

March 14, 2018



## Prayer Changes Things



# Mid-Week Connection

*Connecting to God & Each Other*

Church of Christ  
140 West 15 Street  
Front Royal Virginia  
22630

540 635 2613

FrontRoyChurchofChrist.com  
SimpleBibleLessons.com  
ministerFRcoC@gmail.com

Janet & Joel Jones  
Becky Hawes  
Virginia Wright  
Woody Bolton  
David Bean  
Audrey Herring  
John Woodall  
Frank Couto  
Blaine Tewalt  
Ryan Denharat  
Sandy Holzhauser  
Vita Torres  
Nancy Barnes  
Jeff Pingley  
Wendy Willoughby  
Elaine Appleton  
Robert Jenkins  
Diana Wines  
Sharon Derflinger

Bob Baleskie  
Tim Gunter  
Anita Farris  
Bobby Jo Henderson  
Philip Pop Funk  
Kenny Henderson Jr.  
Ruth Brooks  
Sharon Jenkins  
Gloria Van Arsdall  
Jamie Shell  
Marty Jones  
Jamie James  
John Taylor  
Irene Alger  
Lisa Settle  
Scott McCool  
Jaden Turner  
Kim Wines  
Remi Wines  
Debbie Martin  
Doris & Donald Jones  
Carol & Doug Ritenour  
Dolores Williams  
Barbara Swisher



**God Exists**  
Christian Evidence Seminar ~ Free!  
Each Sunday - January thru March @ 2:00pm

**Pantry Items Needed** Corn meal mix, Dry Cereals

**Ladies Day** May 5 Central Church of Christ  
Martinsburg WV

**Men's Meeting 3/18/2018** 1 to 2



### Lord's Day Servers

**March 18, 2017**

Peter Diaz\*  
Bob Baleskie  
Art Candenquist  
Bill Adams

#### Song Leaders

Jacob Lichliter am  
David Born pm

#### Share Scripture

Art Candenquist



### All Church Fellowship

March 18, 2018

## If I Come Back to the Church, Will You Welcome Me with Open Arms?

There are a lot of Christians in the world who are no longer involved in the church. Some of them left for very specific reasons. But some of them didn't leave for any reason at all, they simply fell away. Maybe they just didn't feel like going one Sunday morning. One week turned into two, and two weeks turned into three. Before they knew it, they had been away from the church for years. Now they are afraid to come back. They are afraid they will be scolded and criticized, and they just can't bear to face their brothers and sisters. I am confident there are many Christians wondering right now, "If I come back, will you welcome me with open arms?"

### Have you felt this way before?

Haven't we all felt this way? Haven't we all put off something important – something we knew we should do – that we just didn't do? And the longer we put it off, the more guilty we felt, but the more afraid we were of what people would say.

I've often felt this way with my car. It'll start making a funny noise and I think, "I need to take it to a mechanic," but I'll procrastinate about going. A week or two later, the sound has gotten worse, but I still put it off. And then after a month or two, I start thinking, "I really need to take this to someone, but now I'm afraid they will scold me for putting it off and making it worse." So I let the noise get louder and louder, feeling more and more guilty about it, but still unwilling to take it in because I don't want to be embarrassed by a mechanic scolding me.

I've done the exact same thing with going to doctors, dentists, and other important places. I know it needs to be done, but I'm too embarrassed to do it. So I wait and wait, the situation gets worse, and my fear grows.

Haven't you put things off for a long time and then been embarrassed to take care of it because it had been such a long time?

### But then what happens?

Then, what usually happens is, I take care of whatever I was procrastinating about and there is none of the criticism I anticipated. Even if someone does say, "You know, you should have come in awhile back," I just say, "Yeah, I know. I put it off too long. I'm sorry." But no one verbally assaults me. No one says, "You're so dumb! Why did you let it get this bad?!"

And I'm always glad I finally took care of it. I've never regretted doing something I procrastinated about; I only regretted the procrastination.

### The Church Welcomes Prodigals!

When we read the story of the prodigal son, we usually think the story is about how God runs to welcome home

His repentant children. While that is certainly true, the story was actually told to teach the Pharisees how they should welcome back their repentant brethren. The "tax collectors and sinners" were trying to come back to God and the Pharisees were repulsed by them. Jesus told three parables to teach the Pharisees that **when the lost is found, you should throw a party and celebrate** (see Luke 15:1-32)!

This is the way Christians should react when one of our brothers or sisters comes back to the church. And most of the time, this is exactly what happens. We throw our arms around the person and say, "We are so glad you came home." We don't harshly scold them for being away for so long. We just say, "Hey everyone, come rejoice with us! **Our brother was lost, but now he's found!**"

### We Need to Calm People's Fears

We need to realize that many of our brothers and sisters, who are currently away from the church, are afraid of what will happen when they come back to the church. They are sitting at home every week thinking, "I know I need to go back to the church, but I'm so afraid of what people will say."

We need to reach out to them and say, "**Don't worry about how long you've been gone, just come home.** There is mercy, grace, and forgiveness for us all! We just want you to be a part of the Lord's family again."

If we are going to restore the lost sheep, we've got to help calm people's fears and let them know we have no intention of berating them. We just want to welcome them home with open arms!

I love you and God loves you,

**Wes McAdams**

### Discussion

1. **Do we know anyone who has fallen away?**
2. **What could be tried/done to help those who are fearful about returning to Serve & Worship the Lord?**
3. **What lessons can we glean from Luke 15:1-32 with respect to receiving the lost back?**
4. **How can we calm people fears?**