



New Life Christian Community

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." 2 Cor 5:17

Sunday, June 10, 2018

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Pastoral Pondering

Reflecting on your Spiritual Growth

At New Life, the Pastoral Eldership Team takes spiritual growth of our church body very seriously. Almost everything we do is to help people grow in their faith and love for Christ. From Sunday morning when the Pastors teach verse by verse from God's Word, to Immerse classes, Bible studies, supporting missionaries, and all the Ministry teams, all of this is focusing on growing your faith and love for Christ. God's Word is clear about this topic, here are a few verses to study, [Philippians 1:9](#), [1 Corinthians 10:12-14](#), [Philippians 2:13](#), and [Ephesians 4:11-16](#). Clearly, it is the expectation of all the New Testament writers that our sanctification will increase throughout our Christian lives. Scripture is clear that when we put our faith in Christ, the process of being transformed into His image starts. Justification and sanctification are truly linked together, let's praise God and give Him all of the glory for this amazing reality. In [Romans chapter 6:6](#), Paul argues that our union with Christ guarantees we shall no longer be slaves of sin: *"Our old self was crucified with Him that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin."*

When the transformation of salvation takes place in our lives, spiritual growth begins. The Holy Spirit indwells us ([John 14:16-17](#)). We are a new creation in Christ, the old sinful nature begins to give way to the new Christ like nature, and we must remember that spiritual growth is a lifelong process that depends on our study, obedience, application of God's Word and our walk in the Spirit.

You may ask then, what spiritual growth is. Spiritual growth is the process of becoming more and more like Jesus Christ. When we place our faith in Jesus, the Holy Spirit begins the process of making us more and more like Him, conforming us to His image. Another definition is from Dr. Wayne Grudem, Systematic Theology; "Spiritual growth (Sanctification) is a progressive work of God and man that makes us more and more free from sin and like Christ in our actual lives."

Spiritual growth is perhaps best described in [2 Peter 1: 3-8](#), *"His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promise, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped*

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Ministry Directory:

Building & Grounds Ministry
Dan Peikert 715.377.6557
dandlpeikert@yahoo.com

Children's Church Ministry
Pastor Chandler Wiley:
815.575.6122
pastorwiley.nlcc@gmail.com

Children's Nursery Ministry
Sara Fugate: 715.379.8799
fugate.sara@gmail.com

Finance Administration
Pete Manship (Treasurer):
715.755.3330
financeministry@newlifechristiancommunity.org

GriefShare Ministry
Connie B: 715.557.1431
conjoh1@gmail.com

Meal Relief Ministry
Diane McMahon:
715.453.8123
dedewiz@gmail.com

Missions Outreach
Lorraine Milner:
715.557.0661
lrnilner@gmail.com

Newsletter Administration
Dawn Holm: 715.472.8453
djholm@lakeland.ws

Sunday Meal Services
Barb Manship: 612.804.9793
or 715.755.3330
barb@pbmpkmanship.com

Transportation Services
Art Behr: 715.220.6882
behrden1@charter.net

Video Ministry
Jim Mabee: 651.470.4172
jmabee@centurytel.net

Youth Group Ministry
Pastor Chandler Wiley:
815.575.6122
pastorwiley.nlcc@gmail.com

PASTORAL PONDERING

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from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desires. For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are your and are increasing, they will keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Keep in mind the context of Peter's letter, false teachers were extolling a system of works that leads to godlessness. Peter wants the readers to find their godliness in the power of Christ alone - not through human effort.

These verses tell us that by God's power we have everything we need to live lives of godliness, which is the goal of spiritual growth. In verse 3, our knowledge of Him comes from God's Word, given to us for teaching, edification, and growth. Spiritual growth is also identified by the fruit of the Spirit becoming increasingly evident in a believer's life. (Galatians 5:19-23)

With this background, can I humbly ask each of you, including myself, a few questions about your day to day spiritual disciplines to aid you in spiritual growth?

- 1) Are you actively reading the Bible daily?
- 2) Is your relationship with Christ growing, are you seeking his guidance and spending time in daily prayer?
- 3) Are you actively serving the local body at New Life out of love for Christ vs. what people think or hoping to gain their approval?
- 4) Are you gaining victory over your sin patterns?

Use this list as an inventory to see where you may have opportunity to grow and ask the Lord to help sanctify you. Everything we do is for His glory.

Here's the amazing reality of spiritual growth, God's desire for believers to grow spiritually is clear from the pages of the Bible, a significant theme in Scripture. God has given us all we need to experience spiritual growth. With the Holy Spirit leading us, we can overcome sin and steadily become more like our Savior. The life God calls His followers to live comes through the divine power of Jesus. The Christian life is to produce a changed life so the whole world can see the character of God forming in a believer. Sanctification will bring you great joy and peace that are part of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22)

In closing, I want to use one of my favorite's quotes from Pastor Dr. Jerry Bridges, I've use this quote in some of my other ponderings. "In this life I'm and always will be imperfect, a saved sinner, seeking to grow in holiness and relating to God on the basis of grace that is mine because I'm In-Christ."

Your brother in Christ, Jim Nelson

Announcements and Upcoming Events

EZEKIEL BIBLE STUDY

We read that "All scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16 and so it is for books of the bible that can be hard to understand. If you are not already in a study, please consider being a part of the Ezekiel study starting this week as we gather together as students of the Word. May the Lord richly bless us with understanding into His Word so that we may know the love of our Savior more and be further equipped for every good work. Join us weekly brothers and sisters on **Thursday evenings 7:00-8:30 p.m.** Bring a Bible, journal, and a teachable heart.

PICNIC IN THE PARK

Join us for a time of fellowship, food, and fun during our Picnic in the Park right after service next **Sunday, June 17th**. There are invite cards on the welcome table that you can take and invite someone you know. Please consider inviting a friend, co-worker, or neighbor to this picnic. Often those who the Lord has placed right around us are those He intends for us to pursue. We will be gathering together as a church body to enjoy fellowship and to be visible in the community in order to make the name of Jesus better known in Dresser. Let's be in prayer for those we could invite and for good weather. **Location: 115 W Main St, Dresser.**

NEW LIFE'S ANNUAL BAPTISM SERVICE

Make a note on your calendars for our baptism service, **Sunday August 5th**. If the Lord is leading you to be baptized and you are ready to make a public declaration of Faith in Jesus, please make that desire known by meeting with an elder or pastor after service or set up a time during the week.

A CALL TO PRAYER

Starting next week, we will routinely gather **Sunday mornings from 8:30-9:00 a.m.** in the large classroom for a time of prayer. Everyone is encouraged, as you are able, to come to pray for the needs at New Life. Specific prayer topics will be: ministry teams, missionaries, bible studies, immerse classes, etc. The goal is that the needs of New Life might be made more transparent and prayed for, giving the saints another opportunity to gather on a consistent basis to pray. We serve a gracious God who hears our prayers! Let us make every effort to gather often and pray.

June Memory Verse

1 Peter 4:10

"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace." (ESV)

Check out New Life Online
newlifechristiancommunity.org

Find Links to:

• *Events* • *Sermons Online* • *New Life Connect* • *Set Lists* • & More

New Life now has an Instagram account.
Follow us [@newlifechristiancommunity](https://www.instagram.com/newlifechristiancommunity)

Pastoral Eldership Team:

Pastor Tony Minell	715.417.1982
galatiansii20@yahoo.com	
Pastor Chandler Wiley	815.575.6122
pastorwiley.nlcc@gmail.com	
Pastor Paul Linzmeier	320.226.5581
pastorpaul.nlcc@gmail.com	
Cory Mattson - Secretary	715.417.0945
Zachary Fugate	715.379.2918
Paul Gilbertson	715.755.3517
Dale Mattson	715.566.2302
Greg Mattson	715.417.2444
Rene Milner	715.557.0185
Jim Nelson	651.283.2132

This Week's Schedule of Events:

Jun 10	Forge (high school youth) 6-8 pm at Milner's
Jun 13	Women's Bible Study 12:30 pm at NLCC
Jun 14	Women's Bible Study 9:30 am at NLCC
Jun 14	GriefShare Evening Meeting 6:30 pm NLCC Lg Clsrm
Jun 14	Ezekiel Bible Study (Men and Women) 7:00-8:30 pm at NLCC

Upcoming Potluck/Meal Team:

Jun 17	Picnic in the Park
Jun 24	Meal Team #5
Jun 3	Potluck Sunday-Team #1

Please join us today for fellowship and a meal following our service!

JUDGES

Our Desperate Need for the King

Today's Passage:

Pastor Tony's message is from the Old Testament book,
[Judges 7:16-25](#)

Sermon Notes: