



THE SEVIERVILLE SOWER

Sowing the seed (Luke 8:11) into the hearts of mankind.

Sevierville Church of Christ | 208 Hicks Drive | Sevierville, TN 37862 | (865) 453-8009 | seviervillecoc.org

March 6, 2022

Struggling Leads to Strength

Eric Lyons

Much truth is contained in the statement, “a smooth sea never made a skillful mariner.” One who does not undergo the intensity of physical training hardly can expect to become an outstanding athlete. For example, if a man desires to participate in weight training, but at the same time refuses to endure the resistance that comes with adding weight day after day, his chances of becoming stronger are very slim indeed. After all, the whole concept behind lifting weights is resistance. A person struggles with the weight in order to build muscle mass and become stronger physically. Similarly, one who seeks intelligence must struggle through the learning process. He must work at reading, writing, and figuring out problems. The same is true of faith. In order to grow and become stronger, Christians must face some resistance. That is to say, on occasion we must struggle in order to strengthen our spiritual bodies. Jesus told His apostles the night of His betrayal: “In the world you will have tribulation” (John 16:33). Paul told Timothy: “All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus **will** suffer persecution” (2 Timothy 3:12).

Sometimes people wonder why God allows trials and tribulations in this world. Why did He not create us so that everything we experience is painless? One of the answers to this oft-asked question is that sometimes we can benefit greatly from experiencing mental and/or physical pain. We witness this same principle at work in the animal world. The emperor

moth must struggle from its cocoon in order to properly develop its body and wings. If it does not struggle, the result is a flightless moth. In Hebrews 11, one reads of Abraham being tested (17), Moses suffering affliction (24-25), and others being mocked, scourged, and imprisoned (36). Did these trials benefit them in any way? James wrote: “My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that **the testing of your faith produces patience**. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing” (James 1:2-4, emp. added). In writing to the Corinthian brethren Paul said, “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (2 Corinthians 4:17). The struggles Paul endured while on the Earth were a momentary trifle compared with the eternal glory before him.

You **will** struggle in this life. When you do, look to the Lord and trust in Him (Proverbs 3:5-6). Realize that different forms of suffering can make us stronger if we permit them to do so. We can be confident that “all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28). This does not mean that everything that happens to us is good. But it does mean that if we are living godly lives, whatever does happen will work out for the best in the long run.

Prayer Requests & Announcements

Remember our sister Dawn Sutton in prayer as she has been diagnosed with breast cancer. She will have an MRI on Friday and treatment will be determined based on the results.

Crissy Chambers is suffering with gallstones and has had several painful attacks. She will be seeing a surgeon on Thursday to schedule surgery.

Remember in prayer our sister Chris Bender who has been having health issues lately. She had a biopsy recently and saw a surgeon on Thursday to have tumors removed. She hopes to receive results tomorrow.

Please remember Chris Bender's brother-in-law in prayer. He has cancer and has also been going through rehab after suffering several strokes in December.

Continue to pray for the Christians in Ukraine. There is no news of injury to any of the brethren. Many of them have left their homes to stay in the western part of the country. About 50 of them have traveled to the western city of Chernovtsy.

Continue to Remember...

Chris Bender, John and Helen Carr, Connie Duncan, Dennis and Marty Danilchuk, Lindsey Johnson, Shirley McKnight, Sue Moore, Lyn Morris, Paul and Ellen Ostrander, Joanne Roark, Shirley Yeager, Becky Duncan (Joe and Connie's daughter-in-law), Belinda Lang (Kevin's aunt), Adam Lane (son-in-law of Vickie Price), Harlie McClung (John and Helen Carr's 12 year-old great-granddaughter), Anita Ogle (Sherry Simms' friend), Casie Rains (friend of the Hansens), Paul Rolan (Mary Kate's brother), Frankie Simms (Scott Simms' father), Wayne Tart (Tammie Fish's brother).

We had a great turnout for our first fellowship night and encourage all who can to come together on March 18 in the fellowship hall for this time of fellowship and growing our bonds in Christ!

Ladies' class Thursdays at 6:15 at the Hansen's house

Fellowship lunch: Today

Fellowship night: March 18, 6:30

Monthly afternoon song service: March 27

Evangelism Materials

Extra supplies for our evangelism work are freely available in the supply room to our members. Instructional books, DVDs, and Bible study materials are available. We also have a variety of cards for our Compassion Card work.

Weekly Assemblies

Sunday: Bible Study 9 a.m.
Worship 10 a.m.
Worship 1 p.m.
Wednesday: Bible Class 7 p.m.

Reasons for Rejoicing

Gary C. Hampton

Watching or reading the news can be depressing. The focus is on the worst actions of man, often against other men. Focusing on such can result in a sense of helplessness and hopelessness. The Christian, however, has multiple reasons for rejoicing.

God's children should rejoice in the Father's love.

He sent His Son to die for us while we were sinners (Romans 5:8) "In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:9-10). That love permits us to say there is literally nothing that can defeat us (Romans 8:38-39).

Those in Christ can rejoice because we are free from sin.

That freedom was achieved when we changed masters by obeying from the heart the pattern of teaching in the Gospel. Those who have repented and have been baptized under Jesus' authority went down into the water dead in sin. In the watery grave, they were buried with their Lord, coming in contact with the blood He shed in his death. Freedom from sin was achieved and all condemnation was removed (Romans 6:3-4, 16-18; 8:1-2; John 19:31-35).

Those who are part of Christ can rejoice because of their hope.

Peter said, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Peter 1:3-5). We are citizens of a heavenly kingdom (Philippians 3:20-21). Though we may be troubled by the evil around us, we can know the Lord is one day coming to take us home (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

We have good reasons to, as Paul said, "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!" (Philippians 4:4).

Elders

Randy Hansen, Robert Moore, Kevin Ruiz, and Jerry Sutton

Deacon

Lenwood Johnson (finance)

Preacher

Kevin Ruiz