



James Owen Walker

September 14, 1937 - July 15, 2025

A Celebration of Life service for James Owen Walker, 87, of Tyler will be held on Saturday, August 2, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. at Stewart Family Funeral Home with Pastor Sam Fisher officiating. A private interment was held at Wilson Chapel Cemetery in Donie, Texas.

James Walker passed away peacefully on Tuesday, July 15, 2025 surrounded by his loving family. He was born on September 14, 1937 in Groesbeck, TX to Howard J. Walker and Ada Rainer Walker. James graduated from Groesbeck High School, Jacksonville College and Hardin Simmons University and attended Seminary in Jacksonville, TX.

James was preceded in death by his parents, Howard and Ada Walker; sister, Ava Lee Black; brothers, Heston Walker and Charles Walker. He is survived by his loving family including wife Anne Walker of Tyler, daughter, Melonye Arnold (Chip) of Hideaway, son, Steve Walker (Linda) of Bullard, grandchildren, Heath (Casey), Seth (Hannah), Jacob (Lexxy), Jesse (Elizabeth), Charles, Walker, Sidney (Caleb), and great-grandchildren, Hadleigh, Gauge, Josiah, Kressa, and Daniel; and brother, Dennis (Barbara) of Groesbeck. He had many nieces and nephews that loved him and many friends who have become family. A special thanks to Diane Rainwater and Renee Parker for their loving care over the last several years.

James grew up in a Christian family on a farm outside of Groesbeck, TX. Through the power of prayer he survived a very serious illness as a young child and his parents dedicated his life to the Lord. At 18, as a senior in high school, he planned to major in agriculture and had received a full scholarship to attend college. During that year he felt the Lord calling him into the ministry. When he shared this with his mom, she said she already knew because she and his dad had dedicated his life to the Lord after surviving the childhood illness. He was ordained while he was still in high school and started pastoring at the age of 18 at his home church, Lost Prairie. He enrolled in Jacksonville College and worked for the highway department to earn his tuition. While attending college and pastoring at Lost Prairie he drove 70 miles each way to be at the church every weekend. While pastoring there, he met the love of his life and the only girl he ever dated, Anne Turner.

He then pastored at Antioch Baptist Church near Fairfield, TX and married his sweetheart during that time. Next he was offered a pastorate in Cushing, TX at Landmark Baptist Church. He headed the building of the church and attended seminary while there. This is where their first bundle of joy, Melonye Anne, was born. This was the first church where they had a parsonage in which to live. James then planted, built and pastored Elmcrest Baptist Church in Abilene, TX. He attended and graduated from Hardin Simmons while living there. This is where their second bundle of joy, James Stephen, was born.

Next was Waco, TX where he pastored at Sanger Ave Baptist Church and then Berea Church. After a time in Waco, a series of events led to him being invited to Tyler, TX to start a church. That church was Tyler Christian Fellowship. A few years later Tyler Christian Fellowship School was started.

James spent 18 years working with the Navajo Indian Reservation in Arizona. This sparked a love for missions in his heart. He mentored many pastors and missionaries so that they would be equipped for their work. During this time he

founded Outreach Christian Fellowship which is an umbrella organization for missionaries all over the world. After 50 years, he retired from pastoring and went full time with OCF. He did missionary work spreading the gospel across the globe including Belize, Africa, Cuba, Nicaragua, Honduras, Peru and Romania to name a few. On one of his travels to India, he went to a remote village that had never seen a missionary. Because of his willingness to climb their mountain, they listened to the message. The Chief, as well as the entire village, became Christians. While on this trip, James contracted malaria and became seriously ill requiring an extended hospital stay, but once again, God brought him through.

In addition to his work with missions, his Friday morning men's Bible study at Cox's Grill in Tyler was a highlight for many years. He also counted it a privilege to serve on the Board of Directors of Calvary Commission. In addition to missions, he deeply loved his family and friends and enjoyed a lifetime of gardening.

While looking through his preaching Bible, a piece of paper was found. It was the notes that he had used while preaching a funeral. On it he wrote, "One thing I know is that heaven becomes sweeter when we have an investment there and the hope of it becomes more precious." We can only imagine the joy that he is experiencing having entered the gates of heaven.

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Previous Events

Celebration of Life

AUG 2. 10:00 AM (CT)

Stewart Family Funeral Home
7525 Old Jacksonville Hwy
Tyler, TX 75703
(903) 581-2008

Tribute Wall



“ Stewart Family Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of James Owen Walker



Stewart Family Funeral Home - July 28, 2025 at 10:04 AM



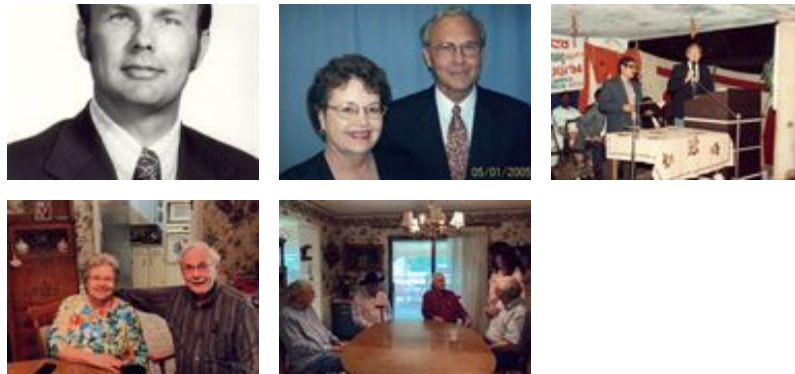
“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of James Owen Walker.



July 29, 2025 at 12:36 PM



“ 80 files added to the album Life Tributes



Stewart Family Funeral Home - July 28, 2025 at 09:53 AM

IJ

While sorry to see that he passed, I know he is enjoying the reward of a mighty man of God! He played an important part in my walk with the Lord and married my wife and me. Praying for the great Comforter to bring peace to all those left behind as we look forward to joining him one day!

Ivy Jernigan - August 31, 2025 at 05:30 PM

DA

“ *Drunita Arps lit a candle in memory of James Owen Walker*



Drunita Arps - July 27, 2025 at 02:49 PM

DB

“ *Debbie Dudley Barnett lit a candle in memory of James Owen Walker*



Debbie Dudley Barnett - July 26, 2025 at 06:27 PM

DA

Condolences and hugs to my coworker Linda, Steve and to entire Walker family. May the Lord give you all peace during your time of bereavement, you KNOW where his soul is, keep the warm memories alive in your hearts. Love, Donnie an Drunira Arps

Drunita Arps - July 27, 2025 at 02:52 PM