




Today's Passage:
Pastor Chandler will be conducting a gospel message
in the book of Philemon 1:1-7

Sermon Notes:

Welcome to the Celebration!



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, January 24, 2016

Vol. 9, Issue 15

Pastoral Pondering

Old Testament, What's the Big Deal?

Before you read this ponderings, please adjust your reading voice (out loud or in your mind) to match the inflection of my voice. This article is not meant to be understood as a nasty rebuttal to the attitudes considered below. I am writing this merely as a matter of fact. Imagine these things said in a casual conversation and a heart-felt careful selection of words. Let your voice smile - if it will. This is for our information and in order to bless all those who agree and to help those who may disagree, see another perspective.

It is not unusual for me to hear something negative about what the pastors (don't think Chandler) are doing at New Life. One of the more normal critiques I hear seems to revolve around the selection of texts that we study on most Sundays (these complaints don't consider our Thursday morning Men's Bible study, the Immerse Adult Bible study, the Thursday morning Women's Bible Study or any of our Sunday Morning studies in the book of Colossians).

If you are wondering, 'why are we always studying the Old Testament?' let me give you a few answers (by the way, it is alright to wonder that!).

When we started our study in the book of Genesis on May 26, 2012, I hadn't sat down and decided, 'we are going to *only* study the Old Testament.' Instead, I sat down and prayed about what we needed to study in order to better understand what Jesus accomplished on the cross.

The very same thought occurred to me as we selected and began down the road of Exodus and Joshua.

Each of these three Old Testament studies were precluded by a yearlong study of all Scripture. The last 22 weeks we went through the New Testament at a very high altitude. It was a wonderful study.

Secondly, it would be helpful to bear this truth in mind - we preach Christ and Him crucified on a daily basis. Every sermon, study, and teaching ought to always (without exception) lead us to the ministry of Jesus Christ. He, not the New Testament, is our focus and aim.

The apostle Paul (like Peter, and the rest of the early church) - only preached Christ through the use of the Old Testament. Their messages and Bible studies were strictly Old Testament studies. Our answer to someone wondering about our use of the Old Testament can lovingly be, "actually, we simply preach Christ and Him Crucified." Wherever we are - we proclaim the message of the cross - the gospel.

Thirdly, [2 Timothy 3:16-17](#).

Fourthly, the Old Testament is as relevant today as it was the day it was written. This is where things can get confusing. Since God condescended to our sinful world, the application of the Old Testament has changed. The way we apply the Old Testament has gone through an important shift. Though it was written to a different audience - it was, nevertheless, written for our benefit.

For example, while studying the 7th chapter of Jeremiah we are introduced to a section in

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If you would like someone to pray with you today, you may come to the front of the church immediately following the service.

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Be sure to tune into our pastors' podcast at the beginning of each week. You can access the podcast through our website, the Table, or the podcast icon on your Wi-Fi enabled Apple device.

This Week's Schedule of Events:

Jan 27	Afternoon GriefShare Mtg. 12:30 - 2:30 p.m. Green Room at NLCC Building
Jan 27	Immerse Family Grp. Studies 6:30 p.m. at NLCC Building
Jan 28	Men's Bible Study Book of Acts 6:30 a.m. at NLCC Building
Jan 28	Women's Bible Study Book of Hebrews 9:30 a.m. at NLCC Building
Jan 28	Evening GriefShare Mtg. 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. Green Room at NLCC Building

January Memory Verse:

Colossians 1:15-16

"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him." (ESV)

Pastoral Pondering

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which God almighty warns His people to "reform" their ways. Jeremiah relays this heavy message with great fire and power. [7:3b-7](#) says,

"Reform your ways and your actions, and I will let you live in this place. Do not trust in deceptive words and say, 'This is the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD!' If you really change your ways and your actions and deal with each other justly, if you do not oppress the foreigner, the fatherless or the widow and do not shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not follow other gods to your own harm, then I will let you live in this place, in the land I gave your ancestors for ever and ever."

If we merely "preach the Old Testament" - then our conclusion and application from this Old Testament passage would be - "REFORM YOUR WAYS!" If we stop stealing, murdering, committing adultery and perjury, burning incense to other gods (see verse 9), then God will let us "live in this place."

Though this is a convicting message and one many of us need to hear - it is not the total truth regarding this passage (though sadly in many churches passages like this are nothing more than just that - which is nothing better than what we might have heard on Oprah - moralism - change your behavior messages).

However, if our aim is to preach Christ and Him crucified, then this passage becomes a window into what life is like without Jesus Christ. We are desperate sort - a hopeless scrum. We cannot (and all of Scripture buttresses this point) reform our ways.

We need God to reform us. Thus, this passage serves to remind the follower of Christ that we are unable to fulfill the demands that God has placed upon us. The only one who was able to fulfill the demands of God Almighty was God Almighty.

Now, He has invited us into Him. We are invited to die with Him on the cross - that we may rise to new life "in Him" (see Paul's writings). And when we are "in Him" then we realize that the temple that was destroyed and rebuilt in three days ([John 2:19](#)) was and is the body of Christ - and we are now invited to live "in Him." The reformation that was needed was and is the destruction of our temple and the rebuilding into His Temple.

He has done it!

Therefore, a good study of Jeremiah 7 finds worship as its proper application. Will you read the Old Testament with me and worship our great and awesome God all the more?

With every jot and tittle, let us be filled with awe and wonder for our great and awesome God.

Blessings, Pastor Tony Minell



Fellowship follows our service every Sunday, along with a great meal.

Please stay and join us!

Ministry Directory:

Building & Grounds Ministry -

Jim Nelson 651.283.2132 his email: lynnjimnelson@gmail.com

Children's Church Ministry -

Cara Gilbertson: 715.755.3517 her email: cara.gilbertson@gmail.com

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Announcements and Upcoming Events:

A friendly reminder to all when exiting the building. Please remember to lock the door after you have "armed" the security system. We continue to have too many examples where the door is unlocked when people come in. Thanks for your help on this. Building and Grounds team.



Gathering at Milner's Home

Lauryssa and Lorraine Milner are hosting an IF:Gathering for Women. Initially, this will be a private gathering in their home (205 S. Adams Street, Saint Croix Falls, WI 54024) to see how this gathering is received. If received well, we as a church can sponsor one next year.

The website can be visited @ ifgathering.com (we are the Thompson House gathering). Because the space is limited to the first 15 women to sign-up, we want you to know the Alliance church is also open to registration. There is a sign-up sheet at the entrance table of the church. There is no registration fee; a donation will be taken for their chosen cause. May God bless your decision.

This event will be held Feb. 5th and 6th @ the Milner's home with live simulcast. Sessions start @ 2:00-5:30 & 5:30 -9(?) pm on Friday and sessions resuming on Saturday morning at 9:00 am for 2 sessions. Saturday lunch will be provided. Feel free to bring your own snacks. Bring blanket/pillow and wear comfy clothes.

Mexico



It is time to be thinking of the New Life mission trip for Tapestries of Life to Mexico July 9th-17th. Anyone that is interested or committing members, please plan to attend our meeting on January 24th after the church service in the closed-door area at the back of the church. Please contact Lorraine Milner if planning to go and not able to attend the meeting. Note from Missions: Christmas cards and packages have all been sent to bless our fellow missionaries. Seven soccer-ball netted bags were also sent to Gospel Joy Mission. Please be in prayer for all our missionaries and their missions, as well as our mission here at New Life in our community of St. Croix Valley. Your prayers are invaluable.



ATTENTION ALL TEENS!

Christian Youth in Action is holding its winter retreat February 5-7 at Camp Fairwood, WI. Snow games, indoor games, great food, worship, special speakers and fellowship! Share the weekend with teens who love the Gospel and find out more about local summer missions. Register soon and spend a fabulous weekend in fellowship and God's Word with teens from around WI. For more info or to register see Erika Rice.