



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, July 14, 2019

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PASTORAL PONDERING

Worship Matters - Part II

What is worship? How would you define or describe it? Before reading any further, think about how you might answer that question. Is worship a certain activity? Is it a particular musical genre? What is it and how should we think about it? In "Part I" (printed June 16), we said that corporate worship at New Life is **(first) a crucial part of a bigger whole**, and also **(second) gospel centered**. In this follow-up, we'll continue exploring the topic of worship together with two more aspects to consider.

Third, corporate worship at New Life is to be communal and participatory. With the inadequate but common assumption that worship is defined solely as singing, we often treat congregational singing as an individual encounter with God. As we sing, we try to avoid being distracted by others and seek after an individual experience. While that can certainly be a part of our worship, by itself it misses a much bigger picture of what corporate worship is meant to be.

Too often we put too much emphasis on ourselves in corporate worship—our own experience, our own favorite songs or musical style, etc. All of this misses an important point in aiming for a truly *corporate* experience in worship, however. "Worship is a broader thing than music, and music's purpose in the church is bigger than my personal experience. It's not merely *my* song, but *our* song. We sing together, uniting our voices and our words" (Casper).

Rather than coming to church with attitudes that are tainted by individualism and consumerism, we must join together gladly with all the diversity contained in the body of Christ ([Ephesians 4.1-16](#)). We should not come to church expecting to have a worship experience delivered to us; we should come excited to sing together and sit together under the authority of God's Word. Isaac Wardell of *Bifrost Arts* has helpfully pointed out that our worship services should not be viewed as a "concert hall," but rather a "banquet hall"—not a place we go to merely receive something, but a place we enter to participate in something together.

So, while it is important to have experienced and qualified people leading musical worship from the stage, it is far more important for the congregation to sing boldly the great truths of the gospel. *They* are the real "worship team."

Fourth, our worship must be marked by humility and service for others. For years now in the American evangelical church, issues surrounding musical styles and preferences have become far more important than they should have ever been. Music is an important component of our corporate worship, but it should never have become a point of contention in the church. That Christians would literally argue with each other about which style of music to use in church worship is nothing short of sinful and embarrassing in our witness to Christ.

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Art Behr: 715.220.6882
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PASTORAL PONDERING

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People are naturally deeply wedded to their personal preferences, but we must be constantly aware that the *style* of music we use in our church services is almost never a matter of essential theological importance. We must recognize the differences between what is theological and what is cultural; between where the Bible speaks clearly and where it does not.

Equating worship with music and becoming too attached to any particular style of music in our worship is extremely problematic. Cospers describes the danger like this: "If music is worship, then when you mess with someone's musical preferences, you threaten their access to God. No wonder the debates become so heated."

As discussed in the previous pondering, our access to God has been achieved and provided for us by God himself, through the person and work of Jesus Christ. It has nothing whatsoever to do with any particular aspect of culture or music style. Of course, we all know this truth, but it sometimes appears that we don't really *know* it or truly live in light of it. When we join together with God's people in corporate worship, we must come with open hands and humble hearts toward one another.

"While Paul tells the Colossians that social and ethnic boundaries are obliterated for Christians, we have found ways to divide into new tribes based on musical preference: traditional and contemporary, classic and modern, hymns and praise choruses. Harold Best once said, 'A mature Christian is easily edified.' If we're gathering humbly, united by the gospel, we should be marked by a sense of thankfulness that brings us together, regardless of our stylistic and cultural decisions" (Cospers).

Paul wisely encourages us in [Colossians 3.15](#) to "*let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts, to which we were called into one body.*" We sing together as one body for God's glory. Practically, this may mean that at times our most sincere worship is singing a song we don't prefer because we know someone else is helped by it. Disciplining ourselves to enter into corporate worship with this mentality is one way we can let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts and count others more significant than ourselves ([Philippians 2.3](#), [Romans 15.1-7](#)).

To summarize, this is *not* an argument for any particular worship style over another, but rather a corporate *approach* to the issues of style and preference—an approach characterized by humility and service to our brothers and sisters in Christ, with unity in the Spirit as our highest aim.

Worshiping Jesus with you, Pastor Bennett

Join us Every Sunday Morning @ 8:30am in the large classroom to pray together as a body.

Announcements and Upcoming Events

GRIEFSHARE EVENT

GriefShare has Free Event, "Loss of a Spouse" this **Thursday, July 18th** (One evening only) 6:15-8:30 pm at the building. There will be a DVD and discussion afterwards. Contact Connie via conjoh1@gmail.com or 715-557-1431 if interested or have questions. This evening of support and encouragement is provided for anyone who has had a husband or wife die. It is ok if you need a friend to come with you.

*****Looking Ahead:** The regular 13-week season of GriefShare for the loss of all other types of relationships through a death, including spouses, will begin **Thursday, September 5th** at 6:30 pm. Do you know of someone that may need encouragement and hope after a death of their loved one? Bring them!

PICNIC IN DRESSER PARK

Mark your calendar for a New Life Picnic in the Park *next Sunday, July 21st* after service. Enjoy food, games, and fellowship together at the park, 115 W Main Street in Dresser.

ANNUAL BAPTISM EVENT

Our Baptism Service this year is fast approaching, which will be on **Sunday, August 4th**. If you are interested in being baptized – put your name on the sign-up sheet located on the welcome table in the lobby and be sure to reach out to one of the pastors to let them know your desire.

VIDEO MINISTRY

The Video Ministry is looking for a switcher, someone to sit in the booth and switch between camera views. This is a chance to serve the body of Christ, by serving those who are unable to be here in person. If you are interested or just want more information, contact Jim Mabee via jbmabee@gmail.com or 651-470-4172.

POTLUCK SUNDAY

Did you know that New Life has a Potluck Sunday every month? To make it easy for everyone to remember, it is *always* the **Last Sunday of each month**. This gives our meal teams a break and gives you an opportunity to bring your favorite dish, desert, or just a bag of chips to pass.

IMMERSE

Immerse season is on the horizon. If you are interested in ways to serve, such as supplying snacks, teaching or assisting in a class, or caring for our youngest in the nursery, please talk to Pastor Paul.

July Fellowship Tip:

Are you an avid outdoor person? Next time you go fishing, hiking, running, gardening, etc. invite someone new to join with you and consider how you might spur them on in Christ

Upcoming Sunday Potluck/Meal Teams:

July 21 Picnic in Dresser Park
July 28 Meal Team #2

Fellowship and a meal follow our service today...please stay and join us!

Pastoral Eldership Team:

Pastor Tony Minell 715.417.1982
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Paul Gilbertson 612.799.4865
Dale Mattson 715.566.2302
Greg Mattson 715.417.2444
Rene Milner 715.557.0185
Jim Nelson 651.283.2132

Schedule of Events Week of July 14-20

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 Deuteronomy Bible Study 7:00 pm
Thurs Adult GriefShare 6:15-8:30 pm
"Loss of a Spouse" Event
Youth GriefShare - 6:30 pm.

July Memory Verse:

Hebrews 10:24-25

"And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near." ESV

HEBREWS

JESUS
According to Scripture

Today's Passage:

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

Hebrews 7:20-28

Sermon Notes:

Address: 201 State Road 35 N, Dresser, WI - 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