



# 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](http://seviervillecoc.org)

April 3, 2022

## God's Love and Christian Perseverance

*Eric Lyons*

There is no greater knowledge in the world than knowing one is saved by the loving Creator and Savior (1 John 5:13)—that one is a member of the blood-bought body of Christ that Jesus will one day take home with Him (1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11). Though sin separates man from God (Isaiah 59:1-2), knowing that Jesus paid the debt for sin (Acts 20:28), knowing that one has become a recipient of the gift of salvation (see Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; see also Lyons and Butt, n.d.), and knowing that no outside forces, not even Satan, are strong enough to separate a Christian from the love of God (Romans 8:35-39), Christians should be the happiest people on Earth. No one can force a saved person from the spiritual safety found in Christ Jesus (John 10:28). No one is strong enough to take away the Christian's gift of salvation. No one can make a saved man live in sin. No one can separate a follower of Christ from the love of Christ!

But, do not mistake Christ's love (1 John 4:8), the power of His soul-cleansing blood (1 Peter 1:18-19), or the promise of spiritual safety (Romans 8:35-39) for a free pass to disobey the Master without suffering eternal consequences (cf. Romans 6:1). Although many have bought into the doctrine of "once saved, always saved" (i.e., a Christian can never fall out of favor with God), Scripture repeatedly denies such a claim.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said: "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matthew 6:14-15). What will happen to a forgiven Christian who becomes unforgiving? God will not forgive him of his sins. What happened to the servant who was previously forgiven an enormous debt, but later failed to forgive the small debt of another? "His master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers" (Matthew 18:34). "So," Jesus said, "My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses" (18:35). When a person receives the gift of salvation (through confessed faith, repentance, and immersion in water—Acts 2:38; 8:26-40; 16:30-34; 22:16) and becomes a Christian, God forgives him of his debt. If he, however, becomes hardened and unforgiving, God will "deliver him to the torturers"

(Matthew 18:34; 25:31-46).

The Bible nowhere teaches that Christians who, for example, lose their first love or who become lukewarm are still in a right relationship with God. Jesus never said that hypocrites are still saved. To the **Christians** in Ephesus **who had lost their first love**, Jesus said, "Remember therefore from where you have **fallen**; **repent** and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—**unless you repent**" (Revelation 2:5, emp. added). Christians who become lukewarm cannot remain in that state and expect to receive "the crown of righteous" on Judgment Day. Lukewarm Christians must "repent," or, Jesus said, "I will vomit you out of My mouth" (Revelation 3:19,15-16). Unlike imperfect, yet saved, Christians who are striving to "walk in the light" (1 John 1:5-10), impenitent Christians defiantly living in sin are in a lost state and must repent in order to begin walking in the light again. A Christian should not expect to inherit heaven if he does not remain faithful to Christ. Jesus taught: "Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life" (Revelation 2:10).

Christians should rejoice that no one can forcefully take the gift of salvation away from them. But, it is possible for Christians to lose hold of their own salvation (i.e., "fall from grace," Galatians 5:4) by willfully becoming disobedient to the Master, Jesus Christ. Christians may choose to walk in darkness (becoming unforgiving, unmerciful, lukewarm, etc.), and thus forfeit their eternal life with God in Whom there "is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). Or, Christians can choose to "walk in the light as He is in the light," and forever remain in a saved state, having the blood of Jesus Christ continually cleanse all sin (1 John 1:7-9).

### REFERENCES

Lyons, Eric and Kyle Butt (no date), *Receiving the Gift of Salvation*, [Online], URL: [https://apologeticspress.org/pdfs/e-books\\_pdf/Taking%20Possession%20of%20God%20Gifts.pdf](https://apologeticspress.org/pdfs/e-books_pdf/Taking%20Possession%20of%20God%20Gifts.pdf).

Article published by Apologetics Press at: <https://apologeticspress.org/gods-love-and-christian-perseverance-2814/>

## Prayer Requests & Announcements

Dawn Sutton was diagnosed with breast cancer and is scheduled to have surgery at Fort Sanders Regional on Tuesday.

Crissy Chambers had successful surgery to have her gall bladder removed and has been recovering at home.

Sue Roberts reports that her husband, Bobby, is in Smoky Mountain Rehab. He is weak and fell twice recently and broke a bone in his leg. Also, Sue is suffering with a pinched nerve in her back.

Remember in prayer Lenwood Johnson's sister, Becky Day, who was recently diagnosed with breast cancer. She will be seeing her doctor on the 6<sup>th</sup> regarding treatment options.

Andy Butts continues his recovery from double knee replacement surgery. He is receiving physical therapy three days per week and is coping with the pain and challenges of recovery.

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.

Remember in prayer our sister Chris Bender who had a biopsy recently and saw a surgeon to have tumors removed. Pre-cancerous growth was found and treatment will be needed.

Please keep Natasha Costello in your prayers. She and her son, Hayden, have been visiting our congregation, and she is facing multiple health issues.

Remember in prayer Betty Simms, Scott's mother, who is recovering from back surgery.

Penny Douglas, John and Helen Carr's niece, is recovering from a recent stroke.

Continue to pray for the Christians in Ukraine.

### 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).

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

**Fellowship lunch: Today**

**Fellowship night: April 15, 6:30**

**Monthly afternoon song service: April 24**

## 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.

## The Power of Evangelism

*J.C. Choate*

The Lord's church has been given a work to do. That work is to evangelize the world. Jesus commanded the apostles to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15-16). The Gospel is the good news that Jesus died on the cross for the sins of the world, that He was buried and that He was resurrected from the grave, so that man might be saved and have the hope of eternal life. Christ said that it was the **facts** of that Gospel—the **facts** of that good news—that were to be taken to all the world. He also said that the **commands** of the Gospel were to be **preached** and **obeyed** if man was to be saved.

Individual Christians exist in a city or village, and throughout the world, wherever the Gospel has been preached and there are those who were willing to obey it. With the conversion of two or more, a local congregation is established and begins to function. In addition to meeting each first day of the week to worship, its main work is to evangelize, to preach the Gospel to those in that area, and as it grows in knowledge and numbers, it is to reach out to the whole area in an effort to establish other congregations.

A Christian, or a group of Christians, that make up a local congregation, should never be satisfied to just meet on the first day of the week to worship. Worship is very important, as well as living the daily Christian life, but each Christian, and the local congregation itself, should be very much aware of the need to take the Gospel to their family members, to friends, to those with whom they work and to people in general.

When the church is busy taking the Gospel to others, then it is happy, has a mission, has plans and goals to reach the lost, and as a result, the congregation will grow both spiritually and numerically.

Are you a Christian? If so, what are you doing? Are you teaching God's Word to those around you? Have you converted anyone? What are your plans for the future?

As a member of the Lord's church, a member of a local congregation, what is that congregation doing? What efforts is it making to take the Gospel to others? Is the church growing? Is it establishing other congregations in the area around where you live? What plans does it have for the future?

May God help us to do more to take the Gospel to the world. This is the hope of mankind. This is your hope and my hope.

### Elders

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

### Deacon

Lenwood Johnson (finance)

### Preacher

Kevin Ruiz