

**Today's Order of Worship**

Announcements: Greg Lowery

Song Leader: Lannie Key

Opening Prayer: Billy Box

On the Table: Head - Greg Lowery  
Servers - Eddy Dickinson  
Ralph Burleson  
Gary Addison

Closing Prayer: David Key

Preparing the Lord's Supper Vertie Mae York

**Weekly Service Times**

Sunday

Bible Study 10:00 am  
Morning Worship 10:45 am  
Evening Worship 5:00 pm

Wednesday

Bible Study 7:00 pm

**Visit Our Website**

[www.brilliantchurchofchrist.org](http://www.brilliantchurchofchrist.org)

Elders: Deacon: Al Corkren  
Leonard Key / David Key  
Billy Box / Eddy Dickinson Minister: Greg Lowery

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Brilliant, AL 35548

# Calling The Erring Back Home



*The  
Brilliant  
Beacon*



**When a Sinner Returns Home**

By Rodney Nulph

God’s clear plan for His family, the church, is for members to look out for each other. So clear is God’s directive on our care for each other that the Holy Spirit guided the pen of Paul to write, “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted” (Galatians 6:1). On another occasion, the half brother of Jesus penned, “Let him know, that he which converts the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins” (James 5:20). When fellow-Christians actively seek those who have gone astray, God will bless that effort with increase (cf. 1 Corinthians 3:6, 9), as He sees fit. When God gives increase and a sinner returns home, several wonderful things take place.

Firstly, when a sinner returns home God runs! Almost beyond our comprehension is the fact that the God of heaven would run to meet a penitent sinner. The narrative of the Prodigal Son shows this fact clearly. “And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him” (Luke 15:20). God is waiting, watching and willing that every erring child comes back to where he or she belongs (cf. 2 Peter 3:9)! If you are away from God, He is looking for you. When you make the first step back, God will run to meet you!

Secondly, when a sinner returns home angels rejoice. It thrills my soul to know that the heavenly host is interested in each and every penitent sinner. Sometimes when a Christian leaves God, he often thinks that no one even cares that he is away, but not so. Angels are waiting and preparing a heavenly celebration for those who come back to Christ. Jesus affirmed “...that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repents...” (Luke 15:7). A few verses later the Lord related, “Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repents” (Luke 15:10). If you are away from the fellowship of God, come home today; the angels are waiting to celebrate your return.

**THOSE WHO NEED OUR PRAYERS**

Faye Cotton: recent scans showed little to no growth, please be praying that some new treatment can be found that will help her

Denise Kimbrell: has completed her treatments; please be praying that cancer will not return

Kay Dodd: received good report from recent scans, will continue treatments just as a precaution, please continue to pray that this cancer will stay in remission

Katie Berryhill: diagnosed with gestational diabetes, please pray that this will be controlled and that she will have a successful delivery

Barbara Wilkinson: still having problem with infection on her feet, please pray that the medicine she is taking will cure this infection

Danny Harbin: recently diagnosed with prostate cancer, please keep him in your prayers

Mable Weeks: recent scans showed no new growth of cancer, please continue to pray that this cancer can be defeated

Cory Davis Holmes: born May 4<sup>th</sup> with neuroblastoma which has spread to his liver, he is undergoing treatments, please pray for this young child and his family

Sandy McCaleb: has started cancer treatments, please be praying that this cancer can be treated and defeated

Charles Gay: last scan showed shrinkage with his brain tumor, attends the Cleveland congregation, please pray for him and his family

Adam Stidham; (co-worker of Al) has been diagnosed with leukemia, please pray that this will be treatable

Brandon Adams: {BHS Band Director} diagnosed with stage four liver cancer, please pray that he can receive treatment to defeat this cancer

**Upcoming Events**

Today	Fellowship Meal	
Today	Bible Bowl {Carbon Hill}	2:00 pm

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**THOSE WHO NEED OUR PRAYERS**

Please remember the families of Rebert Corkren and Edward Skinner both of them passed away last week

Kristy Ingram: was diagnosed with cancer and is presently undergoing treatments, please pray that these treatments will work

Sonya Campbell: {Jacob & Whitney Cotton’s Mother} respiratory problems (ARDS), please pray that with treatments she will get better soon

Larry Metcalf: has been diagnosed with lung cancer; please pray that he can receive treatments that will defeat this cancer

Danny Berryhill: the doctor was pleased with the surgery, please be praying that he will make a full recovery and that the pain will be subsided.

Wayne Burleson: had an implant placed into his brain to help control tremors that he is having, please pray that this treatment will be successful

Dewayne Wilkinson: having some heart problems, please pray that he can receive help with this

David Key: his surgery went well; please pray that he will make a full and quick recovery

Alice Foster: diagnosed with congestive heart failure and having problems with her lungs she is currently in the nursing home undergoing rehab, please keep her in your prayers

Thirdly, when a sinner returns home, the family is reinforced. God’s family, the church, is made weaker each time someone walks away from the faith. Conversely, the family of God is made stronger when a penitent sinner returns home. When a sinner returns home, another soldier is back in the fight (Ephesians 6:10ff), another runner is back in the race (Hebrews 12:1-3), another prayer is sent above (James 5:16) and another arm, hand or foot is restored to the body (1 Corinthians 12:12ff)! God’s church needs every available person for the fight in which we find ourselves! There is never a time in this war, especially now, when we can afford to suffer any casualties! If you are away from the family of God, we need you and God needs you. Please come back home!

Someone recently told this author that if we restored every erring member, our buildings could not hold them all. While that situation is quite heartbreaking, it also should encourage us of the potential that lies ahead. How many are erring in the congregation where you worship? With how many have you pleaded to return? “Time is now passing, the moments are fleeting... come home, come home, ye who are weary come home!”

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### **Losing the Saved**

By Raymond Elliott

The responsibility of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ and pleading with sinners to obey this call belongs to the church of our Lord (Mark 16:15; 1 Timothy 3:15). We are to be persistent in our efforts in leading others to Christ. The body of the Lord is to continue this great work that our Savior began while he lived on this earth (Luke 19:10). We should never grow weary in this tremendous challenge. However, there is also a need to recapture the saved that have become lost. That is indeed strange but it is a perpetual problem that plagues and perplexes the spiritually strong members of any congregation. Interested Christians spend a great deal of time and effort in bringing a lost soul to Christ and at the same time become disturbed when they witness the losing of the saved. In other words, we win a few and lose a few. If we could retain all those who have been baptized into Christ, our church buildings would be filled to capacity. Elders, deacons, preachers, teachers and all faithful Christians become frustrated with the loss of members and often ask, "Who is to blame?"

While there may be the case in which many are to blame if the proper care has not be shown to the erring, the Lord himself dealt with this serious problem in the parable he gave regarding the sower who went forth to sow the seed, as recorded in Luke 8:4-15. The seed (Word) was not different as it fell into the various soils (hearts). The difference was in the soils (hearts). Many members, having no real depth in Christ, fall to the various temptations of Satan. Others permit the various cares and pleasures of this world to lure them away from maturing in spiritual matters. They find no time to meditate on God's infinite grace and love, to pray, study the Bible, attend the periods of worship, and visit the sick or to teach the sinner of the love of God.

How many Christians have wept silently as they have seen souls won by Satan in spite of the manifested interest, love and concern on the part of the spiritual members of the church. How discouraging to know that the devil has captured the heart of an unfaithful member of the church. Our wayward brothers and sisters should observe the warning in Hebrews 6:4-6, knowing that they are crucifying to themselves the Son of God afresh and putting him to an open shame. Those who have wandered away from God, as did the prodigal son in Luke 15, should come to their senses, realize their lost condition and repent of their sins, and pray to God for the forgiveness of their trespasses (Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:8-10).

Now, having said all of that, we are not released from our responsibility of making every effort to bring the wayward brother or sister back to Jesus Christ. In Galatians 6:1, the apostle Paul instructs us in this manner: "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you, who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted." This is not an option but Paul makes it obligatory on the part of faithful brethren to reach out to the weak and erring brother or sister and encourage him or her to repent of unfaithfulness. If this is done and the wayward child of God is rescued, a soul will be saved "from death and a multitude of sins will be covered" (James 5:20).

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