

## SCHEDULE OF ASSEMBLIES

Sunday morning worship (Bible study).....	9:30 AM
Sunday morning worship (Preaching).....	10:30 AM
Sunday afternoon worship (Preaching).....	4:00 PM
Wednesday evening worship (Bible Study).....	7:00 PM

## NEWS AND NOTES

**SCHEDULE:** The schedule for January is posted on the bulletin board so the men can see what their responsibilities are for the month.

**SICK AND SHUT-INS:** Dottie Henderson is in the Tupelo hospital with heart problems. She will be having a surgical procedure Monday to correct her rhythm problem. Donna Criswell's aunt, Nell Barrett is not doing very well. Donna's brother has moved in with Nell, but Donna provides most of her care. Jane Edwards continues physical therapy. Brother Butz's sister has a mass in her chest that may be cancer. Remember Telford Hamm's brothers and brother-in-law. Zola Basham's sister, Mary has a brain tumor. Remember Jack Elliott's niece. Nancy Summerford's mother is in last stages of Alzheimer's. Virgie Waddle's sister-in-law, Jean Malone is in the Red Bay nursing home.

**VISITING PREACHERS:** Dan Henderson talked about the work in Malvern, AR where we help support him and then presented a lesson during the Bible study period. Then Reuben Prevost and Jonathan Henderson preached Sunday morning and evening. Wednesday evening, we heard from Ben Hall about the work in Brooklyn, New York where we help in his support. Tonight (not a visiting speaker), but we will hear Bruce Tooley. He will be preaching each 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday evening.

**OUT OF TOWN:** Marvin Butz is visiting his daughter in North Carolina and will not be back until sometime in January.

**TEACHING EFFORTS:** Our teaching bulletin, the **EASTSIDE EXAMINER**, was in the **Red Bay News** the first week in October. There are copies of the new issue on the table in the foyer for those who do not receive a paper. There is also an ad in the local paper once a month offering a free Bible correspondence course. Remember our TV/Radio program on local Cable TV channels 12 and 97 at 6:30 AM and 4:30 PM on Sunday and various times through the week as well as the audio on radio stations 1430 AM and 97.9 FM. It is also on Facebook live at various times. There are DVD copies of the TV program available. Jerry is also on the radio on 95.5 FM about 10 AM each Sunday. Please pray that these efforts will reach people interested in studying God's word.

**GOSPEL MEETINGS / SINGINGS:** Helton Drive Jan 10 - Singing Fri 7 pm. Song Leaders: Jim Deason & Todd Dennis. South Cullman With Bruce Reeves Jan 17-19; Fri 7 pm; Sat 10 & 10:45 am. Gooch Lane (between Athens & Huntsville) – Singing Jan 24 Fri 7 pm. If you know of other meetings or singings in the area, please tell the one making announcements.

## POINTS TO PONDER

- The man who sows seeds of kindness enjoys a perpetual harvest.

# THE EASTSIDE REMINDER

2Pet 1:12-15

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## OVERCOMING DIGITAL TEMPTATIONS

By Heath Rogers

Christians must remain alert while online, knowing that Satan makes great use of advancing technology to tempt, entrap, and destroy us in sin.

Satan has always tempted man to sin through three avenues: "For all that is in the world - the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life - is not of the Father but is of the world" (1John 2:16). He successfully used these three avenues as he tempted Eve in the Garden (Gen. 3:6). He tried to use these three avenues as he tempted Jesus in the wilderness (Matt. 4:1-11). We can expect Satan to use these three avenues as he tempts us today.

Satan has always been able to adapt with the times. He makes great use of technology as it advances. The internet has provided the devil with an incredible tool to use as he entices mankind to sin in the current age.

Lust of the flesh. These are natural desires, but Satan appeals to us to fulfill them in unauthorized or sinful ways. David had to walk on his rooftop to see a beautiful woman bathing (2 Sam. 11:2). Today, one can access such images (and worse) in an instant on their devices. Although specific numbers vary from year to year, statistics indicate that over 28,000 users are watching internet pornography every second.

Lust of the eyes. Covetousness is a greedy desire for more than one has. There is nothing wrong with wanting things, but covetousness will lead us to be dissatisfied and ungrateful for

God's blessing, to be envious of those who have the things we desire, and to commit sin in order to obtain them.

When tempting Jesus to sin, the devil took Him up on a high mountain and "showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time" (Luke 4:5). The internet can do the same thing today. The developers of websites and phone apps all exploit human behavioral tendencies, designing their products and sites in ways that attract and retain our gaze. Hours are spent on sites looking at things we want, while God's work goes undone.

Pride of life. The internet fuels the pride of those who glory in self-promotion. Whether it be posts placed on social media, or videos posted on YouTube, some people are obsessed with the number of views, likes, and shares they have received. Their importance is based upon their popularity online. Instead of seeking first the kingdom of God, or the benefit of their fellowman, they are seeking the highest number of hits, likes, shares, etc.

### **Overcoming Digital Temptations**

There are things a Christian can do to protect his heart, his soul, and his influence in this internet age.

Fill your heart with the word of God. "Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You" (Psa. 119:11). Memorized Scripture is a resource to use when battling temptation from any source (Matt. 4:4, 7,10), including the internet. How does your "screen time" compare to your Scripture time?

Prayer. We all need God's help in overcoming temptation. Prayer is the means by which we seek and receive this help. Jesus taught us to pray, "and do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one..." (Matt. 6:13). How many times do we ask the Father for such help and guidance in our daily lives?

Make yourself accountable. One danger of the internet is that it gives one a false sense of anonymity. Some feel they can go online, visit any site they want, and no one will know. God knows the things we see online (Heb. 4:13).

One safeguard against this danger is making yourself accountable to others (Prov. 27:17). We will be more careful of the websites we visit if we know we will be asked about where we have been online. Give a faithful friend your permission to ask you about where you have been online – and commit yourself to giving an honest answer. Don't delete your browser history. Spend your online time in the open where others can see you.

Ask yourself, "Why am I wanting to post this?" Why are you posting a selfie or video? Is it to see how many "likes" and "shares" you can get? Why are you wanting to post a terrible review for a company or place of business? Is it so you can vent

your feelings and make yourself feel better at another's expense? It would do us all good to ask these kinds of questions before we hit "like," "share," or "send." Let's make sure we are not being like the hypocrites who did things only to be seen by men (Matt. 6:1-6, 16-18).

Learn to be content. "Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content" (Phil. 4:11). There is nothing wrong with going online to look at things, but we need to learn to be satisfied with the blessings we already possess. Perhaps if we spent more time enjoying these things, rather than wasting time online, we would be happier people.

When you go online, stay on the path. "Therefore, you shall be careful to do as the Lord your God has commanded you; you shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. You shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God has commanded you, that you may live and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which you shall possess" (Deut. 5:32-33). The internet can be a great benefit to the Christian, but there are many pitfalls and distractions found online. Many people are trying to get our attention while we are surfing the web. Advertisements "pop up," enticing us to take a look. Some links are hijacked and send one to sinful websites. Fight the temptations that "pop up," stay on the path (do what you got online to do), and then log off.

"Cut it off!" Stay off the internet altogether. "If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire" (Matt. 18:8). We know Jesus was not teaching self-mutilation, but extreme self-control. If access to a specific temptation causes us a problem, we need to act as if we have no eye to look at it, no foot to carry us to it, and no hand to grasp it. However, the admonition "cut it off" is especially applicable to the internet. We may live in the internet age, but we can survive without the internet. "If access to the internet is causing you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life without a smart phone, tablet, or laptop, rather than having such to be cast into everlasting fire."

Conclusion: Satan is the restless enemy of God's people. He is always on the prowl, looking to devour the Christian (1Pet. 5:8). We know the tactics of our enemy quite well (2Cor. 2:11). Technology will bring new and exciting advancements, but the battle against the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is still raging on. We must remain on the alert when we are online.