



New Life Christian Community

Join Us As We
Celebrate Only Jesus

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2024

VOL. 17, ISSUE 20

"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 Pondering

WHICH CAME FIRST? THE CHICKEN OR THE EGG?

We know from the creation account in the Bible that God created the birds before any bird ever laid an egg. We also know from the dictionary that "chicken" comes before "egg." (Think about it for a few seconds.)

There is an interesting "which came first" question in the Bible—in the book of Genesis.

In Genesis 15:1 God spoke to Abram with encouraging words. He said, "*Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.*" Abram replied in verse 2, "*O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless.*" This reply is surprising because it is a *non sequitur*. God was letting Abram know what He thought of him and how he would fit into His plan for the world. Why would Abram reply to God's encouragement in such an ungrateful unrelated manner? It does not make sense.

One reason for Abram's answer is that it reveals what was in the forefront of Abram's mind. It was a great concern to him that he did not have a son. He wanted someone to receive the great blessings God had promised him. He had already seen significant material blessings. Those blessings required him to separate from his nephew Lot due to the vast herds and flocks they both had. Abram was getting older and there was no son to inherit this wealth. As a result, he voiced his concern to the Lord. He even went on to say it was God's fault in verse 3, "*Behold, you have given me no offspring.*"

The Lord did not react to Abram like my mother reacted to me once: "Watch your tongue, young man!" (Well, maybe it was more than once.) Of course, Abram was far beyond being a "young man" and his concern about the lack of a son was not frivolous. Indeed, God had promised Abram that He would make him a great nation. One elderly, childless couple was hardly "a great nation."

The Lord's response in verse 4 was exactly what Abram needed to hear: "*Your very own son shall be your heir.*" It was years before that son was born, but the New Testament tells us something amazing about Abram as he waited through those long years.

He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he

Continued on next page...

gave glory to God, fully convinced that God was able to do what He had promised. (Romans 4:19-21, ESV)

Now what about that “which came first” question? Whose idea was it for Abram to have a son? Abram mentioned it first. The Lord responded to him immediately with the news that Abram would father a son. The Lord had first promised that Abram would become a great nation, and for that to happen, there would need to be a son.

Even though Abram is the first to mention a son in this passage, it was God’s idea and plan. God used Abram’s natural desire to have a son to lead Abram to speak of the need of a son. Abram was a man of faith who walked with the Lord. His thoughts were influenced by the Lord’s thoughts even though he thought the Lord might have forgotten that important detail.

Abram only had his eyes on one son. Little did he know that one of his sons, many generations later, would be the Savior of the world!

May we be so in-tune with the Holy Spirit that we follow the unintentional example of Abram and think God’s thoughts.

Jay Swisher: Elder, Brother, and Friend



Did you know we have a Greeting Card Ministry? If you know someone that needs encouragement, support, or celebration, please remember that New Life has a ministry just for that! Contact Lynn with your request via email: lynnjimmnelson@gmail.com or call 651-373-1426.

welcome

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. Please join us for fellowship and a meal after service today where we would love to meet and get to know you and for you to get to know us more.

MINISTRY DIRECTORY

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastoral Eldership Team:

Pastor Tony Minell	715.417.1982
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Brian Nelson	651.323.4253
Jim Nelson	651.283.2132
Jay Swisher	763.587.3472

This Week's Scheduled Events:

Mon	Prayer Night/Westbury's– 6:30 pm
Tues	Men's Bible Study– 6:30 am
Wed	Every Man's Battle– 6:00 am
Wed	Immerse– 6:15 pm
Thurs	Men's Bible Study– 6:30 am
Thurs	Ladies Bible Study– 10:30 am
Thurs	Ladies Bible Study– Noon
Thurs	Ladies Precept Study– 6:30 pm
Thurs	GriefShare– 6:30 pm (Adults & Youth meet separately)

February Memory Verse:

Romans 5:1 (ESV)

"Therefore since we have been justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

February Fellowship Tip:

Consider the needs of the elderly, widows/widowers and those homebound in our fellowship. Consider reaching out to someone this week with a phone call, visit, invite to your home, or inquire perhaps about a need that can be shared for the body to come alongside in meeting.

Sunday Meals and Fellowship:

February 18	Meal Team 5 ~ Breakfast
February 25	Meal Team 6 ~ Casseroles

Contact Barbara Judkins if interested in being on a meal team or a helper.

Check out New Life Online
newlifechristiancommunity.org

- **2023 Giving Statements:** Today, make sure to grab your envelope with your 2023 giving statement from the table next to the resource center. It helps to save the cost of stamps for mailing. Thank you!
- **New Life Preaching Guild:** Reminder to the men who are planning to participate in the New Life Preaching Guildour first meeting is *this Sunday February 18, 6:30pm* at the building.
- **New Life Business Directory:** Melissa Cox is working to compile a list of businesses that are owned by New Life attendees for us to reference when we need goods or services. If you would like to be in this directory, please contact Melissa Cox at melissamae25@hotmail.com or 651-285-6185. Send me your business name, address, website, phone and what goods or services you provide and I will get you on the list. **Please do so by today, this Sunday, February 18.** Once everyone's information is gathered, the information will be posted on Connect. Thank you for supporting our New Life businesses!
- **Monday Evening Prayer:** Monday night prayer is meeting at Linda Sandmann's home for the **month of February.** You're invited to join us **6:30pm** at 13415 Newlander Ave, Lindstrom MN.
- **Attention Women:** Megan and I would love for you to join us for a 2-part book discussion of *Andrew Naselli and J. D. Crowley's book "Conscience: What it is, How to Train it, and Loving Those Who Differ"*. We will meet **Tuesday, March 5**, to discuss chapters 1-4 and **Tuesday, March 19**, chapters 5-7. Both meetings will take place at my house, 2212 73rd Ave, Osceola, at **6:30 pm**. If you have any questions, please reach out to me (Julie) 715-417-1981 or Megan 715-553-8369.
- **Women's Thursday Evening Bible Study:** Our next Women's **6:30pm Thursday Bible Study** will be **March 21 to June 6**. We will be studying *Behold your God: The Weight of Majesty* by John Snyder. Workbook is \$18. The Sign-up sheet is in the foyer. Contact Colleen Firkus 612-889-7581 with questions. A 1st week sample is available for review.
- **Upcoming Men's Retreat:** The 2024 St. Croix Valley Men's Retreat is on the horizon. Coming up **April 12-13**, men, young and old from all over the valley will gather at Oak Forest Retreat Center in Frederic for a rich time in receiving the preaching of the Word, engaging the text in group discussions, and enjoying fellowship with one another in Christ. Keep your eye out for a brochure and registration in the coming weeks. If you have any questions about the retreat or registration just talk to Pastor Paul.

Busy Bags
Available by the Door

nlcc
resourcecenter

Are you looking for a good book to give as a gift or thinking of starting a bible study? Check out our resource center and ask the resource ministry team for some good suggestions. In addition to good books for both adults and children, there are also music CD's, DVD documentaries, bible concordance, systematic theology books, and much more. We have many choices, so be sure to take a look today after service.



Jesus

According to Samuel

TODAY'S PASSAGE:

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

1 SAMUEL 18:5-30

SERMON NOTES: