



The Worker

3108 Hamburg Pike, Jeffersonville, IN 47130 Ph. (812) 284-3125

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The Need for Personal Study

Why has attendance been greatly stressed among God's people in the past? We cannot ignore that the attendance changes between different Bible classes and worship services on Sundays and Wednesday evenings. Are elders and spiritual leaders just being "nit-picky," or is there a deeper issue that concerns our fellow Christians when they see our lack of participation?

We have approximately 168 hours in a week. If we attend ALL of the regular congregational worship services and studies, we have made a four hour investment in our spiritual development. That is roughly 2.4% of our weeks' time that we dedicate to God. What about Christians that are a part of congregations that only meet once or twice a week? Then that percentage theoretically will go down. If we invest nothing else into our spiritual lives, these numbers look sad compared to the amount of time we spend on entertainment and other non-spiritual things.

It seems that, even though attendance has been the measure of faithfulness in the past, congregational worship and study should be viewed as the mountain top of what we are consistently investing in our personal spiritual development. We know that faith is built upon our access to, meditation on, and devotion toward God's word (Romans 10:17). The great salvation provided through Jesus Christ should provoke us to want an intimate relationship with the Creator, desiring to seek His ways over ours. As the Psalmist said: "I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you," (Psalm 119:11, ESV).

Why is personal study so important? Faith is described in the New Testament as the starting point of spiritual development and growth (2 Peter 1:5-10). Faith is also the Christian shield that protects us against the flaming arrows of the enemy (Ephesians 6). What happens when that shield is splintered, shattered, and/or broken? It needs to be repaired. Like a plant needing maintenance and care, so our faith needs to be watered, tended, and matured. Consider these five reasons we need to develop and grow our personal study of God's word:

1. Personal study enables us to have a better understanding of spiritual things (Psalm 119:99).
2. Personal study is connected to our salvation, and the salvation of others who witness our faith (1 Timothy 4:11-16).
3. Personal study can help us better protect our minds and hearts (Philippians 4:6 -9).
4. Personal study gives us experience to better handle God's word (2 Timothy 2:15).
5. Personal study better prepares us for fighting off temptation (Matt. 4; Luke 4).

The bottom line, however, is that no one can do this for us. We are responsible for our own spiritual growth and development. Are you satisfied with your current spiritual investments? I know I am not always satisfied with mine. Let's take and make personal study personal!

"Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time... Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is," (Ephesians 5:15-17, ESV).

- Robert Guinn preaches for the Central Church of Christ in Paducah KY.

Flattery

Flattery is saying positive things about people that you do not really believe, and it is condemned in the Bible.

Flattery is a trap. Proverbs 29:5 asserts, "A man who flatters his neighbor Spreads a net for his feet."

Flattery is used to gain advantage over someone. "These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and they mouth great swelling words, flattering people to gain advantage" (Jude 1:16).

Flattery is deceptive. Paul wrote, "Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them. 18 For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple" (Romans 16:17-18).

Flattery brings ruin. "A lying tongue hates those who are crushed by it, And a flattering mouth works ruin" (Proverbs 26:28).

It is important that we are truthful in our speech toward others. But we need to be kind in speaking that truth.

Our words should be filled with grace. "Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one" (Colossians 4:6).

Our words control our destiny. "But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. 37 For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned" (Matthew 12:36-37).

Say what you mean and mean what you say but don't be mean with what you say.

- Larry Pasley serves as a minister with the Jackson Street Church of Christ in Alexandria, LA.

Leadership

Elders Hayward Blanton, Jerry Casey

Deacons Clint Smith Sr, Clint Smith Jr,
Robby Stocksdale, Joe Sweeney

Pulpit Minister Eric Welch

Associate Minister Irvin F. Williams

Panama Mission

Pablo Sanchez

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Bible Class 10:00 AM
Morning Worship 11:00 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Class 7:00 PM

We Offer Free Personal Bible Studies and Bible Correspondence Courses - Phone (812) 284-3125

Visit Our Website: www.hamburgpikecofc.org

Email: church@hamburgpikecofc.org

Sermon Titles

Sunday Morning: "Jesus vs. Muhammad"

Sunday Evening: To Be Announced

Those Privileged to Serve

AM Service

Song Leader Michael Hawkins
Opening Prayer Jerry Casey
Scripture Nathaniel Welch
Sermon Jack Honeycutt
Lord's Supper
Message Irvin Williams
Attendant Art Patrick
Attendant Ryan Irwin
Closing Prayer Clint Smith Sr

PM Service

Song Leader Clint Smith Jr
Bible Reading Ethan Welch
Selection 34
Prayer Hayward Blanton
Sermon Eric Welch
Closing Prayer Rick Martin
If you are unable to serve, please call Art Patrick 502-819-9481 or Harold Tincher 502-409-3511

AM & PM Services

Announcements Leon Stocksdale
Lord's Supper Robby Stocksdale
Offering Greg Blanton
Usher Harold Tincher
Count Offering Harold Tincher
Assist Count Marc Owens

Last Sunday

Offering \$2,462
Attendance 77

The Creepiest Clown

Eric Welch

The season of fun with fear is upon us, evidenced by the costume aisle at Walmart and by recent incidents far more sinister. Creepy clown sightings in more than two dozen states are causing people's irrational fear of clowns (clourophobia) not to seem so irrational. Children have reported clowns trying to lure them into the woods. Some incidents have become dangerous with a clown in New Jersey shot to death and a pregnant woman in the UK scared into premature labor. Law enforcement has had to step in to get a handle on this foolish youth fad.

Yet the creepiest clown ever to walk the earth (1 Peter 5:8) is a liar and a murderer (John 8:44), but most Americans like him. He doesn't appear creepy at all (2 Corinthians 11:14). The sinful pleasures of life are his balloons. They look enjoyable. They feel good, but when they pop, nothing is left but a life destroyed. Don't let his deceptive look fool you. This clown will lure you into the darkest place unimaginable.

Jesus calls this place of outer darkness hell (Matthew 8:12) and fear of this darkness is anything but irrational. "Do not fear," Jesus urges, "those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10:28). Hell is the place of God's ultimate and infinite wrath against sin, a place of absolute hopelessness. Hell is real and many will go there (Matthew 7:13-14). For that reason, Jesus teaches us to cut off anything causing you to sin and separate it from yourself now (Mark 9:43, 45, 47) or otherwise face the consequence of eternal separation from God. Hell is no joke; it is not worth holding on to sin. Jesus wants you and me to live with a view of eternity and to aim for heaven (Colossians 3:1-2).

Hell is the eternal destiny of the creepiest clown. Don't let his destiny be yours too. Resist this clown and he flee run away from YOU like the coward that he is (James 4:7).

Paul's Politics

When it came to civil government, Paul's priority was to seek the best possible environment for sharing the gospel. He refused to allow the ill-will of officials to sidetrack his desire to preach Jesus.

Paul's eyes focused on seeking the lost where ever and whenever he could. To make that easier he commanded Christians to submit to governing leaders and ordinances that did not violate their higher obligation to obey God (cf. Acts 4:19-20). They were also instructed to pay taxes (Rom. 13:6-7) and to pray for their often hostile leaders (1 Tim. 2:1-4). Then Paul encouraged them to be busy spreading the good news of Jesus with the world.

As a Roman citizen Paul was not to be bound and publicly beaten. He asserted that right in Acts 22:24-29, which he used as an opening to address a Jewish audience. But he did not always use that privilege (cf. 2 Cor. 11:24-25). He chose not to demand his rights in Philippi, perhaps because to do so would require abandoning Silas (Acts 16:22-23).

He also had the right to escape prejudices of local officials by appealing directly to Caesar's court. However, Paul did not assert that right very often. It was only when he found himself in a situation that could have easily brought his evangelistic efforts to a premature end that he asserted this privilege (Acts 25:11-12). God used this situation to fulfill His promise at Paul's conversion; "to bear My name before ... kings" (Acts 9:15).

Today we live in an untested political environment. But we are still ruled by the same goals that motivated Paul. Twenty-first century Christians must ask which political candidate and party will create a better, more tolerant atmosphere for carrying out the great commission (Matthew 28:18-20).

- David Bragg serves as minister at the Northwest Church of Christ in Greensboro, NC and is co-editor of BulletinGold.

Hamburg Pike Happenings

- The Monday Night for the Master group will meet October 24th at 6:30 pm; the meal theme is Pizza.
- A youth devotional is scheduled for Thursday October 20th at 6:30pm at the Slotman's home for a bonfire.
- Our [Fall Gospel Meeting](#) is scheduled for October 21st thru the 23rd at 7:00 pm on Friday and Saturday with regular class and worship times on Sunday. The speaker is Jack Honeycutt. The lesson titles: "The Origin and Development of Islam," "The Real Agenda," "Bible vs. Quran," "Jesus vs. Muhammad." Flyers are available in the foyer.
- The Annual Trunk or Treat is scheduled for Friday October 28th from 7:00 to 8:30 pm at the building. Please plan to participate. Each year we have been able to reach over 100 youth and their families and spread the Good News through this event. See Ashley or Stephanie with questions.
- The Ladies' Bible class will meet Saturday October 29th at 10:00 am.
- Sunday October 30th will be the next 5th Sunday special contribution and has been designated by the elders as "Orphans Sunday". The elders prayerfully challenge the congregation with the goal of doubling our regular weekly contribution.
- Attention Teens: Mark your calendars for the Evansville Youth Rally scheduled for November 18th and 19th. See Michael for details.
- If you would like to participate; a jar is on the foyer table for the collection of coins to purchase Bibles. This is part of the India mission work of Jack and Becky Honeycutt. The Bibles cost \$2.50 each and The Welch's will present the money to the Honeycutt's during the holidays.