

Today's Passage



Pastor Chandler will be teaching from the Book of Philippians. Our passage for today is Philippians 1:12-18a.

Sermon Notes

Sunday, Nov. 27, 2016

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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

pastoral ponderings

"Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water" (Hebrews 10:19-22).

I, along with millions of other viewers, tuned in to watch the 2016 baseball World Series. I had to, right? I'm a greater-Chicago-lander. Even if you don't watch baseball you probably know the Cubs hadn't won the World Series in over hundred years. Many Chicagoans were alive when the Bears won the Super Bowl, but none of them were alive when the Cubs won the World Series. It was a big deal. So, I had to watch and, alas, they actually won.

Throughout the dramatic series, I was watching many miles away from historic Wrigley Field via my television. Even so, it's not hard to imagine what it would have been like if I had been sitting in those terribly hard, unbearably uncomfortable seats down first baseline. I mean I have been to Wrigley ten or so times and the broadcasting network and announcers did a superb job capturing the dramatically charged atmosphere. Every time the camera cut to the audience the fans were standing in, what looked like, painful agony. One wayward pitch would surrender the advantage to the visiting team. One well-timed or even lucky swing of the bat would merit the advantage for the home team. The fans jumped with jubilation when the Cubs surged and dreadfully sunk when the Cubs slipped.

Back and forth the series went. Back and forth went the hearts of the faithful Cubs fans.

Through it all there is one image I can't shake out of my mind. There is one image that the broadcasters kept celebrating. One shot that the network, producers, and camera crew couldn't seem to shoot enough. It wasn't the Cubs' manager Joe Maddon nervously chewing wads of Big League Chew. It wasn't the countless shots of the relief pitchers warming up in the bullpen. It wasn't anything to do with the players or coaches. It was a shot of the fans that had gathered around Wrigley on the streets outside the friendly confines.

To the west of the park, Clark flowed with fans as if it were a human river. To the east, Addison beamed with the lively Cubby faithful. North and south of the park Waveland and Sheffield Avenues were crowded with Chicagoans hoping for some glimpse of baseball glory. And, the most favored shot for the camera crew and most sacred ground for the baseball worshipers, the entrance to the stadium itself, just below that old sign that reads, "Home of the Cubs," hundreds upon hundreds gathered to get the slightest view or hear the thundering roar of their comrades gathered inside.

Continued --->

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Sermon Date

Scripture Passage

Prayer Card

If you are in need of prayer or would like to share a praise report, please share it below and drop it in the wooden offering box near the back of the room.

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- This may be added to our congregation prayer wall.
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If you would like someone to pray with you today, you may come to the front immediately following the service.

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pastoral ponderings cont.

If we picture Wrigley as a baseball tabernacle for a moment, the corner of Waveland and Sheffield Avenues is where we'd find the curtain entrance. So many baseball faithful pressed in so close to that curtain. There was, at least it seemed, something so worthy inside. Those fans couldn't get close enough. But, sadly, a veil was thick that prevented them from gaining entrance. Just inside the entrance, we'd find the Court of the Tabernacle. On the altar? There were hotdogs upon hotdogs upon hotdogs. It was a fragrant odor and a pillar of smoke filling up the crisp air. The walls that held the worshipers in the stands acted as the temple covering keeping the unwarranted out of the temple's holy place. First baseline, third baseline, and the walls arching to mark off the outfield were the veil enclosing the holiest places. At the center of it all, where only a few were aloud to stand and what the gathering throngs had gathered to fix their feasting eyes upon, was home plate.

Seriously. While this might sound funny, picturing Wrigley field as a temple, the imagery is not far off.

Now, think for a moment on Hebrews 10. We, as people of God, were forbade entrance into the Holy of Holies. Much greater was this holy place than home plate. Infinitely more worthy of worship is this God than the baseball. For years, worshipers were not granted access into this divine presence. Because of rebellion and sin they were forced to worship God from a distance. Either in the court or even outside the pillared walls, Israel was not permitted entrance into God's actual presence but once a year and, even then, only one representative was allowed.

Then, Jesus entered in. He walked the streets surrounding the temple. He ministered upon His earth. He joined the throngs of wayward worshipers and administered grace upon grace. He stepped up to the temple and, because He alone was worthy, pushed into the Court. There, He laid His own body on the altar. His blood became a fragrance filling the entire earth with mercy. As nails pierced the hands that spun all of creation into existence, the veil that marked off the Holy of Holies frayed. Jesus, the holy One, the very presence of God, God with us, ripped the veil. God's presence became available to all who come in the Name of Jesus.

We, the worshipers of God, are not cut off as the baseball worshippers were on Waveland Ave. We are no longer separated from God by a boundary, as the baseball fans were affixed to their seats. While only three could gather round the holiest place of baseball, all are welcomed into the holiest place through Jesus Christ.

Don't stand outside. Don't stand at a distance like a fan. Push through the crowd. Jump over the walls. Run to the presence of God. You've been given this freedom in Jesus. Live every breath and every moment with God. This is your right as a child of God; A right that is solely won at Calvary.

Pressing in with you, Chandler

Building & Grounds News

Once a year we do an audit of who has building keys, if you have been given a key and no longer need it, please return to Jim Nelson. This way we keep some control of the keys.

Operation Christmas Child



Thank you so much New Life for your gracious contributions for Operation Christmas Child 2016. We collected 66 boxes again this year! The Lord is good.

Mission Bake/Craft Sale

Christmas is around the corner and with it, the anticipation of gift giving. It may be a gift for someone you know in a hardship, maybe someone you don't even know but has been brought to your attention, or maybe a loved one. Whatever the reason, it has been suggested a perfect time to put on a craft, gift, and bake sale for future missions. If people are interested in donating for this purpose, can you please speak with Lorraine Milner in this regard. Some planning would be required. Thank you so much. May God bless you.

November Memory Verse

"Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever." (ESV) Psalm 136:1

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**NEXT WEEK IS
POTLUCK SUNDAY**

upcoming [events]

- 11.30 Immerse family studies @6:30
- 12.1 Men's Bible Study, of Ezra, 6:30 a.m. @ the building
- 12.1 Evening GriefShare, 6:30-8 pm @ the building
- 12.3 Christmas Worship Service, 6:30 @ the building