, the importance of punctuality, the importance of keeping one's word, the high place of honesty and the problems of lying, about proper human relationships, the value of human life, and sexual conduct and purity.

Habits are created by repeated behavior. If a thing is bad and harmful, children must learn to avoid it. Consistent unpleasant results make the action undesirable. Where we are today is the result of the writing of each page of the book of our lives, and so it will be for those whose books we are helping to write, page by page. Sobering thought, isn't it?

"Chasten your son while there is hope, and do not set your heart on his destruction," Prov 19:18.

"A child left to himself brings shame to his mother," Prov 29:15. 

How God Shapes His People

By David Diestelkamp

I once saw a man sculpting a log with an axe. It was both amazing and terrifying at the same time. He skillfully placed each powerful blow of the razor sharp axe, chopping off and leaving precisely what was needed to make the amazing sculpture he desired from a rather plain log. Now read what God said about the Old Testament nations of Ephraim and Judah when they sinned:

"...I have hewn them by the prophets, I have slain them by the words of My mouth; and your judgments are like light that goes forth. For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings," Hosea 6:5,6.

Both Old Testament and New Testament imagery uses things like axes, hammers, and swords as means for God shaping, directing, and judging His people. And when we look closer, these tools are often God's word. God said it clearly through His prophet Hosea, "I have hewn [cut, carved, shaped] them by the prophets".

Change. The axe changes the log—that's the function of the axe and the purpose of the chopping. Sometimes people are surprised, even put off when they discover that the word of God calls for repentance and change. We sometimes only want to be told we're fine, can remain the same, and are loved and accepted just the way we are. Jesus came to call

sinners to repentance and heal the spiritually sick, Lk 5:31,32. He is carving and shaping us into someone new by His word.

Removal. The axe removes from the log what the carver wills not to be in the sculpture. Hebrews 12:1 says, "...let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith..." Paul said, "...forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus," Phil 3:13,14. Things will be removed from our lives, our minds, and our actions to make us someone new.

Cut. The axe cuts the log in ways that seem harsh, violent, and (in the beginning) unproductive or even non-sensical. We don't always

immediately understand why God calls us to stop some actions and begin others. It can cause deep sorrow, 2 Cor 7:8; cause our hearts to be pierced, 2 Cor 2:37; and bring tears, Lk 22:61,62. God's discipline shapes us, but it isn't pleasant, Heb 12:11—He is carving us into someone new, and it won't always feel good at first.

New. The axe cuts aren't random, destructive, or pointless. Yes, putting the old man to death can be painful, but it is worth it because the new man, the new creation is "being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory," 2 Cor 3:18 (NIV). God is carving us "...to be conformed to the image of His Son," Rom 8:29; "...created in righteousness and holiness of the truth," Eph 4:23,24. What God is carving us to be is someone amazing and suited for heaven! 

***Remember to invite your friends to
our upcoming meeting
September 13-16 with Jonathan Carswell***

Remember in Prayer

Please continue to pray for **Carolyn; Betty; Hazel; Dwight and Shirley;** as well as **Larry's** mother, **Polly** (she is doing some better!); **Cindy's** parents (**Don** and **Jackie Churches**), and her brother **Kenny,**

who cares for them; and **John, Sylvia,** and **Paige Pollard.**

...and be sure to thank our kind and loving God for the confidence of a resurrection to eternal life when Christ returns, 2 Tim 4:8.