

## *Strong Faith*

History records an example of strong faith that occurred on March 9, 320. The emperor Licinius had commanded a sacrifice to the Roman gods. Governor Agricola of Armenia tried to carry this out but was faced with 40 Christian soldiers who refused to obey and betray their faith. He had them whipped, pierced with iron hooks, and chained in dungeons all to no avail. Finally he directed that they be stripped of their clothing and driven out on an ice pond until they obeyed. History records they removed their own clothing and ran onto the ice singing hymns. The governor had fires and hot baths set up on the sides to temp them. Only one gave up but died as soon as he got into the hot water. One of the guards is supposed to have been so impressed that he removed his clothing and replaced the dead man. What a magnificent display of faith that speaks to us across the years.

As Americans we are blessed with the freedom to worship as God has commanded. I admit that I take this blessing for granted as I have never been subject to persecution because of my religious beliefs. Oh I have had people challenge certain beliefs; but, never have I been faced with punishment or death for following God's word. I honestly don't know if I would have the courage to suffer perhaps to die as a Christian or not.

James speaks to the purpose of trials much better than I possibly can. James 1: 2 – 4: "Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing". God allows us to undergo trials because He loves us and wants us to mature as Christians.

History is full of accounts of Christians that endured unthinkable horrors yet maintained their faith until the end. You know what? Those that persecuted the Church (Christians) are long gone but God's Church continues. Evil may prevail for a time; but, at God's final judgement the faithful will be vindicated by God Himself. There are a lot of evil forces in our world today and in our country. May God grant all of us the courage of our convictions to stand by His word come what may. What is anything on earth compared to an eternity with God?

## ***How to Get an A+ from God***

***“Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test! I hope you will find out that we have not failed the test.” 2 Corinthians 13:5-6***

I've often said I would love to go back to college if I didn't have to go to class. I consider myself a pretty good student, but I am by no means the best test taker. I remember on one occasion having to stay up all night to study for an exam in my Critical Introduction to the New Testament class. By the end of the study session (which happened to be at 6:00 AM) I knew everything in the book as well as every bit of content from the lecture notes. I was ten feet tall and bulletproof...until I saw the test.

The first page was multiple choice; however, the choices I needed were not listed among the answers. The second page was short answer, but none of the questions seemed to pertain to the subject material we had studied. The last page was essay style questions. I have a love-hate relationship with essay questions. Sometimes, if I know the answer, I have a difficult time stretching the response out long enough to fill the required space. However, if I don't know the answer, I can keep writing until I find something good to say.

I think we can all agree that tests are horrible. Yet, we as Christians are seeking to pass the test of Godliness every day. Paul's hope is that through Jesus Christ and our own examination we can pass this test. We are to test ourselves. The Devil is seeking diligently to cause us to stumble. Testing ourselves ensures that we know what to do when we are faced with sin. Through Jesus Christ, who Paul says, "is in you," and our own self-examination, we can conquer sin and be the light that Jesus desires us to be.

Tests aren't easy and the Devil is a difficult test-giver. Let us all continue to pray without ceasing, examine ourselves daily, and walk in the light. This is how we pass the test!

**Joshua Houston**

### **PRAYER REQUESTS:**

Selma Boyd, Ernestine Taylor, Margaret Taylor, Sue Reeves(No Visitors), Odell Grissom, Nora Fann, Louis Wilson, Carolyn Thomas, Kenneth Tucker, Edward Tucker, Lester Clark, Danny Webb, June Jernigan, Dean Thompson, Laura Wisner, Virgie Leonard, Ruth McDonald, Kay Jennings, Allie Owens, Evelyn Leeman, Charles & Shirley Craig, Carl Robinson, Charles Reeves, Sheila Foster

### **SHUT INS:**

Rita Reed, Mabel Robertson, Houston Henry, Oleta Bullard, Tommy & Shirley Bibb, Dan Stephens, Melba & Jeanie Young

### **NURSING HOMES & ASSISTED LIVING:**

#### **\*MEMBERS**

**ADAMS PLACE:** Nora Fann\*

**NHC:** Lizzie Bush, Sue Reeves\*, Ernestine Taylor\*

**STONES RIVER MANOR:** Laura Wisner\*, Virgie Leonard\*

**SMYRNA:** Geri Melton\*

**WOODBURY:** Jeweldean Hall\*

**TN VETERAN'S HOME:** Edna Vance\*

**COMMUNITY CARE OF RUTHERFORD COUNTY:** Margaret Davidson\*

### **NEWS & NOTES**

- **MYM** at Stewart's Creek; tomorrow at 7pm. Sign-up sheet is in the foyer.
- **Youth/College Fall Retreat** for 6<sup>th</sup> grade to college Seniors will be September 1<sup>st</sup>- 3<sup>rd</sup> at Camp Meribah. **Deadline to sign-up is Sunday, August 20<sup>th</sup>.** The cost is \$35 per camper. You can pick up a flyer in the foyer or see Joshua Houston for more information.
- A **Picture Day** is scheduled for **Sunday, August 6<sup>th</sup>** for all new members who have not had their picture made for the Pictorial Directory and for anyone desiring to update their picture. This will take place in the right front of the auditorium after Bible classes. Please see Rick Corum or Larry Benson if you have any questions.
- **Seniors** please mark your calendars for a **Senior Saints** event on **Saturday, August 26<sup>th</sup>**; 5pm at our building. We will have a meal and an Estate Planning presentation with a question and answer opportunity. In addition to Senior Saints, anyone 50 or over are invited to attend. More details to follow.
- **Elder, Deacon, Preacher Seminar** at East Main on Saturday, August 5<sup>th</sup> 8:30am - 1pm. Registration begins at 8am. Lunch will be served.

Salem Creek church of Christ  
2525 Salem Creek Drive  
Murfreesboro, TN 37128

~

P.O. Box 332067  
Murfreesboro, TN 37133-2067

Email: [office@salemcreekcoc.org](mailto:office@salemcreekcoc.org)

We're on the web!  
[www.salemcreekcoc.org](http://www.salemcreekcoc.org)

## SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday

Morning Worship	9:00 am
Bible Classes	10:15 am
Evening Worship	5:30 pm

Wednesday

Ladies Morning Bible Class (Sept-May)	10:00 am
Evening Bible Classes	6:30 pm

### ELDERS

B.K. Ham  
Jim Hatfield  
Jon Holland  
Andy Mitchell  
Randall Phifer  
Keith Short

### MINISTER

Ron Harper

### ASSOCIATE MINISTER

Joshua Houston

### DEACONS

Rick Acklin	Rick Corum
Larry Benson	Andy Melton
Michael Bowman	Brian Melton
Craig Buckner	Alan Pepper
Joe Byars	Wendell Wilson

### FOR THE RECORD

*July 23, 2017*

Sunday	AM worship	233
	Bible classes	177
	PM worship	111
	Contribution	\$6,893.00

Wednesday	PM Bible classes	140
-----------	------------------	-----

Wednesday	AM Ladies Class (Sept-May)	
-----------	----------------------------	--

### *To Our Honored Guests...*

*We are happy you chose to worship with us today! Please stay after our assembly so that we can get acquainted with you and your family. We invite you to come back as often as you have opportunity!*

*We were honored by your presence!*

### GREETERS

*Please be at the door  
30 minutes prior to service*



### July 30

Dianne Stroop                      Joyce Jenkins

### August 6

Bobby & Jackie Sims