

# Safford Church of Christ

3888 S Hwy 191, Safford, AZ 85546

## 16 February 2014

### Topics

A.M. Bible Class: Peter's First Denial  
(John 18:15ff)

A.M. Lesson: Dare to be Different  
(Matthew 7:13-14)

P.M. Lesson: Judgment and Hope  
(Isaiah 66)

Wednesday: Little Book of Elisha's  
Miracles (2 Kings 4)

Pulpit Evangelist

*Ken Knowlton: 428-3494*

Elders

*Greg Briggs: 428-8756*

*John Cunningham: 428-0895*

Sunday Bible Class	10:00 A.M.
Sunday Morning Worship	11:00 A.M.
Sunday Evening Worship	6:30 P.M.
Wednesday Evening Class	6:30 P.M.
Thursday Ladies Bible Class	10:00 A.M.

## 7 Reasons Very Active Church Members Drop Out

Thom S. Rainer, February 9, 2014  
(condensed)

Why do people who have been active in church life for years sometimes drop out? They have had key leadership positions. They are considered some of the most faithful members. And then they are gone.

Though there are certainly far more reasons, I am listing the top seven reasons I noticed in my years of ministry.

**1. Moral failure.** The most common scenario is a sexual affair. The member who was once revered becomes intensely embarrassed and ashamed, so much so that he or she cannot face the members and

friends at church.

**2. Dropping out of a group.** The church member stops his or her regular attendance in a small group or Sunday school class. It is almost inevitable that, without the accountability and fellowship a small group brings, that person is headed to be a complete church dropout.

**3. Burnout.** The church member is asked to do many things because he or she tackles them with such passion and faithfulness. But some of these very active members don't know how to say no. They burnout and leave church completely.

**4. Traumatic event.** A painful loss or some similar pain can cause many church members to lean on fellow Christians even more. But some react in an opposite fashion and leave the fellowship.

**5. Dropping out of a ministry.** The church member's primary point of reference and connection with the church is a particular ministry. If he or she leaves that ministry (or in a few cases was asked to leave), it is not unusual for them to see no reason to continue with the church at all.

**6. Major interpersonal conflict.** Marginal church members tend to drop out at the first hint of even minor interpersonal conflict. Very active members are more resilient, recognizing that no church members are perfect. But if the conflict becomes severe, some of the very active church members will leave as well.

**7. Gradual withdrawal.** Most of the time a very active church member will drop out rather suddenly. But, on a few occasions, they just gradually withdraw from involvement in the church. These dropouts had trouble articulating to me why they left, or why they slowly withdrew from involvement. As one lady told me, "It's like I woke up one morning, and I was no longer involved in the church."

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/7-reasons-very-active-church-members-drop-out-113768/>

# Why Bible Reading Is Down at Your Church

Peter Mead  
(condensed)

I was interested to see an article by Peter Enns exploring why Bible reading is down in churches today. Biblica (<http://www.biblica.com/>) did some research and offered three conclusions. Let me share their findings with my own thoughts here:

1. Bible reading is down because people read it in fragments. They point to the perennial problem of proof-texting. People like to think that there are nuggets and bite-sized nibbles that can satisfy the need for wisdom and instruction. People need more than “a verse for this” and “a verse for that.”

Which leads to the second issue here. Not only does proof-texting fall short, but it also steals the experience of seeing the bigger picture, the sweeping thoughts, the epic narratives and the heart-stirring poems of Scripture. I often ponder the fact that the Bible men and women whom I most aspire to be like are not those with a ready quiver full of pithy proof-texts, but those who know the God of the Bible because they are washed in the Bible as a whole, book by book.

2. Bible reading is down because people read it a-historically. I think too many readers are reading Bible books looking for something to jump out to them today, as if the Bible were written as a relatively poor repository of ancient wisdom for future listeners to sift through and glean the lasting nuggets.

Studying the historical setting of an epistle or a prophet can be a profound experience.

3. Bible reading is down because people read it in isolation. When did the “personal devotions” approach to Bible reading become the only legitimate approach to Bible reading? Study should not be about hunting for applications as the first order of business, but about pursuing the God who has first loved us.

I can't help but think there may be some other important factors too. Let me list a few:

7. Bible reading is down because preachers with an overemphasis on application and utility have reduced the appetite for chasing God Himself (a self-focused engagement with Scripture will always diminish appetite for a revelation that works in the opposite direction).

I wonder if Bible reading really is down? But among a lot of people I meet, there is a great passion for Bible reading. These kinds of studies are always open to spin in respect to who is in the sample. I had a conversation recently with someone asserting that the under-30s are

leaving the evangelical church in unprecedented droves. I pointed out that I don't know any under-30s who love Jesus who are leaving the church, and perhaps the stats may actually be pointing to nominal church-goers?

It is hard, statistically, to measure true faith.

<http://www.churchleaders.com/pastors/pastor-how-to/172647-peter-mead-bible-reading-is-down-at-your-church.html?p=1>

In My 36 years in pediatric surgery, I've never known *one instance* where the child had to be aborted to save the mother's life. - C. Everett Koop. U.S. Surgeon General, 1982-1989.

I consider that the chief dangers which confront the coming century will be religion without the Holy Ghost, Christianity without Christ, forgiveness without repentance, salvation without regeneration, politics without God, and heaven without hell. - William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army.

## News

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After services and before potluck, we will have a congregational meeting in the auditorium.

Gerry Clark passed away on Friday, February 14. The funeral will be Wednesday, January 19th at 10:00 A.M. at Vinings Funeral Home. The viewing will be from 9:00 till 10:00 A.M.

Carol Urley passed away on Thursday, February 13. Mark Marley, 57, one of the elders of the Mt. Vernon Church of Christ in Prescott, Arizona, died suddenly in Phoenix Tuesday afternoon, February 11. Some members here knew him.

Jimmy Johnson is recovering from surgery.

Michelle Collins is recovering from surgery.

The Duncan church will have a guest speaker on Sunday, March 9 at 11 A.M. The speaker is Ken Leonard. He is Associate Director Of Development at Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort Inc. in Nashville, TN.

February Elder Appreciation Dinner: postponed.  
March 1 work party: postponed.

## Prayer List:

*Healing: Della Phillips, Harold Boling, Jerry Robinson's mother Norma, Mike and Sandy Cavasos, Faye Atchley, Nicolas and Annie Self, Jonda Gardner, Dave Morse, Richard Tuey.*

Back issues are posted at  
<http://saffordchurchofchrist.org>

