

James Hamilton
July 2016 Report

OVERCOMING ADVERSITY

Praise the Lord for His steadfast care for us. In His love and wisdom, the Lord has allowed us to be a part of His family and a part of His work of saving others. We try to make His wisdom known by evangelism, but we also seek to demonstrate God's love and wisdom by striving to imitate His Son's selfless attitude and behavior.

Following Christ involves sacrifice and endurance of hardship, whether the challenges are physical or spiritual, afflictions or weaknesses. Paul mentioned all kinds of these challenges in His list in 2 Corinthians 11:22-33 and 12:7-10. The Lord wisely allows us to live in a world with weaknesses (such as physical needs), mistreatment by other (because He gives us all free will), and temptations (by the god of this world). The Lord does not leave us alone but provides the resources sufficient to overcome the world and overcome the wicked one (1 John 2:13; 5:4).

It is in the depth of adversity that we become more aware of God's mercy and love. We must persevere in hope based on faith in God's love and power. We seek to glorify God in overcoming every challenge.

BENTON

Attendance has been lower in the summer, in the 40's and 50's. Except for sickness, care for others who are sick, and traveling, I would say that we have made progress in attendance. Several have made an improvement, and it has helped our class situations. The classes are helping students in each class to grow closer together. The improved fellowship and spiritual growth are the good fruit of having more teachers involved in having more, but smaller, classes. I have spoken to one man about having a goal to qualify as an elder in five years, and his response was very encouraging. It is my aim to present every person perfect in Christ—first by evangelism and to make Christians and then by edification of the Christians.

I have a couple of other people to teach. Jason C., one of the members at Highway 5, has encountered a variety of problems, and he has needed our help with many of them. He has asked to start meeting more during the week. He also has introduced me to Angela, a friend in his neighborhood. We are hoping to start a regular study with both of them. Most of my studies have started with a Christian who then invites others to join. This has been keeping me busy as each class grows in number and in interest of outsiders. The exceptions to this upward trend have been the contacts that I had through Joey S. and Tony O. Recently, Joey has been working extra, so we have not met since June. Since Tony has been out of town, I had difficulty maintaining regular studies with his recent converts (Valerie, Denise V., and Mark H.) and contacts (Clark F.). I have made contact with a few other people, but there are no other new studies from those efforts.

My regular studies include: Lula M. (Matthew), Barbara J. (The Church), Mt. Carmel group study (1 Thessalonians), Rhonda J. (Matthew), Richie (First Principles), Chad, Seth, and Patrick B. (Old Testament Survey), Jerry O. and Bertha J. (Psalms), Mildred P. (1 Kings), and the Dickerson family (Numbers), and Jason C. (Christian Living).

I help Don McLain with the 65th Street church's live call-in radio program every day except Monday (I am probably start helping on Mondays more and Fridays less.). Besides the home Bible studies, radio work, and preaching, I write the articles for our weekly bulletin and prepare teaching materials for other Christians here and in Romania.

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FELLOW WORKERS

If the Lord wills, I will go to Romania with Ellen in October. We will spend most of our time in Constanta where they need the most help. The last two trips have been very fruitful. Dan and Tami Peters have worked some in Constanta, but their focus is on the western side of Romania. Their son Sam will be in Romania for three months (September through December). Please pray for the safety and spiritual growth of all our brothers and sisters overseas where they have hindrances that we do not have in the U.S. yet.

I thank God for everyone involved in God's great work of reaching souls with His word. Thanks be to God for you and your fellowship in our work together for the Lord. Your support makes it possible for me to work full-time preaching and teaching. Your support opens doors for me to teach others that otherwise would not have an opportunity to hear the gospel. Thank you for your prayers and words of encouragement that also make us fellow workers. May the Lord bless you and your efforts to sow the seed of the kingdom.

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