



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

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It's Great to be Christians

Kevin V. Rutherford

There are a number of reasons for Christians to rejoice and say, "it's great to be a Christian!" Christians are given a heart of stability and tranquility when they fully trust in God. Our hearts are filled with joy, contented peace, hope, and love. We are more positive and smile more because we are Christians.

As Christians we have hearts filled with joy, peace, hope, and love when we trust in God because they know that God is going to take care of them (Philippians 4:4-9). We can always rejoice knowing that the Lord is near. He is our friend and our help. He is our confidence. We can always rejoice knowing that we can pour out our hearts in prayer unto God and He will help us. We express our thanksgiving even as we empty out our innermost fervent words of earnest requests to God for help for ourselves and others. In all of this we know He hears. In all of this we know He can do whatever He chooses to do. In all of this we know His will shall be done. His power is unlimited and therefore the influence and power of prayer is unlimited. The knowledge that we have the ear of God gives us the ability to rejoice in the Lord always, to set aside anxiety, and to enjoy a deep and satisfied inner peace. It is this deep trust in God that will guard our hearts and minds. This is why we pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17), and this is why we say "it's great to be a Christian!"

Christians have hearts filled with joy, peace, hope, and love when they trust in God because they know that God is going to reward them (Matthew 5:10-12). While we may have peace within because of our trust in God, and we may work to be peacemakers. We cannot control how others react to us. Though we have a beautiful message of hope and joy so many people will reject that message with bitterness and malice. Though we may love people, there are times when they will hate us and want to persecute us. But Jesus says, "blessed are you when they revile and persecute you; and say all kinds of evil things against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven" (Matthew 5:11-12)! Our citizenship is in heaven (Philippians 3:20). Heaven is our true country and eternal home (Hebrews 11:13-16). Heaven is where we shall find our incorruptible inheritance that is undefiled and that does not fade away (1 Peter 1:3-4). It's great to be a Christian!

As Christians we have hearts filled with joy, peace, hope, and love when we trust in God because of the high, holy, and noble qualities and characteristics developed in us. When the perfect and Divine Son of God became man, He sat down on a mountain one day with His disciples and taught the multitudes (Matthew 5:7). He began by speaking of those qualities in people that will cause them to be happy and blessed (Matthew 5:1-16). Those qualities include

meekness, a hunger for righteousness, mercy, purity of heart, a peace-making spirit, and a willingness to shine the light of good works in our lives for the purpose of glorifying God. No doubt Christians are blessed by God for these characteristics, but it is also most certainly true that these qualities make Christians happier people. If you are humble and meek you will be happier. If you are merciful and pure in heart you will be happier. If you are a peacemaker and busily involved in good works you will be happier. This is the way to joy. This is the way to a happy life. This is the Lord's way, and this is why we can say "it's great to be Christians!"

As Christians we have hearts filled with joy, peace, hope, and love because of our confidence in God's forgiveness. We must be diligent to enter into heaven (Hebrews 4:11). We cannot hide our failures from God (Hebrews 11:12-13). Yet we are confident that we can enter into heaven because of our High Priest (Hebrews 4:14-15). "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16). Christians can be confident they received forgiveness of their sins when they repented and were baptized into Christ (Acts 2:38). But, Christians can also be confident of their forgiveness when they sin after they have become Christians (Hebrews 4:16). Approach the throne of grace with confidence in God, not arrogance. Arrogance is an over-inflated confidence in self that fails to recognize one's own limitations and weaknesses. Confidence in God is trust in His power, and not in our weakness. In the case of asking for forgiveness we confidently approach the throne of grace to obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. We are confident of that forgiveness because of our High Priest, Jesus the Christ. It is great to be a Christian!

It's great to be Christians because God loves us (Romans 5:8). It's wonderful to be Christians because we have been justified by the blood of Jesus Christ (Romans 5:9). It's tremendous to be Christians because we have been saved from wrath (Romans 5:9). It's a joy to be Christians because we have been reconciled to God (Romans 5:10-11). It's a blessing to be Christians because we have put to death the old man of sin and we are living a new life (Romans 6). It's great to be Christians because "there is now therefore no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit" (Romans 8:1-4). It's great being Christians because we have been adopted into God's family, and as such we are heirs of glory (Romans 8:14-18). It is certainly most wonderfully grand to be Christians because God is working for us (Romans 8:28-35), and we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us (Romans 8:37-39).

Prayer Requests & Announcements

Remember our sister Dawn Sutton in prayer as she has been diagnosed with breast cancer. She had an MRI on Friday and will meet with her doctor again on the 23rd.

Lyn Morris has been having problems with significant drops in her blood sugar. Also, her brother, Jim Cochran, fell recently and broke his hip and the socket.

Andy Butts had successful double knee replacement surgery on Tuesday. He went home Wednesday afternoon. Please remember him in prayer as he recovers.

Crissy Chambers recently met with her surgeon and is scheduled to have her gall bladder removed on March 30 at LeConte.

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 is still awaiting results.

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 60 of them are staying with the church in the western city of Chernivtsi.

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 everyone to come together this Friday, March 18, in the fellowship hall for a time of fellowship and growing in Christian love!

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

Fellowship night: March 18, 6:30

Monthly afternoon song service: March 27

Fellowship lunch: April 3

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.

Don't Be Left Out

Andy Gates

There are many denominations in the world today and not one of them is mentioned in the Bible. None of them existed in the first century—the time the New Testament was written. Consider some of the following dates when some of the modern-day denominations were established:

- The Catholic Church — ca. A.D. 600.
- The Lutheran Church — A.D. 1517.
- The Baptist Church — A.D. 1522.
- The Episcopal Church — A.D. 1534.
- The Presbyterian Church — A.D. 1536.
- The Methodist Church — A.D. 1729.
- The Mormon Church — A.D. 1830.
- The Nazarene Church — A.D. 1907.

The word “church” is used very loosely here, since there is only one church (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 1:22-23; 5:23). The point is clearly made in the Bible that in New Testament times there was only one church.

The church was purchased with the precious blood of Christ which he shed on the cross. In Acts 20:28, Paul mentions to the elders of the church at Ephesus, the church which Christ *“bath purchased with his own blood.”*

In the Old Testament, we find prophecy of the establishment of the Lord's church (Isa. 2:2-3; Micah 4:1-2; Dan. 2:44; 7:13-14). These prophecies were fulfilled on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2). That is the day the Lord's church was established. *“And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved”* (Acts 2:47).

One who is a member of some other religious organization is outside of the Lord's body, the body of baptized believers, the saved (Eph. 1:22-23; Mark 16:16). When God sent the flood, only saved were in the ark (Gen. 7:1,7,13; 1 Peter 3:20). The entrance to the ark was sealed shut to those outside the ark (Gen. 7:16). It is not hard to picture the flood waters rising and those left outside of the ark trying to pry the door open, and screaming “let me in, let me in,” but to no avail. On the Day of Judgment, the door to heaven will be sealed shut to those outside of the body of Christ.

Live faithfully for God while there is still opportunity. Do not be left out!

Elders

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

Deacon

Lenwood Johnson (finance)

Preacher

Kevin Ruiz