

MAY 3RD, 2026



# The Searcher

Published By



**SOUTHAVEN**  
CHURCH of CHRIST

681 Church Road E  
Southaven, MS 38671  
662-393-2690

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES AND SEEKING THE LOST

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## THE CHURCH'S ROLE IN AN ADDICTED AGE

### Jameson Steward

In recent headlines, Brendan Sorsby, the highly touted transfer quarterback at Texas Tech, entered a gambling addiction program after it was discovered he placed thousands of online bets on all kinds of sports. His future in sports does not look good. This young man's gambling problem is just a widely publicized example of the vast issue that addiction in various forms has become in this country. A large part of the problem, according to David French, is "we are making virtue more difficult and vice easier to access" (We Are Gambling Away Our Future). He went on to state, "If you want to watch porn or place a prop bet, the wind is at your back. If you want to go to college or start a business, the wind is in your face." Those who promote these addictive vices are knowingly taking advantage of young men and boys at the worst possible time in their lives. But this problem is not limited to young men.

A recent study discovered that 52% of men between the ages of 18 and 49 have an account with an online sports betting site. 61% of the general population reports viewing pornography, including 54% of practicing Christians. I won't go into more detail here, but I just wanted to highlight that gambling and pornography addiction do not exist merely on the "fringes of society." It is a struggle that the majority of the upcoming generations currently have. If the church is going to continue to obey the Great Commission, taking the gospel into the world, and continuing to teach disciples to observe all that Jesus has commanded (Matthew 28:18-20), then the widespread vices of our time must be confronted. But, how do we do this? Here are a few ideas...

**Start with your own people.** There are over 8.2 billion people in the world. Where in the world do we start? Scripture shows us to first start with ourselves. We must "examine ourselves" (2 Corinthians 13:5). I won't be able to do much good in helping someone else with their problem until I address my own issues (Matthew 7:1-5). Then, we have a responsibility to see to our own family (1 Timothy 5:8).

Parents are responsible for the spiritual development of their children (Ephesians 6:1-4). The father must "rule his own house well," as a shepherd cares for his sheep (1 Timothy 3:4-5).

We also have a responsibility to help our "family in Christ." We must help one another when we fall into temptation and sin (Galatians 6:1-2). We encourage and strengthen one another to "love and good works" (Hebrews 10:24-25). As we have the opportunity, we must also do all we can to help anyone who comes into our lives (Galatians 6:10). The Good Samaritan didn't have the opportunity to help every person who needed something that day, but he helped the one he had an opportunity to help (Luke 10:33-35).

## (Continued From The Front Page)

**Be proactive, not merely reactive.** Parents must be proactive in looking ahead to the problems their children may have in the future and helping them prepare for those things *before* they face them (Proverbs 22:6). Sometimes parents will have to be reactive in their parenting, because they can't anticipate everything that might happen. But parents who aren't proactive in rearing their children are failing as parents. The same is true in the church. Paul warned the elders of the church of Christ in Ephesus to be proactive in watching over the flock *before* problems arose (Acts 20:28-31). While there will always be situations where elders must react to what happens - they cannot anticipate everything that could happen - the shepherds of the church must be proactive in preventing the sheep from being attacked.

Gambling and pornography addiction could rightly be called a widespread epidemic in this country, especially among younger people, young men in particular. If we sit back and wait until we have to react to one of these problems arising in the church, the situation will have already spiraled out of control. We must be proactive in helping people navigate these issues, rather than waiting until their lives fall apart to offer help.

**Show the seriousness of sin, and the greatness of God's love.** Before anyone will turn away from sin, they must first be shown how serious their sin is. Paul reminded the Christians in Corinth of this. Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. (1 Corinthians 6:9-10) That's a pretty sobering statement. Those who practice these sorts of things **will not** inherit God's kingdom. Sin is a serious problem.

But may we never fail to remind those caught in sin that they have a way out because of God's great love for them. Paul went on to say: And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. (1 Corinthians 6:11) Some of the Christians in Corinth had once lived in the sorts of sins Paul had just listed in the previous verses. But this now describes them in the *past*. It's who they once were - but no longer. Now, they had been cleansed, set apart for God, and made right by Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

Because of God's great love for sinners, Jesus died for us (Romans 5:6-8; John 3:16). People who feel trapped and are overwhelmed by sin often feel shame and guilt for what they are doing. We need to show them *why* they feel that way, but also, they need to hear that God loves them already, and that we love them, too. God didn't love us after we got our lives cleaned up. He loved us when we were sitting in the filth of our own sins.

**Walk and sit with them.** Having a group of people support them is a critical component for someone turning away from whatever it is they are addicted to. The church is uniquely structured to be the best "support group." Paul referred to Christians as being individual members of the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Romans 12:4-5). When one member of the body hurts, the rest of the body hurts with it. One way the church could take a proactive approach to these issues is by making sure each Christian in the congregation has a "support system" in place.

While many of us don't like asking for help, we are rarely able to handle our struggles, problems, and sins on our own. James reminded Christians to "confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed" (James 5:16). Let's be there for one another, bearing each other's burdens, "and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2).

# INFLUENCE OR INFLUENCED?

*Bryce Mayfield*

In our world today, it is estimated that roughly 6.5 to 7 billion people own a smartphone. Of those numbers, almost 6 billion people are on social media. Of these billions of users, millions of them are striving to be “influencers.” They make posts and videos trying to convince people how to eat, workout, dress, travel, handle finances, parent, work, practice Christianity, and live their lives. It can be quite overwhelming. The reality is, billions of people are being influenced daily to pattern their lives after people of the world. While social media is neutral (can be used for good or bad), there is a warning I would like to offer you from the pages of scripture.

Paul would say, “Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father” (Colossians 3:17) When we watch and allow ourselves to be influenced by people of the world, a dangerous temptation arises. Instead of living our lives in light of the Words of Jesus Christ through the motivation of what He has done for us, we start following the instructions of these mere men, seeking the “perfect life” they depict on their social media pages. Once again, there is nothing inherently wrong with wanting your house to have a certain aesthetic, striving to put on muscle, following the newest diet, or traveling when you’re young. However, when we forget our purpose and who we live for, our goals in life can be influenced towards worldly pursuits.

As a test, we must ask ourselves, are we the influence or the influenced? Jesus would say, “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 5:16). Social media is a reality in our world today. As Christians, when we spend time on it, may we never allow ourselves to be influenced from our true purpose and goal in this life. May we always be striving to glorify God (1 Corinthians 10:31), spread the gospel (Matthew 28:18-20), and remain faithful that we might spend eternity with Him (Revelation 2:10).

## Sunday Sermons

Choose You This Day (AM)

For Whom Is It? (PM)

## Bible Passages To Consider

" And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord (Joshua 24:15)

## IN NEED OF PRAYER

**Meredith Peek** is in Baptist Desoto Hospital. She is having tests run on her heart.

**Angie Schrimsher** is recovering from a recent procedure.

**Dorothy Butler** is in Baptist Desoto Hospital. She has had a few tests run. She is making improvements.

**Vern Schrimsher** is recovering at home following foot surgery.

**Rannie Butler** is taking therapy at Senatobia Healthcare and Rehab.

**Joyce Valentine** had a scan recently and learned that her cancer has shrunk.

**Jean Jones** is taking physical therapy at Desoto Healthcare.

**Veronica Rapp** is recovering from a procedure she had last week.

**Jamie**, 18 month old nephew of Rona Johnson, was scheduled to have skin graph surgery on Wednesday in New York.

**Edward Oglesby**, son of Karen Oglesby, was involved in a four wheeler accident recently. He suffered broken and dislocated bones.

Please continue to remember the following: **Barbara Day, Brenda Dreher, Danna Smart, Alan & Linda Stone, Debbie Shull, Dorothy Butler, Betty Culbreath, Pat Pierce, Beverly Parnell, Lucy Chamberlain, Don Sykes & Karen Oglesby** in your prayers.

## BATTLING CANCER

Please remember those who are fighting, or recovering from cancer: **Alan Stone; Brenda Dreher; Pam Eaton; Charlene Farris; Justin Camp**, husband of Kim Camp; **Andrew Utz**, great nephew of Peggy Shull; **Varda Cole**, sister in law of Linda Davis; **Don Cheathour**, friend of the Sykes family; **Joe Daly**, online viewer in England; **Houston Hall**, great nephew of Karen Oglesby & Beth Roney; **David Taylor**, neighbors of the Sykes; **Dan Manuel**, friend of Tommy & Peggy Shull; **Heather Butler**, daughter of Lewis Dawson; **Vickie Parker**, sister of Nick Parker; **Kim Butler**, sister in law of Larry Butler; **Lily Jane**

**Jordan**, neighbor's granddaughter of Terry & Brenda Harris; **Oakleigh Free**, great granddaughter of Alan & Linda Stone; **Mandi Singer**, friend of Erica Stuckey; **Mandy Dunbar**, friend of Erica Stuckey; **TJ Holt**, cousin of Amber Wallis; **Margarito Zuniga**, father of former member Alan Zuniga; **Becca Reynolds**, niece of Anita Sanders; **Laura Sowell**, mother of Erin Sowell, **Doreen Harris**, former member, **Glenn Jenkins**, the husband of Bonnie Reid's niece, **Carol Tierce**, sister of Peggy Shull & **Whitley Joy**, great niece of Larry & Elaine Melton.

## SHUT-INS/ NURSING HOME

**Lucy Chamberlain; Debbie Shull; Brenda Dreher; Beverly Parnell; Pam Eaton; Phyllis Smith**, The Goldton at Southaven Room #116.

## SYMPATHY

**Tommy Eaton** passed away on Tuesday. Please keep Pam and his family in your prayers.

## MEN TO SERVE - May 3rd, 2026

**Preside:** Gary Barch

**Serve:** Tyler Williams, Reed Rister, Michael Agyemang, Tyrone Willingham, Carter Gahagan, Colin Iglinsky, Jonah Adam, Andy Young

**AM Opening Prayer:** Joe Ruiz

**AM Closing Prayer:** Jason Bayless

**PM Opening Prayer:** Nick Parker

**PM Closing Prayer:** Duane McCrory

**Wed. Opening Prayer:** Greg Wilson

**Wed. Closing Prayer:** John Stubblefield

**Announcements:** Chris Tice

**Song Leader:** Michael Gahagan

**Scripture Reading:** Lucas Gahagan

**Security:** TJ Johnson

### REMINDER:

If you are a song leader, scripture reader, or have opening prayer, you are asked to sit on the front pew when worship begins.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**May 3-6:** Gospel Meeting at Nesbit with Keith Mosher. There is a flyer on the bulletin board with more information.

**May 16:** Ladies Day at Collierville Church of Christ with Berta Kennedy. See the bulletin board in the foyer for more information.

**May 16, 9am-3pm:** Teacher Workshop @ Forest Hill Church of Christ. If you plan to attend please RSVP by May 9th. There is more information on the bulletin board in the foyer.

**June 14-20:** Sardis Lake Christian Camp

## MAY FOOD TEAM

**Captain:** Christie Hawkins

Camille Bobo, Grace Childers, Bonnie Ruiz, Michele Teske

### OUR RECORDS

Bible Study	210
A.M. Worship	335
P.M. Worship	160
P.M. Wed. Worship	168
Contribution	\$13,910



681 Church Road E  
Southaven, Mississippi 38671  
Telephone (662) 393-2690

Email addresses  
southaven-elders@googlegroups.com  
secretaries.southavencoc@gmail.com  
robert.minister@gmail.com  
josh.walker8898@gmail.com

### Schedule of Services

Sunday Bible Class.....	9:00 a.m.
Sunday Worship.....	10:00 a.m.
Sunday P.M. Worship.....	1:00 p.m.
Wednesday P.M. Service.....	7:00 p.m.

#### ELDERS

Gary Barch  
Larry Everson  
David Rister

#### DEACONS

Bruce Dunaway  
Michael Gahagan  
Aaron Gallagher  
TJ Johnson  
John Stubblefield  
Chris Tice  
Andy Young

#### MINISTERS

Robert Jefferies  
Josh Walker