



"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

Sun, December 31, 2017

Vol. 11, Issue 13

Pastoral Ponderings

Resolutions

Today marks the day we seek to codify our new years resolutions. We are on the eve of a new year. If history is an indication of what is to come, 2018 will echo with resolutions of years gone. Sadly, we are slow to learn. Nevertheless, our good intentions compel us to "give it another go." I suspect the fitness centers around us are more full in the early days and weeks of January than any other time of the year. In time we will all fall back (with very few who are able to push through to the end) into the old patterns of who we are. Indeed, even with the few success stories among us, we are unable to truly change who we are.

This is among the truths that we must acknowledge as we come to the Lord for His grace. Indeed, in order to receive grace, we must first acknowledge our need. We need help.

More than that, and along with that, a more fundamental truth that we must first come to grips with is that we are sinful.

The fact that we are a sinful people is not news to the prophet Micah (if you haven't looked at the book of Micah lately, take a look – but be ready to apply some sobering and difficult truths). Micah begins his message to Judah by letting them know that there is impending doom. But his message of destruction for a sinful people (all of which could be applied to each of us) is not without hope. In Micah 4:1-2a he expresses the hope that in the days to come, despite the impeding destruction of the temple,

"the mountain (temple) of the house of the Lord shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and it shall be lifted up above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it and many nations shall come, and say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths."

There is good news to come! Those days have indeed come! In the following chapters Micah reveals that there will be a ruler to be born in Bethlehem. Christmas is the exact fulfillment of the prophecy of Micah.

But the days of salvation are yet far off.

God's people would need to wait nearly 800 years to see Micah's words fulfilled. In the same way, we view the promise of salvation for a day yet to come (if you are reading this you are still waiting for that great inheritance which is being

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Pastoral Ponderings cont.

kept for you). For those who have turned to Christ for salvation we have already received God's salvation yet we have not yet fully realized its inheritance in heaven.

Thus, we must wait (like Micah's readers). As impending doom knocks at the door of each of his reader's homes (that includes you and me), they/we are called to "look to the Lord" (7:7). Micah writes, "I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me" (7:7).

Though we have not seen the full relief of the salvation that Christ has brought, we will wait for the God of our salvation.

What is most fascinating, and perhaps most insightful for our culture, is that the person who is truly turning to the Lord for salvation must first be willing to acknowledge that we are deserving of God's indignation.

In the midst of this inspiring moment - waiting for the salvation of the Lord, Micah writes something our culture tends to avoid. He says, "I will bear the indignation of the Lord because I have sinned against him." He is willing to acknowledge (first) that he has sinned and that he is willing to stand under the judgement/indignation of God (7:9a)! Then, in 7:9b Micah says, "until he pleads my cause and executes judgement for me. He will bring me out to the light"!

The person looking to the Lord for salvation must first look to Him for judgement.

These two contrary concepts do actually go together.

A heart willing to receive salvation from God is a heart that first acknowledges that he is sinful. A heart that is willing to be saved is a heart that freely acknowledges that she will not be able to change herself.

Let's make sure our new year's resolutions are not a distraction from the only truth that saves – "there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." Jesus Christ is our only resolute hope.

Truly, any eternal change is only possible in the one - Jesus Christ. He is our new year's resolution, today, tomorrow and forever.

Blessings,
Tony Minell

Upcoming Events

Financial Peace Class

A great opportunity is coming your way. Starting Jan 3rd at 6:15 pm we are starting a Financial Peace University class at New Life. If you have never heard of Financial Peace University then I suggest you come to the informational meeting and check it out. It is a 9 week study on various aspects of finance driven at getting control of your money before it gets control of you all taught from a biblical perspective. If you don't think this is the right fit for you then tell your family, tell your friends, tell your neighbors. This is a great way to minister to others. If you have already heard of Financial Peace University and would like to sign up or have any questions just let myself, Paul Gilbertson or Pastor Tony know.

New Music at New Life

It's a New Year and the New Life Music Ministry is picking a new album as the New Life Hymnal for 2018. Sovereign Grace Music recently put out a prayerful, Spirit-led collection of Christ-centered songs that are ripe with wonderful truths. The CD is called "Prayers of the Saints" and we will be slowly implementing these songs into our set list on Sunday mornings. Get your copy of "Prayer of the Saints" in the Resource Center today and learn all the songs!

December Memory Verse

A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."
-Isaiah 40:3-5

Check out New Life Online

newlifechristiancommunity.org

Find Links to:

- Events • Sermons Online
- Set Lists • The Table • & More

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this week [events]

- 12.31 Forge @ 6:30
1.3 Immerse @ 6:15
1.4 Men's Bible study @ 6:30 am
1.4 Women's Bible Study @ 9:30 am
1.4 GriefShare @6:30pm

meal [teams]

- Jan. 7th Potluck team 1
Jan. 14th Meal Team 3
Jan. 21st Meal Team 4

Today's Passage



Jesus
According
to Mark

Pastor Tony will be teaching from the Book of Mark.
Our passage for today is Mark 16:1-8.

Sermon Notes

New Life has an Instagram account! Follow us @newlifechristiancommunity

Sign up in the entry way to be added to New Life Connect

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