



# 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

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## Pastoral Pondering-What is the fear of the Lord?

The phrase “fear of the Lord” (or variations of it) is a theme that permeates the pages of Scripture, both explicitly and implicitly. From Genesis 3 when the reader implicitly longs to see a fear of the Lord from Adam and Eve to Revelation 19 when in verse 5 a song of praise is explicitly rising up from “his servants...who fear Him”! This is no peripheral obscure concept. It is a theme that weaves its way through almost every story in Scripture.

Though there are many Scriptural references to “the fear of the Lord”, opinions about how we ought to define the phrase abound in a myriad of ways. Indeed, “myriad” could likely describe the number of ways the phrase has been misunderstood. Humans are creative. That means, if something doesn’t initially sit well with our opinion, we can be rather creative in rationalizing an idea until it better suits our opinion.

If we are to have the “fear of the Lord” does it mean – that we are to be scared of God? Does it mean that we are to run from God? I’ve actually heard some in the ivory tower say – “The Fear of the Lord does *not* mean ‘fear the Lord.’” That’s not even creative. That’s just silly (if only that person knew the beginning of wisdom...). Ironically, that person has illustrated what it looks like to *not* fear the Lord.

As students of the Word of God, we ought to seek to allow the Word to light our path. Therefore, let’s take a look at this theme as it is used in Scripture.

In Isaiah 7-8 the King of Judah, Ahaz, is looking at the situation around him with unease. The Northern Kingdom of Israel is closer and closer to conspiring with Syria against Assyria - the world’s then aggressive super-power. Judah would essentially be a sitting duck between Assyria and the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

If Judah is to survive, Ahaz must align himself (give allegiance to) whomever he believes will ultimately have victory.

Judah believes salvation can only come from giving allegiance to either the Northern Kingdom or Assyria. God reminds Ahaz of another Savior – God Himself. In Isaiah 7:4 God instructs Isaiah to tell Ahaz “Be careful, be quiet, do not fear, and do not let your heart be faint because of these two smoldering stumps of firebrands”. He tells Ahaz to stand fast and not give allegiance to either foe (without saying it, God is instructing him to trust *Him* (God) rather than Ahaz’s enemies). Unfortunately, Ahaz rejects the Lord’s suggestion and aligns himself with the grand superpower - Assyria.

In his attempt to thwart disaster, immediately he finds himself under attack from Assyria (see 7:17-20).

*Continued-->*

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## Pastoral Pondering Cont.

God then turns to Isaiah and says the words that we need to hear. He says (in 8:11-13), “do not walk in the way of this people...and do not fear what they fear, nor be in dread. But the Lord of hosts, Him you shall honor as holy. Let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread.”

In other words, who do you believe is ultimately in control? The one you believe as the final authority is the one you obey – and the one you obey illustrates who you essentially fear. Ahaz feared Assyria. He ought to have feared the Lord.

But God knew that Ahaz would fail. He knew that neither the Northern nor the Southern Kingdom of Israel would fear God. That is why he couched this episode with a prophecy of a coming Child. The Child would be called Immanuel, “God with us” (7:14, 8:8). God knew that for us to actually have a fear of God, it would require us to have God in our midst.

It would be this child who would do what no man was able to do – He would perfectly walk in the fear of the Lord – but His fear of the Lord would lead Him to His death. His fear of the Lord would eclipse even His desire to defend Himself. He would obey God not for self-preservation. The quality of His fear simply sought God’s purposes above His own. That is astonishing.

In Christ, we have the great honor and privilege to be able to fear the Lord in hindsight. What do I mean by that? Not only has God come to be with us, but He has defeated our chief enemy – death. We have seen Him have victory over death. It is finished. We can now turn to Him and approach the throne in total confidence – something the world had never had. The fear of the Lord has taken on a whole new hue, in Christ Jesus.

We fear Him because He has *had* the victory. Join me, you His saints, and “do not fear what they fear, nor be in dread. But the Lord of hosts, him you shall honor as holy...And [to us] He will become a sanctuary.”

To whom will you turn to be your sanctuary? Turn to Jesus – only Jesus.

Blessings,  
Pastor Tony Minell

## Announcements & Upcoming Events

Please pray with us as we celebrate graduating seniors today!

**Worship and Prayer Night:** Our next worship and prayer night is scheduled for May 28<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm. Come for a time of lifting our voices in song and together joining in praying for one another and any other burdens on our hearts. Feel free to bring an instrument and play along!

**Prayer before Service:** Join us Sunday mornings before service @ 8:30-9:00 am in the large classroom to pray. Everyone is encouraged to come. Specific topics we pray about are: ministry teams, missionaries, bible studies, immerse classes, community witness, etc. We serve a gracious God who hears our prayers! Let us make every effort to gather often and pray.

**Resource Center:** 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!

**Baby Bottle Fund Raiser:** Please consider supporting Options for Women [TRI-COUNTY] in their Baby Bottle Fund Raiser this year. Simply take a bottle from the welcome table and during the next few weeks, fill it with loose change and bills. Then on Father's Day weekend (Sunday, June 16) bring your bottles back during service. Pray for these funds to effectively serve the needs of struggling mothers in our community so that both the mothers and their born and unborn children may know the love of Christ through this support.

**May Fellowship Tip:** Take a moment this morning and greet someone you haven't met before.

### Check out New Life Online

[newlifechristiancommunity.org](http://newlifechristiancommunity.org)

Find Links to: • Events • Sermons Online •  
Set Lists • New Life Connect • & More

### Pastoral Eldership Team:

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### This Week's Schedule of Events:

Tue	Worship & Prayer Night @ 6:30
Wed	Women's Bible Study 12:30 pm
Thurs	Men's Bible Study 6:30 am
Thurs	Women's Bible Study 9:30 am
Thurs	ALL GriefShare Folks 6:30 pm

*Adults and Youth meet separately*

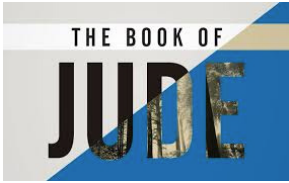
### Upcoming Potluck/Meal Teams:

June 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Potluck 2
June 9 <sup>th</sup>	Meal Team 5
June 16 <sup>th</sup>	Picnic in the Park

### May Memory Verse

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God." - Colossians 3:16

## Today's Passage



Please welcome New Life's first Pastor,  
Jeremy Kimble. He will be teaching from  
the Book Jude.

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