



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 19, 2020

Vol. 13, Issue 14

PASTORAL PONDERING

Our Father In Heaven

In my previous pondering (Nov 10, 2019), we looked at "The Lord's Prayer" ([Matthew 6.5-15](#)). While the prayer of our Lord is a model prayer for us to follow, it is also a concise summary of the Christian faith as a worldview (an idea explored more thoroughly in *A Transforming Vision* by William Edgar). So today we'll begin exploring the prayer more deeply, taking it bit by bit as we go.

Every worldview has a starting point—a foundation—a beginning. The thing upon which everything else stands. An ultimate authority.

The Christian worldview begins with God—our Father in heaven. Jesus begins His prayer by saying, "*Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.*" That's the beginning of the Christian worldview.

Consider the very first words in Scripture: "*In the beginning, God*" ([Genesis 1.1](#)).

Every worldview tries to make sense of justice, right and wrong—and how we know right from wrong, what true human flourishing is, why we're here, how we got here, etc.

How do we understand justice? "*In the beginning was the Word,*" ([John 1.1](#)). God himself is the foundation and standard for justice.

How do you know right from wrong? God Himself is the foundation for our understanding of morality and the ultimate standard of goodness and perfection.

Why are we here? In the beginning, God made man in His own image to have a relationship with Him and bring glory to Him.

Underneath *everything* we know, think, see, and experience, there is a God who has made all things and has revealed Himself to us. He is the fundamental starting point in the Christian worldview and in all of life.

And this God is our **heavenly Father**. Think about that! When Moses stood before Pharaoh he was to declare, "*Thus says the Lord, 'Israel is my firstborn son... let my son go...'*" ([Exodus 4:22-23](#)). When His people were disobedient, the Lord asks them why they are ungrateful, because, "*Is not he your Father who created you...?'*" ([Deuteronomy 32:6](#)). [Psalms 68: 5](#) calls God the "*Father*

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PASTORAL PONDERING

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of the fatherless." Jesus refers to God as His own Father, and as the Father of His people, over and over again.

But when you hear that God is a Father, what do you think about that? Some people are understandably troubled. Why? Sometimes people have fathers who are far from the kind, protective, providing Father in heaven of the Lord's Prayer. Sometimes dad's epically fail to represent what our Father in heaven is like, and therefore put a bad taste in the mouths of their children for God as *Father*.

Yet just as Scripture sets God up as the ultimate and perfect foundation and standard for morality and justice, He is also the ultimate and perfect standard of what a true father is. All fathers in this world are fathers, whether good or bad at the job, because He is Father *first*.

In the book referenced above, Edgar writes, "*God is the good shepherd, yet earthly shepherds are at times far from good at their work. God is our dwelling place, yet most earthly abodes are far from sufficient. God is enthroned forever, yet most earthly rulers are flawed and arbitrary. God is the bridegroom, yet most earthly husbands are far from adequate. Thus, when we call God our Father, we do so in the understanding that no earthly father can come close to the heavenly image. These earthly parallels are merely useful, if true, descriptions of qualities in God never approached by the earthly analogies. Even if one had a marvelous father on earth, he could never come close to the fatherhood of God.*"

May we pray to our Father in heaven, recognizing Him as the ultimate authority and starting point in all of life.

We'll continue this discussion next time, taking a deeper look into our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

Pastor Bennett Anderson

If you are a visitor this morning or have only been coming to New Life for a few months we are glad you are joining with us. If you would like to learn more about New Life, be sure to stop by the [Resource Center](#) in the front foyer to pick up a welcome bag we have for you. In addition, you're invited to join us for our meal after service. We would love to meet and to get to know you, and what better way to meet someone new, than sharing a meal together.

Announcements and Upcoming Events

- ❖ Grieving the death of a spouse? Or do you know someone who is? Your life has changed. The daily emotions and challenges can seem too hard to bear. Come to a **GriefShare "Loss of a Spouse"** DVD seminar. You'll hear about practical advice from others who've been there and why it won't always hurt this much. Join us and bring a friend for this event right here at the NLCC building. Two dates available for you: Monday afternoon, **January 20th, 2:00-3:30pm** in the Green Room, and **Thursday, January 23rd, 6:00pm** in the large classroom across from the kitchen. Registration appreciated, but not required. This is a *Free* seminar. Contact Connie 715.557.1431 or Maggie 715.419.4822. (Flyers available on the entrance table)
- ❖ The **Woman's Book Study** group will be meeting **Monday January 20th @ 7:00pm**. The location has been moved to the New Life Building. The next book we will be reading is... "*Even Better than Eden: Nine Ways the Bible's Story Changes Everything about Your Story*" by Nancy Guthrie. Experienced Bible teacher Nancy Guthrie traces 9 themes throughout the Bible, revealing how God's plan for the new creation will be far more glorious than the original. But this new creation glory isn't just reserved for the future. The hope of God's plan for his people transforms everything about our lives today. Read the introduction and first 3 chapters for our meeting on Monday. Contact Sara (715-294-0748) if you need help getting a copy of this book.
- ❖ **Don't forget Saturday January 25th** we will be holding our **Annual New Life Partners Meeting**. It will be held here at the building at **10:00am** and following the meeting will be a potluck lunch (so bring a dish to pass!). Even if you are not a partner, you are welcomed to come reflect and seek the Lord together in this year to come.
- ❖ Mark the date on your calendar! **Sunday, January 26, at 3:00pm**, we will be joining area churches in our **Annual Walk for Life**. We will meet at St. Joseph's Church (255 10th Ave Osceola) and, following the walk, will enjoy chili and desserts. There is even talk that our very own Pastor Bennett may lead us in some music. Let's be a voice for those who have been silenced and a witness of gentleness and love for those who've been affected by abortion.
- ❖ The next **Hall of Men** is **Sunday January 26th at 6:30pm!!!** Look forward to seeing the hand of Christ in another man of faith from the past.

Upcoming Sunday Potluck/Meal Teams:

January 26	Meal Team #1
February 2	Potluck Team #1
February 9	Meal Team #2

Fellowship and a meal follow our service today - Please stay and join us!

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Schedule of Events Week of Jan 19-25

Tues	Men's Bible Study	5:30 am
	Our Place Café - SCF	
Wed	Women's Bible Study	12:30 pm
Wed	Immerse Family Studies	6:30 pm
Thurs	Men's Bible Study	6:30 am
Thurs	Women's Bible Study	9:30/10 am
Sat	Annual Partners Meeting	10:00 am

January Memory Verse: [1 Corinthians 15:58](#)

"Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain." ESV

January Fellowship Tip:

Often January is a time for new beginnings, make sure to share with someone this month the "new beginning" you have in Christ by telling someone your testimony. Share of your coming to saving faith in Jesus, and by his grace, what He is currently doing in your life to draw you to treasure Him above all things and to call you pursue making Him known to others.

HEBREWS

JESUS
According to Scripture

Today's Passage:

Pastor Tony's message is from the New Testament book,

[Hebrews 11:32-40](#)

Sermon Notes:

201 State Road 35 N, Dresser, WI ~ 715.201.2295 ~ Email: info@newlifechristiancommunity.org
Sunday service starts at 9:30 am / Check out New Life online at newlifechristiancommunity.org
Join New Life Connect by emailing Pastor Paul at pastorpaul.nlcc@gmail.com