

The Path to Unfaithfulness

A casual examination of the rolls of most congregations will reveal a large number of the "unfaithful," those folks who seldom if ever attend the worship services, and never participate in any other activity of the church of the Lord. These people are a continual concern to the conscientious preacher and a heartbreak to the faithful elder. Most efforts to enlist them back into the service of the Lord fail. It is evident that preventive effort will be much more beneficial than treatment after the fact; but how did these people arrive at this condition? What are the steps toward unfaithfulness that others may be warned?

An examination of the history of those who have departed will indicate a uniform pattern of behavior that is characteristic of most of those who have turned back, no longer to walk with the Lord. No one seems to take the giant step from the faithful relationship to unfaithfulness in one bound. A gradual departure seems to be the pattern. The following is a list of those elements observed in many we have seen leave the Lord's service in past years. It is hoped that this list will assist the sincere follower of Christ to evaluate his own life for the danger signs of creeping unfaithfulness.

(1) Creeping Absenteeism: At first, seemingly irreconcilable conflicts arose that "prevented" one from attending some services. Then, it seems that one is almost looking for the barrier to attendance. This absenteeism deprives one of the association with strong mature Christians and keeps one from the food of God's Word that can provide strength for temptations. Soon one is able to absent himself without any prodding of the conscience. If you are one of the absentees, see if you do not observe this pattern in your own life. If you are one who is beginning this pattern, please be aware of where it will eventually lead you.

(2) Critical Observations: When one finds himself continually being critical of the actions of others in the worship services – song leaders, preachers, elders, singing, those serving, actions of members around him – he can be assured that it will not be long until he can find a "reason" to absent himself from those associations with imperfect people. When one begins to evaluate his own worship experience by the behavior of other participants, his own worship experience is beginning to lack some vital elements.

(3) Entertainment-Oriented: Some folk become members of the church during an emotional high and now they are disenchanted because the high is not maintained. They are continually complaining because someone is not "doing something" to entertain them. Surely, someone should be appointed to keep these folks interested. It won't be long until they begin to eye those churches and congregations that do major in entertainment rather than Christianity. We must remember that worship is God directed, not man-centered.

From your own experience you may add to this list. Be sure to examine your own life to see if you are beginning to show any signs of being afflicted by the creeping disease that will slowly but surely consume your soul. No one intends to fall away. No one plans to be lost, but just as surely as we begin to slip away or drift from those things which we have heard, just that sure is the outcome – unfaithfulness. Once we have severed the tie, once we have taken the dreaded step, it is harder to return to the first love. The best action is to guard against ever getting into that condition in the first place. Guard against the listed steps that will lead you to unfaithfulness.

P R A Y E R L I S T

Addison & Jerome Hodge	Tony Bennett & Family	Olympia Billings
Terry Almond	George Odom	Phyllis Holmes
Terri & Nikki Hodge	Orlando Byrd	Betty Hayes
Susan Hodge & Family	Paul Steen	Isace Newton
Adria Morgan	The Royals Family	Peggy Ross

Prayer Ministry – If you have a desire for prayer, or know someone who does, please forward your request to dhmor30331@yahoo.com, or call Doris Morgan at 404-346-1372. You can also contact Johnnie Stephens at 404-243-1139, Esther Brown at 404-696-3941, Angela Dillard (midnite626@yahoo.com), or Nettie Fanning at 404-696-9104. In order to avoid duplication, names that are currently listed on the Sick and Shut-In list will not be added to the Prayer List.

New Baby – Fredric and Rhonda McKinney are the proud parents of a 7 lb, 13 oz, 21 inch long baby boy, (Fredric Leon McKinney, 1V). He was born Thursday, December 13 at 5:42 a.m. Congratulations to the parents as well as the proud grandparents, Greg and Darlene Scruggs.

All ladies, young women, growing girls and “seasoned” saints are invited to bring in the New Year on the first Saturday of 2008 by attending the **Monthly Ladies Fellowship Breakfast** on January 5 at Paschal’s Restaurant at Castleberry Hill from 9 -11 a.m. Resolve to take the time and make the effort to get better acquainted with your fellow sisters in Christ in the New Year. The food is great and the fellowship is even better! Direct any questions to Sierra Grigsby or Kesha Clinkscale.

Quiet and Cleared Out Please – During West End’s 8 a.m., 10:45 a.m., and 6 p.m. worship services, all are expected to be in the auditorium. Please keep the foyer clear during worship services, and be courteous to the deacons that request you to move. Collection and Lord’s Supper will not be served in the foyer. Thanks in advance for your cooperation.

The **Membership to Discipleship** group will not meet on December 25 and January 1, 2008. Weekly meetings will begin again on January 8, 2008.

■ YOUTH AND SINGLES ■

West End Singles (ages 19 and up) will have a meeting following the 10:45 service, on Sunday January 13 to discuss 2008 events and to recruit other coordinators. See Denise West, Jarrod Simmons, or Rodney Sawyer for more details.

It’s Star Students Time – Turn in your report cards to David Bishop to be recognized as a West End Star Student or Rising Star. Star Students are those with all A’s and B’s on report cards or progress reports. Rising Stars are those that have shown an improvement in grades from a previous report card or progress report. Also, conduct, behavior, and work habits in all classes must be top-notch. So far we have five Star Students for December – Nia Bullock, a student at Hooper Alexander Elementary School; LaDarion Lewis, Campbell Middle School; T’ara Tripp, Stoneview Elementary School; Stephen Brown, East Fayette Elementary School; and Taja Smith, Stoneview Middle School. A brief presentation will be held during our New Year’s Eve program. Congratulations to everyone. *The last day to submit report cards is today.*

Star Student Pictures – All December Star Student parents are requested to provide a photo to David Bishop or send one via email to dbishop@thewestender.com by today.

Youth Nite with the Atlanta Hawks – All youth and parents interested in attending the Hawks vs. Cleveland Cavaliers on Friday, Feb. 8, 2008 should sign the list in the lower level of the educational building starting today. Tickets are \$10 each. See David Bishop with any questions.



Got Baptized or Placed Membership from Another Church of Christ?

All individuals and families placing membership with West End from another Church of Christ, or those that have been baptized here should attend our New Members/New Converts Orientation Class. The class is for two consecutive Sundays and Wednesdays (total of four class sessions) and led by members of West End’s leadership. Contact elder, I. David Logan (404-755-1016) with any questions about the orientation class. The class is held in the red brick house located adjacent to the main building, and is held during regular Bible School class times. After taking the class, new converts will be directed to the New Converts Class; new members will be advised of the classes available for them and their families. Contact minister Orpheus Heyward (678-592-3397) or any elder or deacon with any questions.

Baptism Certificates – If you were recently baptized here at West End and have not received a baptismal certificate, please see Gayron Johnson or call her at the church office. You can also contact Bro. David Logan

New Year's Eve at West End

Be prepared to bring in the New Year here at West End tomorrow, December 31 at 9 pm. A great program is being planned with a night of singing, gospel preaching, special presentations and more. Invite your friends, relatives and neighbors to join us. Visit www.thewestender.com for more details.

**There is no better place to be to start of 2008 than the
West End Church of Christ!**

Baptisms

12-23 **Jabari R. Hardy**
1191 Appian Way
Lawrenceville, Ga. 30045
404-691-1810
Date of Birth 20/09/1995

Placed Membership

12-23 **Makini Davenport**
6335 Wellington Way
Austell, Ga. 30106
404-421-4779

12-23 **Denise Collins**
4465 Celebration Drive
Atlanta, Ga. 30331
404-484-8938

Children's Bible Hour

Children's Bible Hour - Children's Bible Hour for ages 2 through 6 is held during the 10:45 a.m. worship service. Parents may sign in their children by reporting to Room 14 upstairs in the educational building. *Parents should leave the auditorium immediately following Lord's Supper to pick up your children. Waiting until the end of service significantly delays the volunteers from being able to leave.* See Shona Nixon or Tina Clark with any questions.

SICK & SHUT-IN

To be included or to have someone included or removed from this listing please contact Gayron Johnson at the church office.

Leonard Walton has been released from Egleston Children's Hospital and is undergoing treatment at home. 1388 Westboro Dr., Atl., GA 30310. 404-756-0832. Please call before visiting and do not bring live flowers or fruit baskets. Charlette Hickson has been released from the hospital and is at home recovering. 404-686-7119. Corene Woods, Arbor Terrace Assisted Living Center at Cascade, 1001 Research Center Atlanta Dr., Atlanta, GA 30331, 404-696-0432. Carrie Henderson - 1258 Windsor Pkwy, Atl., GA 30319. 404-255-1210. William Johnson, Jr., son of William and Gayron Johnson. Cressie Lawson - 450 Fairburn Rd, SW, #14, Atlanta, GA 30331. 404-696-2548. Thomas Chase is in Crestview Nursing Home located at 2800 Springdale Rd., Atl., GA 30315, 404-616-8100. Visitors are welcomed. Lillie Tyler - 419 Crossing Dr, Lithia Springs, GA 30122, 770-732-8914. Annie Glaze - A.G. Rhodes Home at Wesley Woods, Room 421, 1819 Clifton Rd., NE, Atl., GA 30329. Barbara Edgerton is at home ill. Tallulah Latham - 320 Fairburn Rd., Apt H-6, Atl., GA 30331, 404-505-1581. Willie Mae Morrow - 3060 Continental Colony Pkwy., Apt. 502, Atl., GA 30330. 404-344-9990. Elizabeth Perkins - 1392 Maynard Rd., NW, #31, Atl., GA 30331. 404-691-0268. Elnora Bethel - 3700 Potomac Dr., East Point, GA 30344. Daneka Vickers, daughter of Mack and Sandra Freeman. Annie McArthur - 751 Fairburn Rd., SW #2212, Atl., GA, 30331. 404-699-2939. Anrenea Johnson.

BEREAVEMENT

Phyllis Holmes mourns the recent passing of her mother. Arrangements will be announced from the pulpit today.