



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, May 13, 2018

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Pastoral Pondering

THE NAILS

I have been having trouble deciding what to write about for this pondering. As I think on the things around me, life seems to have gotten really complicated. Some relationships in the family have gotten strained. Work has gotten busy with way too many tasks and not enough time. My ability to spend time with the Lord is being tested, and when I have time, it seems like I am mostly stuck in one small passage and can't seem to get out of it. Life is complex. So, I thought I would talk about one of my bigger struggles. Proper nail care.

For years I have had difficulty with poor nail care. Seriously. It seems that the edges of my finger nails are always rough and irritating. And yes, I confess, I chew my nails. I am a nail biter. It is who I am. I know better. Dr. Mattson tells me this is bad for me. Not only that, but the pain I get from keeping the nails too short reminds me constantly of my weakness. I can't seem to stop. I have told myself a thousand times how bad this is for me. I have quit over and over but I can't seem to get the victory. Why can't I stop? I have stopped for a short time. How proud I was of myself. Then one day something happened. I don't even know what it was, but I remember finding myself back into the same old place. I remember the guilt and defeat that flooded in as I realized I had again failed to stop. I felt doomed to live like this.

If you know me at all, you probably realize by now that this is not about the nails. (PS - married men wanting relationship insight should watch a YouTube video called "*It's not about the nail.*")

I led you astray a little bit ago. You see, a couple of weeks ago that all changed. How you ask? I finally realized I was not a nail biter. No, Seriously. I don't like it. It's not good for me and it is **not** my identity. I just suddenly realized it. The reason I had such a tough time and felt guilt and disgust was because this is not who I am. It is opposite of who I am. The problem was that I was focused on my flesh. I was looking at how I could quit this nasty habit. What things could I do to gain victory over it? How could I get God to come to the rescue? If I prayed enough would He remove this thorn in my flesh? I lived in defeat.

A wise man once said to me "I would rather be known for what I am **for** than what I am **against**." He was referring to one of the many battles we as Christians choose to come out on the "I'm against this..." side. But really it applies to our

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PASTORAL PONDERING

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whole lives. As WE choose to stand against something, WE end up focusing on the battle and how WE can gain victory. WE begin to define ourselves by OUR successes in the battle. WE forget that when WE have a success all our righteous acts are like filthy rags. My argument is then, that we need to realize that we are more than conquerors, **in Christ**. Does this apply even to physical habits? Absolutely. Gluttony, alcoholism, sexual sin. They are all of the flesh. We do not walk in the flesh. We walk in the Spirit. Walking in the Spirit does not mean we concentrate on what the flesh wants, even in an attempt to stop the flesh. You don't conquer the flesh by focusing on the flesh. You conquer the flesh by fixing your eyes on Jesus. Don't touch this, don't handle that. These things get our eyes off of Christ and onto our own strength. Simply accept that you can do nothing in your strength. But you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you. So, focus all of your attention on the founder AND perfecter of our faith.

Does this then mean I can do nothing? Heaven forbid. As I sit here I still have stumbles with the nails. So? That proves I am weak and that my power cannot come from me. With each stumble I choose to remember that I am walking in the Spirit. It reminds me to trust and pray. I have fellowship with others and allow them to speak to me and correct me. (That includes you now) If you see me stumble, lovingly correct me. My weakness now shows Christ's strength. As I do even the smallest thing, God gets all the glory. In fact, the smaller the thing that we can't conquer on our own the greater we realize our need for Him in everything and the greater glory is His. He is not just the God of "random" huge miracles but the God of everything. In each moment fix your eyes on Him. When you stumble, and you first feel it, turn your eyes upon Jesus. It may be a small thing, but He is the God of all things. Give Him the glory.

Rene Milner

May Memory Verse

Acts 2:36

"Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified." (ESV)

Pentecost is on May 20th this year and it was during the feast of Pentecost that Peter gave his stirring address from which we get [Acts 2:36](#). It is a great reminder for each of us.

Announcements and Upcoming Events

CELEBRATING MOTHERS TODAY

Mothers, we thank God for you and your notable example of caring of your children by teaching and admonishing them while pointing them to look to Jesus. At the end of service please take a flower as a gift to you.

Announcements and Upcoming Events

FELLOWSHIP NATURE WALK

Please join us this **Wednesday @ 6:30pm** for our Fellowship Walk at Lions Park in St. Croix Falls. There is a beautiful trail in the woods you won't want to miss. The address is Hwy 87 North St. Croix Falls, WI.

NEW LIFE'S NEW ADDITIONS

Welcome baby *Abigail Carlson*

It's been a couple weeks since sweet baby girl Abigail joined the Clay and Kelli Carlson family, but we're still celebrating! There's a pail in the entryway with her name on it. If you'd like to help out, we're trying to fill it up with diapers to send home with the Carlson's.

Welcome baby *Arabella Zobisch*

Baby girl Arabella Zobisch surprised Erin and Drew with a very early delivery on March 10th. Now that she is finally home from NICU, we also have a pail in the entryway with her name on it. We're trying to fill it up with *newborn* diapers if you'd like to help these first-time parents out, since it will be quite a while before she will fit into anything bigger.

BABY BOTTLE FUNDRAISER

Please consider this Baby Bottle Fundraiser for the mothers in our community who are in need. Your support will help provide free pregnancy tests, counseling, ultrasound services, clothing and baby supplies for the mothers who are most in need. This support will be used to provide services that care for both the baby and the mother. Simply take a bottle (located near the Welcome table) home and fill it with loose change, bills, or even a check. On Father's Day weekend bring your bottles back during service. Pray for these funds to serve the needs of struggling mothers effectively so that both the mothers and the children may know the Love of Christ.

CHURCH PICNIC IN THE PARK

Join us **Sunday May 20th** immediately following our service for a time of fellowship, food, and fun during our first *Church Picnic in the Park* for the season. Please consider inviting a friend, co-worker, or neighbor to this picnic. We are gathering together as a church body to enjoy fellowship and to pursue a visible presence of Jesus for our Dresser community. Let's be in prayer for those we could invite and for good weather. Location: 115 W Main St., Dresser

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)

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This Week's Schedule of Events:

May 13	NO FORGE
May 16	Women's Bible Study 12:30 pm at NLCC
May 16	Fellowship Nature Walk 6:30 pm at Lions Park
May 17	Women's Bible Study 9:30 am at NLCC
May 17	GriefShare Evening Meeting 6:30 pm NLCC Lg Clsrm
May 20	Forge (high school youth) 6-8 pm at Milner's

Upcoming Potluck/Meal Team:

May 20	Picnic in the Park
May 27	Meal Team #3
Jun 3	Meal Team #4

A meal and fellowship follow our service today. Please stay and join us!

JUDGES

Our Desperate Need for the King

Today's Passage:

Pastor Tony's message is from the Old Testament book,
[Judges 6:25-32](#)

Sermon Notes: