

**SERVING IN WORSHIP**

February 19, 2023

*Sunday Morning:*

**Call to Worship:**

2 Corinthians 1:3-5

Austin Miller

**Song Leader:**

Dennis Blanton

**First Prayer:**

Michael Pittman

**Presentation/Lord's Table**

Larry Miller

**Servers:**

Barry Phillips \*\*Dwight Mullett

**Speaker:**

Johnny Felker

**Prayer & Announcements:**

Mark Claypool

**Usher:**

Ralph Brown

\*\*\*\*\*

*Sunday Evening:*

**Call to Worship:**

Luke 9: 23-27

Barry Phillips

**Song Leader:**

Larry Miller

**First Prayer:**

Stanton See

**Speaker:**

Johnny Felker

**Lord's Table:**

Dwight Mullett

**Prayer and Announcements:**

Mark Claypool

**Usher:**

Ralph Brown

**Prayer List and Announcements**

Jeanette Aldridge continues to do well.

**Janett King.** I received a call from Janett's daughter, Sheila Erwin. She wanted to let me know Janett had been having a lot of trouble with her hiatal hernia this week, pain and trouble breathing. She is better now but not feeling like talking. Her brother Earl remains about the same. Her sister Brenda will probably remain in the rehab center as suffers from Alzheimer's and continues to deteriorate.

**Deborah Grigsby** continues to do well. She was able to visit Mike on Saturday. He continues to do well.

**Fred Duggin** has a great number of tests scheduled in the next several weeks. His heart rhythm was off all week. He is getting frustrated with all the tests that are scheduled, but hopes they can find out what is causing all his troubles. Unfortunately Elaine has been getting worse again, feeling very lethargic.

**Betty Travis** has been alert and talking this week but not eating very well. Her son **Jim Travis** had been sick with COVID for several weeks, but he has finally been getting better.

**Betty Dennis** was able to be with us last Sunday. We were so glad to see her!

**\*\*Let us continue to Remember in Prayer\*\***

Janett King, Chelsea Gilliam (friend of Betty Copley), Paige Toxey, Keith Barclay (friend of Betty Copley), Susie Martell & Allison Barton, Neal Smith, Dalton Gregory, and Esther Carreira, co-worker of Dwight Mullett.

**Birthdays:**

No birthdays this week

ELDERS: Johnny Felker & Doug Driver

DEACONS: Ralph Brown & Mark Claypool

# Perry Heights Weekly Bulletin

Perry Heights church of Christ  
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*"...let us consider how we may encourage one another"  
Heb. 10:24*

February 19, 2023

## Four Ways to Lose Your Faith

A friend in the church asked, "How can I pray for you this year?" I told her, "Please pray for those I have the opportunity to share the gospel with. Pray that they may grow in faith and be active in their walk with Christ." I asked for this prayer because too many people find the joy of salvation, only to lose their faith before it grows to maturity. Each time it happens it breaks my heart.

Betty lived in the neighborhood. She had a sinful background and was living with a man. She knew something needed to change. The gospel gave her life meaning and joy. We studied the Bible every week. She enjoyed the worship of the church and started caring for her new spiritual family. I can still remember how she smiled the day she was baptized into Christ.

Then something happened. Her interest in Bible study decreased. She found excuses for missing worship, and she drifted away from her new friends in the faith. Several of us reached out to draw her back to Christ. She responded for a few weeks, but then would drift away again.

Those who share their faith with others know this story is not unique. No one becomes a disciple expecting to fail, but many do. I'm tired of seeing it happen. Please consider some of the ways I've seen people lose their faith. If you see these habits form in your life or in someone you love, please do something about it. A soul is too precious to waste.

**Isolate yourself from your spiritual family.** The front of our new church building is covered with white stone. During the construction I stopped by to check on the progress. When I arrived I saw an expensive SUV parked in the grass. A woman was filling up the back of her SUV with stones that were lying in a pile on the ground. I asked her, "What are you doing?" She explained, "I'm going to use these stones to border my garden." I motioned toward the building and said, "We need those stones to finish our wall." She indignantly responded, "Do you mean I can't have these?" "No ma'am, we need these stones." In a huff she moved toward her car to unload them. But, as soon as I turned away, she jumped in her car, sped off across the lawn, jumped the curb and raced down the street with a car full of stones.

Later, as I reflected on this bizarre event, it occurred to me the thief did not take the

**"Your lovingkindness, Oh Lord, extends to the heavens,  
Your faithfulness reaches to the skies." Psalm 36: 5**

## Preacher's Pen points

# The Comfort of Faith

*The Bible shows us that there is consolation for all those who truly believe in God.*

\* \* \* \* \*

### The Comfort of God's C\_\_\_\_\_

*Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He carries you for you. (1 Pet. 5:6-7; cf. also Is. 49:14-16; 2 Cor. 1:3-4)*

### The Comfort of God's P\_\_\_\_\_

*Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him for the help of His presence. (Psalm 42:5; cf. also 23:4; 73:23-24; 34:18; 145:18)*

### The Comfort of God's P\_\_\_\_\_

*This is my comfort in my affliction, that Thy word has revived me. (Ps. 119:50; cf. 119:76; 2 Cor. 4:16-18)*

### The Comfort of God's P\_\_\_\_\_

*'Do not fear, for I am with you; do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will surely help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.' (Is. 41:10; 40:28-31; Lam. 3:20-23; Phil. 4:12-13)*

### The Comfort of God's P\_\_\_\_\_

*Thou, who hast shown me many troubles and distresses, wilt revive me again, and wilt bring me up again from the depths of the earth. Mayest Thou increase my strength, and turn to comfort me. (Ps. 71:20-21; Rev. 21:3-4)*

### The Comfort of God's P\_\_\_\_\_

*But if we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; or if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which is effective in the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer; (2 Cor. 1:5-7; 1 Thes. 4:18)*

**Put your faith in God and in His Son Jesus and experience comfort in life's most challenging moments.**

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stones that were mortared to one another on the wall. It was easier for her to steal the stones that were just lying in a pile. In the same way, it is difficult for the devil to snatch away a believer who is devoted to the fellowship. It is that soul that is disconnected from other believers who is easily stolen away (John 10:1-10).

The answer to this problem is not simply attendance at an assembly. The mortar that binds believers together is service. You love others as Christ loves you and it drives you to do good works. The resulting fellowship creates a bond that is difficult to break (Heb. 10:23-25).

**Don't share your struggles with anyone.** Every believer struggles with personal sin and failure. All of us have questions about the character of God, the nature of salvation, and the function of church. Some share their concerns, but many hide them. Perhaps it's pride, shame, or the unapproachableness of a friend that causes us to bottle up our struggles. We may look like disciples on the outside but our hidden problems threaten to shatter our faith.

If we only knew! Our struggles are not unique. We are not alone. God knows and is willing to forgive, and fellow believers care and are willing to talk. So, have the courage to confess and to ask for help. Your soul is worth it (James 5:16; Psalm 73:15-17; Acts 18:26).

**Don't fill your life with godly thoughts.** If you only ate a snack once a week you would quickly die. This is what happens to some believers. Their spiritual diet is limited to a Sunday snack.

The irony is that new believers want more about God, but spiritual truths are like a foreign language to them. At first, sermons seem strange, reading the Bible is confusing, and prayer is uncomfortable. Some give up and plug back in to worldly interests.

These dear ones need patience. They need to be told that faith takes diligence. Growth is the result of godly habits. Otherwise the message of the gospel is easily lost in the pursuits of modern life. Our culture spews out skepticism and cynicism about godliness, and it engulfs righteousness beneath a sea of pleasures. Yet, there is no substitute for the daily discipline of prayer and Bible reading. When it is embraced the beautiful language of heaven begins to redefine our lives.

**Be demoralized by weak and sinful Christians.** Lisa said, "I just love this church because the people are so great!" I quickly told this new believer, "Don't be deceived. We are not perfect. We are only forgiven sinners. Love God!" A few weeks later after an encounter with a sorry saint Lisa said, "Thanks for preparing me."

The love of the church might initially draw someone to Christ, but a person must then learn to love Christ even when believers are unloving (John 13:34-35). Ultimately, our faith must be in a God, not people. When we encounter sinful believers, it is not time to run. It is time to love them with the same patience and sacrifice Jesus expresses toward us. We must all remember that God will hold us accountable for how our attitudes and actions impact others (Matthew 18:5-6).

There are many other reasons why people lose their faith. These are enough to help you care more deeply about the faith of others and to strengthen your own.

I told you about Betty. I heard the other day she died. Cancer got her.

(Tim Jennings, Market Street Messenger, May 21, 2017 via Christianity Magazine; Vol. 1/#10. 10/84)