

I have finally given up donuts!

Well, not entirely. I still enjoy them from time to time, but now I eat two instead of half a dozen. I no longer hunt them down. I can now walk right past those that are marked down at the grocery store. I finally decided that the way I felt after I ate too many was not worth the minute or so (yeah, I eat them too fast) of pleasure experienced.

There are other vices (if eating too many donuts is a vice) that are much

more serious and harmful to others and truly difficult to overcome. Once a habit forms that is connected to a feeling or a thought, it can become nearly impossible to “will” ourselves out of it.

Over the course of life, I have learned that we sometimes need to hear, “Stop it!” Sometimes, if it is said early enough and often enough it will prevent bad habits from forming. Sometimes we hear it and refrain until the one telling us to stop is not around.

There are two sides to making needed positive changes in one’s life and I think that we often get

them backwards. It is one thing to stop doing or saying what hurts others. It is another challenge to become someone who no longer wants to do such things. If it takes someone telling us to “stop it” we are bumping up against law – as in “stop it or else.” If, however, we have something to replace that behavior or thought we are moving into grace.

I understand that to change we must first refrain from

behavior we would like to change but it helps to see a better place first. It is not that I don’t still like donuts, but I can now take them or leave them. That apathy is the first step toward better habits. I don’t think there is a reason for me to give up donuts – yet. But there is good reason for me to give up being unkind. There are good reasons for me to stop being self-righteous, or greedy, or prone to violence or a bad temper.

There is, however, a problem that we encounter when we want other people to change for the better. We cannot control them. We cannot make

anyone change. What we can do, however, is demonstrate a new way – a different way – of approaching life. This different way allows for every personality type. It allows all of us to be who we were meant to be, which may or may not be who we are right now.

It is my goal in life to make every day better than the one before. I don’t mean this in a Pollyannish way. Life is too unpredictable and complicated for that. I do believe however that even on the very bad days, of which I have had a few lately, we can still move toward the goal of growth and maturity. We can still be patient and kind. Doing these on our worst days will do much more to make this world better than only doing it on our best days – anybody can do that.

Here are a few encouragements in the form of proverbial sayings that we can carry with us every day. On those days when we just can’t be our best, maybe we will bump into others who are able. When we see a better path ahead and are encouraged to walk it, those bad habits can begin to fade.

If you have time, take a moment and consider what the world would be like if more of us could live out what is encouraged in these well-known verses from the Bible. (All are

RSV.)
A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. (Prov. 15:1)

Therefore, encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing. (1 Thess. 5:11)

Know this, my beloved brethren. Let every man be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger, for the anger of man does not work the righteousness of God. (James 1:19)

Be merciful, even as your (heavenly) Father is merciful. (Luke 6:36)

A cheerful heart is a good medicine, but a downcast spirit dries up the bones. (Prov. 17:22)

Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body. (Prov. 16:24)

Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer every one. (Col.4:6)

And we exhort you, brethren, admonish the idlers, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. (1 Thess. 5:14)

Be the better path for others to see.

Sean is always interested in feedback and conversation. He can be reached at sean.niestrath@outlook.com. He publishes a daily devotional via Substack at seanniestrath.substack.com.



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Vote
ERIC LARUE
Crittenden County School Board
District 2
Experienced & Responsive
Paid for by Eric Larue

CRITTENDEN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT		
Date Approved: September 28, 2026		
Working Budget	FY 2027	
OVERVIEW		
General Fund -Fund 1	17,017,502.73	71%
Special Revenue-Fund 2	3,470,569.51	15%
School Activity Fund 21 - 25	388,718.22	2%
Capital Outlay-Fund 310	111,800.00	0%
Building Fund-Fund 320	709,874.00	3%
Construction Fund-Fund 360	-	0%
Food Service-Fund 51	2,172,835.67	9%
Total	23,871,300.13	100%
Debt Service Bond Obligations	799,279.63	
Debt Service On Behalf	306,505.27	
Debt Service Fund-Fund 400	1,102,263.41	
General Fund Revenue Recap		
Local Sources - Taxes, Etc.	3,750,594.22	22%
State Sources - SEEK	6,704,082.00	39%
On Behalf	4,422,956.21	26%
Beginning Balance	2,139,870.30	13%
Total New Revenue	17,017,502.73	100%
General Fund Expenses Recap		
Instruction	8,297,794.72	49%
Student Support Services	1,097,686.02	6%
Instructional Staff Supervision Services	756,270.48	4%
District Administrative Support	1,014,140.68	6%
School Administrative Support	1,074,808.68	6%
Business & Tech Support Services	472,029.36	3%
Plant Operation & Maintenance	1,693,839.86	10%
Student Transportation	1,371,566.79	8%
Debt Service - KISTA & Energy Savings	186,027.26	1%
Contingency	773,718.10	2%
Fund Transfers	279,620.78	2%
Total Expenses	17,017,502.73	100%
Total Expenses	17,017,502.73	
Total Revenue	17,017,502.73	
	0.00	
	-	
Balanced Budget	-	

Wealth can’t buy forgiveness and eternal life

Question: I’ve worked hard and acquired considerable wealth. My money enables me to take care of myself and my family. It gives me freedom to do what I want. It helps me to know I’m a person of value. Why would I want to become a follower of Jesus, when I already have a good life?

Answer:While riches can make our lives easier, it can’t give us peace of mind or peace with God. While it can buy us the best medical care, a house and a car, it cannot buy forgiveness of sins, a relationship with our

Ask the Pastor
By Bob Hardison

Creator, or eternal life in heaven.

Having money can hinder us from receiving God’s grace. Many with money tend to focus on self and they have the religion of “Me.” When wealth becomes a person’s god, everything else takes a backseat, including the one

true God. God has made it clear—He must be first. He demands total allegiance and loyalty.

Wealth isn’t the problem. In 1 Timothy 6:10, the Bible says, “For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.” It’s the love of money that causes problems rather than money itself. It’s the

love of money that gets in the way of receiving God’s grace.

All people have a sin problem (Rom. 3:23). That includes wealthy people, too. The only way to receive God’s forgiveness and grace is by putting one’s faith in Jesus Christ. My personal experience--my life has been greatly enriched through my personal relationship with God, but the greatest benefit is yet to come—eternal life with God and with others forever.

Send your questions to: bob@bobhardison.com

WORSHIP
with us this week

Visit one of our area churches for worship and fellowship

EMMAUS BAPTIST CHURCH

315 Emmaus Church Rd., Salem, Ky.
Rodney Phelps, Pastor
(270) 704-2400
emmausbaptistsalem@outlook.com
Follow us on Facebook

St. William Catholic Church

Sunday Mass 11 a.m.
860 S. Main St.
Marion, Ky.
(270) 965-2477
Father Jojy Joseph

Mexico Baptist Church

Steve Harris, Interim Pastor
Mike Crabtree, Minister of Music
Sunday Worship Services: 10 a.m., 7 p.m.
Sunday Bible Study: 9 a.m.
Sunday Discipleship Training: 6 p.m.
Wednesday Worship Service: 7 p.m.
175 Mexico Rd.
(270) 965-4059
MexicoBaptist.org

DEER CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

Sunday Bible Study: 10 a.m.
Sunday Worship: 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Approx. 5 miles from the intersection of Hwy. 60 & Hwy. 297
Phone: (270) 965-2220
“Whatever It Takes”
Bro. Jamie Baker

Emmanuel Baptist Church

108 Hillcrest Dr., Marion | (270) 965-4623
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.
Sunday Worship: 10:45 a.m., 6 p.m.
Wednesday Adult Bible Study, Children and Youth Activities: 6 p.m.
Captured by a vision...

Tolu Methodist Church

Pastor: David Brown
We invite you to be our guest
Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.

Barnett Chapel General Baptist

Sunday School: 10 a.m.
Sunday Worship: 11 a.m.
Sunday Night Service: 6 p.m.
Barnett Chapel Rd., Marion, Ky.
Barnett Chapel... where everyone is welcome.

Freedom General Baptist Church

Pastor: Ross Atwell
87 Freedom Church Rd., Marion
(about 1 mi. from Marion off Ky. 91)
CHURCH TIMES:
Sunday School 10 a.m. Sunday Evening 6 p.m.
Sunday Worship 11 a.m. Wed. Bible Study 6 p.m.

Marion Baptist Church

College & Depot streets, Marion • (270) 965-5232
Pastor: Bro. Aaron Brown • Children’s & Youth Pastor: Bro. Shawn Holeman
SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES: 9 a.m. & 11 a.m., ONLINE 11 a.m., SUNDAY SCHOOL: 10:05 a.m.
WEDNESDAY: BIBLE STUDY/PRAYER 6 p.m., AWANA FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH GROUPS 6 p.m.
CHOIR PRACTICE: 6:45 p.m., PRAISE TEAM: 7:30 p.m.

Crooked Creek Baptist Church

261 Crooked Creek Church Rd.,
P.O. Box 442, Marion, Ky. • (270) 704-0914
Sunday School: 10 a.m.
Sunday Worship: 11 a.m.
Pastor, Hank Cayce “Come and Worship with Us”

Crayne Community Church

Crayne Cemetery Road, Crayne, Ky.
Bro. James Driver, Interim Pastor
Sunday Worship 9 a.m.

FIRST CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

224 W. Bellville St., Marion, Ky.
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Sunday Worship 10:45 a.m.
David LeNeave, Pastor

growing in grace
2 Peter 3:18
PLEASANT GROVE General Baptist Church

Located on Ky. 723, 4 miles north of Salem
Sunday School 10 a.m. | Sunday Worship 11 a.m., 6 p.m. | Wed. 7 p.m.

Marion Church of God

334 Fords Ferry Road, Marion, Ky.
Morning Service 11 a.m.
Sun. Evening 6 p.m. • Wed. Evening 6 p.m.
“Where salvation makes you a member.”

Marion General Baptist Church

341 West Bellville St., Marion, KY
Sunday School 10 a.m.
Worship Service 11 a.m.
Evening Service 6 p.m.
Wednesday Evening 6 p.m.
Pastor: Bro. Wesley Lynn
Come Worship With Us!

PINEY FORK CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Speaker: Greg Rushing
SUNDAY School 10 a.m. Worship 11 a.m. Bible study 6 p.m.
A new beginning, going forward and looking to the future
Ky. 506 | Marion, Ky.

Sugar Grove Cumberland Presbyterian

585 Sugar Grove Church Rd., Marion, Ky.
Sun. School: 10 a.m. | Sun. Worship: 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.

Marion Methodist Church

We love intensely, believe deeply, and pray zealously
SUN: Sun. School 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:45 p.m.
South College St.

Frances Community Church

Bro. Butch Gray, Missionary Disciple
Worship service:..... 11 a.m.
Children’s Church ages 3 & up ... 11 a.m.
“The little church with a big heart”

Hurricane Church

Hurricane Church Rd. off Ky. 135 West
Sun. School, 10 am. • Worship, 11 a.m.
Sun. Evening services, 6 p.m.
Wed. Evening services, 7 p.m.

Unity General Baptist Church

4691 Mott City Rd. • Marion, Ky.
Bro. Chris Collins, Pastor
Sunday School 10 a.m.
Sunday Worship 11 a.m.

Marion Church of Christ

546 West Elm Street
(270) 965-9450
Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.
- The end of your search for a friendly church -