

**Today's Order of Worship**

Announcements: Greg Lowery

Song Leader: Eddie Dickinson

Opening Prayer: David Key

On the Table: Head - Josh Berryhill  
Servers - Billy Box  
Charles Berryhill  
Greg Lowery

Closing Prayer: Al Corkren

Preparing the Lord's Supper Shelia Box

**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: Deacons: Al Corkren / Josh Berryhill

Leonard Key / David Key

Billy Box / Eddie Dickinson

Minister: Greg Lowery

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# Prepared



*The  
Brilliant  
Beacon*



**Following Jesus**  
By Rodney Nulph

Following Jesus is not for the faint of heart! A somewhat sad, but very telling narrative occurred between our Lord and some would-be followers in Luke 9:57-62. Each of these individuals had a “reason” why he could not immediately follow Jesus. Some of the reasons given seem somewhat justifiable from the human standpoint. However, no reason that we could ever give for not following Jesus is justifiable in the eyes of the Lord. For those who truly want to follow Jesus, there is a daily price that must be paid (Luke 9:23). However, what is involved in that daily price? What does following Jesus really entail?

Firstly, following Jesus includes doctrine. “If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine...” (John 7:17). Doctrine is teaching or instruction and is the guideline for how we walk (1 John 1:7; 2:6). No one can follow Jesus acceptably and walk by some other standard of authority (2 Thessalonians 3:6). Doctrine is so essential in following Jesus that many of the religious folks in Jesus’ day were condemned for changing divinely given doctrine (Matthew 15:8-9). So important is doctrine that Peter demanded, “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...” (1 Peter 4:11a). Checking doctrine regularly (2 Timothy 2:15; 1 John 4:1) is so important because Paul warned that some will change the pure doctrine into a “doctrine of devils” (1 Timothy 4:1; cf., Galatians 1:6-9). Because one cannot follow Jesus without proper doctrine, Paul exhorted Timothy, “Till I come give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine” (1 Timothy 4:13). Just a few verses later, Paul lovingly warned the young evangelist, “Take heed to thyself and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee” (1 Timothy 4:16). Doctrine is essential in following Jesus!

Secondly, following Jesus involves deeds. Sadly, we are all sometimes guilty of the sin of knowing the right thing to do but not doing the right thing (James 4:17). In fact, Jesus warned that some of the religious folks in the first century were “saying, but not doing” (Matthew 23:3). I guess we all could take a front pew on this one! In following Jesus, we must sincerely and diligently match our deeds with pure doctrine. Paul reminded Timothy, “Let no man despise thy youth: but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity” (1 Timothy 4:12). Paul earlier warned the church in Colosse, “And whatsoever ye do in word or

**THOSE WHO NEED OUR PRAYERS**

Mary Rainey: has bone cancer throughout her body, please be praying for her and her family

Billy Lee & Jimmie Ann Hardy {Carolyn’s Brother & Sister} both are in the nursing home in Guin, please continue to pray for them they both have some health issues

Joey Colburn: is taking treatments for cancer, please pray that the treatments will be successful in defeating his cancer

April Tidwell Dawson: she has recently been diagnosed with stomach cancer; please be praying that this cancer will be defeated with successful treatments

Angie Ganey Gardner: fighting against breast cancer, please pray that this cancer will be defeated

Shauna Silas: diagnosed with thyroid cancer, please be praying that with treatments this cancer will be defeated

Ruth Addison: ongoing health problems, please keep her in your prayers

Mary Box: some ongoing other health problems, please keep her in your prayers

Glynda Long: she is fighting stage 4 colon cancer, please pray that this cancer will be defeated

Don Lawrence: is recovering from a recent stroke, please be praying that there will be no long term complications or any further problems

Eddie Dickinson: recovering from recent colon surgery, let’s be praying that he makes a full recovery with no complications

**THOSE WHO NEED OUR PRAYERS**

Celia Grace Hamlett, daughter of Gary and Kassie Hamlett, was diagnosed with MLD(Metachromatic Leukodystrophy); planning on gene replacement treatment; please pray that these treatments will be successful.

Karen Chaffin: has had fainting spells, please pray that the doctors can determine what is wrong and that she will have no serious problems

Pray for all those dealing with COVID especially those of the household of faith.

Pam Braden: she is dealing with some ongoing health problems, please pray that those working with her can help her

Myra Miles: she is presently dealing with cancer

Guy Weeks: he is presently dealing with cancer

Hank Morar {Bill Berryhill’s Grandson}: having some issues with his liver

Please continue to pray for the families of Rosemary Holt & Rod Tate, they both passed away last week

deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus...” (Colossians 3:17). If our deeds do not match our doctrine, something is amiss in the way we are living. While we all stumble and fall contrary to the doctrine, our goal must be to walk as we talk! Deeds are essential in following Jesus.

Thirdly, following Jesus includes duration. One of the challenges of following Jesus is that no matter how difficult life gets, we must never quit! It is not enough to start following; we must be committed to die following Jesus, if necessary. Christianity is a daily marathon wherein each new day gives us another opportunity to grow and to do better than the day before. (Thank God for His daily mercies, Lamentations 3:22-23). Sadly, sometimes Christians become so overwhelmed with daily struggles that they give up and turn their souls over to the devil. Jesus reminded those amazing saints in the latter part of the first century that no matter what tests and tribulations they faced, they needed to endure to the end (Revelation 2:10).

I would do well today if I could, just for moment, put myself in the shoes of those Christians. What were they facing? How difficult was it for them to live under an ungodly governmental system, which was set on murdering and torturing people of faith? How difficult was it for them to be separated from loved ones, worshipping in secret, maybe not even being able to sing very loudly for fear of being caught by the oppressors? Trying to evangelize communities where many neighbors would turn one into the authorities for even mentioning the name of the Savior was dangerous. Dear friends, we must understand that following Jesus is not always an easy way to live. In fact, it is sometimes downright difficult to hold our tongues when others are mocking. It is nearly impossible to not stoop to the level of those with whom we go to school and with whom we work. It does not take skill to be as mean and nasty as the world; it takes skill and maturity to be different! Following Jesus means that we must never quit; we must endure.

Christianity is not for the faint of heart! We must remember that following Jesus takes commitment (Luke 9:23). Some simply will not devote the time or effort to following our Lord (Luke 9:57-62). Others will begin but then just walk away (John 6:66). Yet, for those who follow His doctrine, emulate His deeds and exhibit faithful duration, the reward is out of this world. Don’t lose heart brethren! “Be thou faithful...”

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## Heaven on Earth

By Robert Johnson

Have you ever heard someone describe something they have done or would like to do by saying, “Oh, that would be Heaven on Earth!”? The phrase refers to the joy or delight a person receives from anything that offers them pleasure and happiness. This is consistent with the idea many have of Heaven in the afterlife, which is filled with joy and with no sorrow or regret. For them, the statement, “That would be Heaven on Earth,” is apropos of the feelings they have.

Of course, Heaven is a spiritual place rather than a physical location. Therefore, to speak of Heaven on Earth is really an oxymoron. Also, many of the things people describe as being “Heaven” in this life are not those matters that will either commend us to live there in eternity or be found there. However, if one were to look for the closest entity on earth that could be associated with Heaven, what would it be? Perhaps to answer that question we should seek to understand what Scripture says about Heaven itself. It is a place where the saved of all ages will be gathered for eternity (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 3:5; 21:7). It is a place where God is worshipped (Revelation 5:11-14). It is a place where God will be served (Revelation 7:15). It is a place where the God Who is love will fully express that love, without the consequences of sin besetting us (1 John 4:16; Revelation 21:4). So, considering all of this, what we seek must be something spiritual in nature.

Knowing these things – how Heaven is described in Scripture – what in this life can be experienced in eternity? Perhaps the closest expression of Heaven on earth is found in the Lord’s church. This is where the saved have been added by the Lord (Acts 2:47). Christians worship God as the church in spirit and truth (John 4:24; Hebrews 10:25). Through the church, we are strengthened and encouraged to serve God (Romans 12:11; Hebrews 12:28; 1 Peter 4:10; Hebrews 6:10; Galatians 5:13). God’s love is fully expressed in the church – the body of the saved (1 John 3:11; 1 Corinthians 13:13).

If these things are true, then, just how important is being part of the Lord’s church to you? If assembling with brothers and sisters in Christ is unimportant now, if it’s not an experience you would call Heaven on Earth, why would you think the actual Heaven is something you would want to experience? If worshipping God is not considered Heaven on Earth, something from which you have no problem being absent, why would

you find joy in worshipping God in Heaven? If serving God is not something you feel motivated to do – not a Heaven on Earth type of experience – why would you think serving God in Heaven is something you would like? If we ignore God’s love today by ignoring its manifold expressions – not cherishing it as a Heaven on Earth experience – why would we look forward to enduring it forever in Heaven?

This is an issue because we don’t love with the love of God, we don’t comprehend the depth of meaning Jesus’ death should have to us and we have been deluded into thinking that no matter how we treat God’s church, He isn’t offended. Really? How can we think this way? The church was in the mind of God from eternity (Ephesians 3:9-10). He sent His Son to die for it so that we might be purified from sin and be prepared for eternity (Ephesians 5:25-27; 1 John 3:1-3). How can we allow a love for the world to supplant love for God (James 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17)? In reality, every excuse we offer to dismiss the church and its role in our lives is an indication of a lack of love and a disrespect for God. One may want to go to Heaven to avoid Hell, but if the spiritual is lacking in everyday living, if we don’t live on Earth in anticipation of Heaven, we will miss Heaven. If earthly hobbies enthrall us more than the hope of Heaven, will we be able to experience Heaven?

We beg, plead and pray for people to love the Lord, to love His Son and to love His church, because God and His Son love the church. We shouldn’t have to be prodded along to reflect this in our lives. Being part of God’s church family should be a foretaste of Heaven on Earth, for all it means to us and for all we mean to each other. Without a love of the church and a preference for brethren (1 Peter 1:22; 2:17; 3:8; 4:8), will we know Heaven in eternity? “The one who sows to his flesh will reap destruction from the flesh, but the one who sows to the Spirit will reap eternal life from the Spirit” (Galatians 6:8).

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