



## David Howell

May 5, 1936 - August 15, 2024

James David Howell, the seventh and last child of Rosa and John Howell, was born at home on May 5, 1936. David's five older brothers were Junior, Pete, Ewing, Tucker, and Brian. His only sister was Rose. His father, John, was a railroad man, along with several of his brothers. When David was only four, he became deathly ill with Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever. No one else in the country seemed to survive this dreadful disease, but God had big plans for David's life. He lived to attend kindergarten in South Haleyville, crossing the railroad tracks alone to get there. Even at this early age, David was very outgoing, very friendly, with a love for people. He was a great encourager!

David came from a very musical family. His daddy, John, had a beautiful singing voice and played the piano. Rose and several of his brothers could also sing. David took piano lessons as a child and later learned how to play the guitar from his brother, Pete. He would sing and play the guitar with his brother Pete for hours. Ginger and Dianna remembered listening to them as teenagers and thinking how good they sounded. "Picking and Grinning"

David's father recognized his talent for singing at a young age and sent him to singing schools around the county. This is where he developed and honed his talent for leading singing. He told Ginger one time that he didn't have to use a pitch pipe because he had perfect pitch. He was not bragging; it was just a fact. David started working for the Lord in his teens. He led singing at Double

Springs Church of Christ when he was sixteen in 1952.

David played high school football in Haleyville his Freshman through Senior Years. He started as a running back, kicked field goals, punted and started as a safety on defense. His senior year, the starting quarterback got hurt and David took over. They were undefeated and were playing Hamilton the last game of the season and Hamilton was ahead. David called a running play over left end & Haleyville ran for a touchdown. This tied the game, but a holding penalty was called against Haleyville and the play was cancelled. With only 2 seconds left, David gets in the huddle and says: "Let's run the same play but over right end." He told his guys that Hamilton would never expect him to run the same play again. He threw a hand off and his man ran 80 yards for a touchdown. This tied the game. David switched over from being a quarterback to a kicker. (He had to change his cleats on the sidelines before he kicked the field goal.)

The kick ricocheted off the cross bar, but went in and Haleyville won the game. The B'ham news declared Haleyville Alabama State Champions. (This was before football teams had playoffs) This was the first Football State Champions in Haleyville History. He was honored by Haleyville High School in 2022 for all his football accomplishments. TV crews were there recording and talking to David. His grandson Cody was with him when he was honored and Cody had no idea that his papaw was that good in football. Cody said: "Papaw's greatest quality was his humility- He is like Moses"

David began his college career at Alabama Polytechnic Institute (Auburn) in 1954. He didn't own a car and had to hitch rides to Auburn with different people. He quickly immersed himself in the Auburn culture. He tried out for Auburn football, but didn't make the team, so he joined the marching band and played the tuba. He also joined a men's quartet. He worked in the cafeteria every day in able to eat. The tuition at Auburn was \$40.00 a quarter,

and he thought that was a fortune. He loved all his days at Auburn! He later received the honor of becoming a “Golden Eagle” This meant he was a fifty-year alumnus at Auburn.

After graduating with a textile degree, he moved back to Haleyville and started working at the textile mill. David enjoyed teaching Bible classes at Ninth Avenue where Ruth Ann was attending. Ruth Ann liked what she saw and asked him to take her home after church. The rest is history. They married a few months later on May 29, 1959.

David was offered a job after their marriage, and the newlyweds soon moved to Houston, Texas. They loved it, but Ruth Ann's parents didn't. They missed them terribly, and L.C., Ruth Ann's father, offered David a job to work at Fuller Lumber Company. They moved back to Haleyville, and David began preaching and leading singing at the Barn Creek Church of Christ in 1959. Ruth Ann was expecting Ginger at the time and she arrived on David's 24th birthday May 5, 1960. David was excited when Barn Creek built a brick building with central heat & air conditioning a few years later. Barn Creek was a 1 room building with a wood burning stove. Only two years after the birth of Ginger, on March 20, 1962, Dianna was born. David was crazy about his girls!

David always had lots of energy and always wanted to learn something new. He learned how to fly in the early 60's and would fly L.C. 's plane for fun. Things, however, really took a different turn for his family when L.C. and Helen Fuller were killed in a plane crash in Spruce Pine June of 1963. Now, his energy was needed to take over the family lumber business. Because of his hard work ethic, he continued to make Fuller Lumber Company a success, and later changed the name to Fullco. With his boundless energy, he also ventured into several other businesses in town. He went into the furniture business with BA Armstrong and had a clothing and gift store in town.

Even though David was an extremely busy man in the business world, he never forgot his first love, the church. In 1970, he became the full-time preacher for the Burleson Church of Christ where he preached for nearly twenty years and also served as an elder. He even served as an elder at South Haleyville Church of Christ.

David was deeply involved in mission work through the years. In 1970, he took the entire family to Taiwan on a mission trip where he worked with Bob and Doris Frazier. In 1977, the entire family went on a mission trip to Malaysia and several other countries with Harvey Starling. He not only did foreign mission work he also preached in congregations wherever he was needed. Later in life, he worked with Billy Lambert's television program, GETTING TO KNOW YOUR BIBLE so David and Ruth Ann moved to Orange Beach, AL in June of 2004.

David had many hobbies: He loved to deer hunt and snow ski. He hunted deer, elk, and antelope out West, and once, he killed a large brown bear in Alaska. He had the bear mounted and placed in his office at Fullco. He always loved being around people so he became a realtor and sold condos and houses for fourteen years on the Gulf. His daughter Dianna followed in his footsteps and sells real estate on Lake Mitchell and does quite well.

Even after the passing of Ruth Ann in June of 2017, David continued to work with the GETTING TO KNOW YOUR BIBLE program in Summerdale, Alabama. But in September of 2020, Hurricane Sally came through Orange Beach, and David decided to wade out the storm. It was supposed to hit Mobile! He told his daughters it was the most terrifying night of his life. He had about two feet of standing water in the house and had to be rescued. His house had already been hit by Hurricane Ivan in 2004, and this was the final straw. He wanted to move back home to Haleyville. In November of 2020, he

moved back to Haleyville. He attended the White House Church of Christ where he taught a bible class on Wednesday night. Even though he now lived in Haleyville, he continued to work with the GETTING TO KNOW YOUR BIBLE program. Ginger moved back to Haleyville two years ago after a career in travel nursing to live and take care of David. Ginger said he was the easiest man to live with. He always woke up happy, never complained about anything and was always smiling. He always had something good to say about every person he met!

David was so very proud of Ginger and Dianna, and absolutely adored his five grandchildren: Emily, Erica, Cody, Logan, Dillon and Evan, and his ten great-grandchildren: Leah, Hannah, Lorelai, Molly, Cash, Clancie, Lawson, Avery, Blakely and Lucas.

He spent the last year of his life typing and organizing all his sermons from the past sixty-five years. He told Ginger to give the sermons to his grandsons that would preach, Cash and Lawson. He said they both might preach. He knew that Lawson and Cash would be song leaders for sure because they were already leading singing at their congregation in Tennessee. Lawson has been leading singing since he was four and his love for singing is obvious because he has to be physically drug from the microphone to stop singing. Cash is not far behind him. In giving the sermons to his grandsons, he was encouraging them to preach. This was a strong quality of David. He encouraged people in their walk with God all through his life.

With all the success in David's life as a businessman, David knew that only true success can be measured in his life as a Christian. David enjoyed many things and was very talented, but he knew what was important. One aspect of his life was his passion, his first love, and that was Christ and His church. David was a servant of the Most High God!

A Memorial Service was held Sunday, August 18, 2024 at 2:30PM at Ninth Avenue Church of Christ in Haleyville, AL., with Vance Hutton officiating.

# Tribute Wall

GT

“ *Gina Lauderdale Terry lit a candle in memory of David Howell*



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**Gina Lauderdale Terry** - August 28, 2024 at 10:44 PM

RH

“ *Ginger and Dianna,  
I am so very sad to hear about your father. He was such a bright light shining in a dark world. He was always so friendly and made a point to talk to me whenever I visited at South Haleyville. My parents, Clet and Eunice, admired him very much. My thoughts are with you and your family at this time.*  
*Rhonda Walker Harris*

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**Rhonda Harris** - August 19, 2024 at 12:01 AM

DC

“ *Dianna and Dave,  
  
Our deepest condolences to you and your family. May your happy memories of Dave give you peace and comfort during this challenging time.*

*Dad and Joan*

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**Dave and Joan Cassens** - August 17, 2024 at 08:31 AM



“ *May God’s loving comfort bring his family peace!!!*



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**Scotty Burleson** - August 16, 2024 at 10:57 AM



“ *I’m so sorry about David’s passing . What a great man and such a wonderful role model . I have nothing but wonderful memories of David. When we were young, the Howell’s would invite us to their cabin. I have great memories of the cabin on the lake. David would pull us behind the boat and patiently wait till we finally made it up on two skis. My favorite memory of David is when we would spend the night on the cabin bunk beds and he would wake us up in the morning by pulling on our toes. We will all miss his smiling face. I’m sure he looking down on all of us smiling.*

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**Julie McAfee** - August 15, 2024 at 09:05 PM