



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." 2Cor 5:17

Join Us As We
Celebrate Only
Jesus

SUNDAY, MARCH 12, 2022
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PASTORAL PONDERING

BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS

Imagine with me that we are living on the edge of the promised land. Our fearless leader, Moses, is dead. What stands behind is the wilderness of slavery in Egypt and the literal wasteland of 40 years of wanderings. What stands before us is a land that is fully inhabited by "the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Hivites, the Perizzites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, and the Jebusites" (Joshua 3:10).

This is the opening scene to the book of Joshua. The people are standing between a rock (the wilderness of Sinai) and the hard place of Canaan. They have managed to find the edge of Occam's Razor - and it's edge is awfully sharp.

It is to this moment in world history that God breaks in and shouts the glorious words, "*Be strong and courageous!*" (Joshua 1:6,7,9,18). Let's consider His words.

What God says is not a word of encouragement (as we think of encouragement today). He does not puff up their ego - with self-esteem pills, declaring, "You got this!". No. His encouragement is of another sort.

The phrase "Be strong and courageous" (which occur 4 times in the first chapter of Joshua) consists of two Hebrew words, both of which are imperatives - which is a fancy way of saying that they are commands. As a double command, they stand side by side shouting at us.

So, what does it mean to "Be strong and courageous"? What is God commanding? Since Israel is on the verge of battle, we are prone to see this as some sort of war-cry, but it's not exactly the war-cry that we would expect. Let me explain.

The first word, "be strong" is rather straight forward. But the question is, for what task is Israel to "be strong"? One can be a strong in a myriad of ways. Be strong in what way? This is where the next word in our double command is helpful. The word translated "and courageous" is literally "make firm" - as in - "unmoved." When we put them together, we see that God is calling Israel to muster all their strength to be unmoved.

Indeed, this is a battle cry, but it is not the sort of battle cry that we would expect of an army that *must* advance (remember Israel cannot remain where they are). This is the sort of battle cry that would be uttered by the army that would be advanced upon. In other words, Israel is pictured as the one who is already where they need to be and all they need to do is "Stand firm!" or "Hold your ground!"

In what way is Israel to be unmoved? Context has the key. Every time the phrase "Be strong and courageous" occurs in the book of Joshua - it is accompanied with a statement about clinging to the Word of God. In our text here, God tells His people to "*be strong and courageous, being careful to do all...that Moses my servant commanded you*" (1:7). He goes on saying, "*Do not turn from it [the Word of God] to the right hand or to the left.*" (1:7) "*This book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, you shall meditate upon it day and night...*" (1:8). He is calling them to hold fast to the Word of

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Pastoral Pondering

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God.

As they move into the promised land, the temptation will be for them to abandon the Word of God. This is the bigger and real battle in the book of Joshua. It is an internal battle. In our lives, we fight the same battle and God's command hasn't changed. We are constantly tempted to turn away from the Word of God as though it were antiquated and irrelevant. The views of Canaan would have been just as alluring to Israel as the worldly wisdom of the 21st century is to us today. Yet, God still commands His people to muster all of our strength to remain steadfast and unmoved - clinging to the Word.

It might be tempting to seek to come up with a better strategy for advancing into the promised land, but the best way forward would be to cling to the one thing that even time itself cannot change. The Word of God.

After centuries of failure to obey God's command to faithfully be strong and unmoved, *"the Word became flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory."* (John 1:14) That is, we were given a tangible way to cling to the incarnate Word of God.

Let your heart, soul, mind and strength be wholly dedicated to the one who perfectly remains unmoved and unchanged. Confess Jesus Christ as Lord. That is not an anecdotal summary statement. That is the way we hold fast our confession of faith. We turn neither to the right or the left from the Word - Jesus Christ.

We need only to remain steadfast and unashamed in our confession of the Word - and the walls of Jericho will fall. Church of Jesus Christ, be strong and courageous. The world needs the unchanging Word of God.

Pastor Tony Minell

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 meal after service today. We would love to meet and get to know you and for you to get to know us more.

Busy Bags
Available by the Door

MINISTRY DIRECTORY

Building & Grounds Ministry
Jim Judkins 715.338.8837
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Coffee Ministry
Sandy Moe: 715.417.1812
sandy.klj@hotmail.com

Finance Administration
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financeministry@newlifechristiancommunity.org

Greeting Card Ministry
Lynn Nelson: 651.373.1426
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GriefShare Ministry
Robin Mattson: 715.566.1945
robinmattson27@gmail.com

Immerse Ministry
Ana Smith: 715.566.3740
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Meal Train Relief Ministry
Kristin Stephan: 651.235.1681
kristin@kageinnovation.com

Music Ministry
Jeff Warren: 316.308.0833
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Missions Outreach
Lorraine Milner: 715.557.0661
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Newsletter Administration
Dawn Holm: 715.472.8453
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Resource Center
Cory Mattson: 715.417.0945
cory79mattson@hotmail.com

Sunday Meal Services
Barbara Judkins: 309.269.0556
bjdarnell@hotmail.com

Transportation Services
Art Behr: 715.220.6882
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Video Ministry
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastoral Eldership Team:

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Dale Mattson	715.566.2302
Greg Mattson	715.417.2444
Rene Milner	715.557.0185
Brian Nelson	651.323.4253
Jim Nelson	651.283.2132
Jay Swisher	763.587.3472

This Week's Scheduled Events:

Mon	Prayer Night/Barton's– 6:30 pm
Tues	Men's Bible Study– 6:30 am
Wed	Every Man's Battle– 6:00 am
Wed	Immerse– no classes
Thurs	Men's Bible Study– 6:30 am
Thurs	Ladies Bible Study– 10:00 am
Thurs	Ladies Bible Study– Noon
Thurs	Ladies Study– 6:30 pm
Thurs	GriefShare– 6:30 pm (Adults & Youth meet separately)

March Memory Verse:

1 Corinthians 15:58 (ESV)

"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."

March Fellowship Tip:

Have you begun a prayer/discipleship relationship with someone from New Life? If not, prayerfully consider whom you can be regularly meeting with for the purpose of growth and sharpening as disciples of Jesus.

Sunday Meals and Fellowship:

Mar 12	Team 6 ~ Casseroles
Mar 19	Team 7 ~ Sloppy Joes/Hotdogs

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

Check out New Life Online
newlifechristiancommunity.org

- **Bible Study:** Genesis study this **Tuesday, March 14, 6:30 pm** at Mary Griesbach's home: 280 Spring St. Osceola. Available seating is limited so feel free to bring a folding chair or cushion to sit on. Instruments are always welcomed, don't forget your bibles, and be ready to grow in Christ. See you then!
- **Immerse:** Just a reminder there are no Immerse classes meeting this week for Spring Break. We will be back in session again the following week **Wednesday, March 22nd**.
- **Hall of Men: Sunday, March 26th** is our next Hall of Men. This announcement comes early so that you men can prepare some meat! Yes, some meat because this month we're planning to start with a potluck of sorts with the emphasis of preparing your favorite wild game or any meat of your choice to pass. We'll plan to have the dishes prepared by 5:00pm and enjoy sampling all the roasted, smoked, seared, rotisserie goodness. Then when were good and filled we'll transition to hearing a presentation on a man of the faith in history. It's always a time of conviction and encouragement to walk as men of Christ now in our generation as we hear about the lives of men from the past where Jesus was honored and glorified.
- **St. Croix Valley Men's Retreat:** Men, make room on your calendars for the St. Croix Valley Men's Retreat taking place **Friday, April 14th and Saturday April 15th**. The location is Oak Forest Retreat Center in Frederic, WI. **The first session on Friday begins at 7pm and the retreat ends Saturday around 5pm.** Fathers are encouraged to bring their sons! Registration forms and pamphlets with cost breakdowns will be available shortly. Any questions just talk to pastor Paul.

Early last Sunday morning our own Karen Lammers took her last breath, closing her eyes this side of eternity and opening them afresh to see her Savior Jesus face to face. Please be in prayer for her two children Chad and Hillary and grandson Gabriel. They are grieving and didn't expect to say goodbye so soon, but are thankful for the grace of God in giving them some really good family time this last week with their mom/grandma. The Funeral service will most likely be in Maple Plane MN at Hillary's church building late March or early April. More information will be posted when an exact day and time is decided.



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. The Resource Center is bursting with new titles! Age of Opportunity (parenting teens) by Paul Tripp; devotional books and a Bible study on the gospel of Mark for middle schoolers; 3 new books by Elisabeth Elliot; Adorned (the women's retreat book); The Princess Adelina (for young ladies & everyone); God and Me series for young kids; Crossway Short Classics; Also, The Treasure Principle by Randy Alcorn; and a story for kids about the parable of the Seeds and Soils by New Life's own Donna Hiller! 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. Take a look today after service.



TODAY'S PASSAGE:
Pastor Tony's message is from the
New Testament book,
Acts 28:11-16

Sermon Notes: