



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

Join Us As We
Celebrate Only
Jesus

SUNDAY, AUGUST 13, 2023
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Pastoral Pondering ~

WHICH THIEF ARE YOU?

What do we all have in common with the two thieves on the cross? We are all sinners in need of a Redeemer.

We may not understand everything about Christology. But we can know everything we need to know in order to receive His mercy and inherit eternal life. And for that, we don't need to study systematic theology. The answers come from a thief having a brief discussion from the gospel of Luke.

"But the other rebuked him, saying, 'Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.' And he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' And He said to him, 'Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.'" (Luke 23:40-43 ESV)

As you dive into these verses, and put them into proper context, we can see some amazing truth. I highlighted below five main takeaways from this text.

The Thief declared that Christ is righteous. The thief knew that he was justly being crucified. But, as for Jesus "this man has done nothing wrong." Christ's perfect righteousness shone into the dark recesses of a man whose life was marked by wickedness.

The Thief appealed to Christ Exclusively. At the foot of the cross stood representatives of Roman political power as well as members of Israel's religious elite. But the thief made no appeal to the Romans for exoneration, nor to the Jews for spiritual absolution. The thief made his only appeal to the crucified Savior. The exclusivity of Christ is a central tenet of the Christian faith. Jesus made it clear that He is the only way - not a way- to heaven. (John 14:6, Acts 4:12) The thief in his most desperate hour knew Jesus was his only hope.

The Thief requested Christ's Forgiveness. He then addressed Jesus directly as the Savior and humbly asked him, *"Jesus remember me when you come into Your Kingdom!"* He based his request on Christ's prayer that God would forgive those who crucified Him, which gave the thief hope that he too might receive forgiveness. His was the plea of a broken, penitent, unworthy sinner for grace, mercy, and forgiveness. He knew his ultimate need was forgiveness.

The Thief Recognized Christ's Authority. Implicit in the thief's plea for forgiveness was his recognition of Christ's authority to grant forgiveness and eternal life. He believed that Jesus was Israel's Messiah. He acknowledged that the Lord would one day establish His kingdom, which was promised in the covenants God made with Abraham

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Pastoral Pondering

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and David, and reiterated repeatedly to the prophets.

The Thief anticipated Christ's Resurrection. The gospel narratives don't shy away from exposing the unbelief of Christ's closest disciples. All of them barring John fled at his arrest and despaired of His death - even though Jesus taught them repeatedly that He would rise from the dead. Since no one survives crucifixion, he understood that Jesus would have to rise from the dead to do that. He probably knew Jesus had power over death, since the news of His raising of Lazarus had spread throughout Jerusalem. He no doubt was aware that [Daniel 12:2](#) promised that the saints would raise and given a place of glory in the kingdom. His request was that Jesus would raise him and grant him entrance to that kingdom.

That the other thief rejected Jesus is remarkable in its own right. Not only was this man next to the Savior of the world, but he also heard Him pray, he witnessed the salvation of the other thief, he saw the world go completely dark, and he heard the testimony of the Son. But his pride kept him from submitting to the only One who could save him, and when he one day bows to the Name he mocked, he will be doing so reluctantly and while in torment, [Philippians 2:10](#).

Through the pain of crucifixion, the thief was able to declare Christ's righteousness, appeal to Him exclusively, petition His forgiveness, recognize His authority, and anticipate His future resurrection. There is a profound simplicity to the thief's faith in the Savior. And it is a glorious benchmark for every sinner who approaches Christ in repentance and faith.

Your brother In - Christ, Jim Nelson



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 after service today where 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
Daniel Lipp 612.229.2893
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Coffee Ministry

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Finance Administration

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Greeting Card Ministry

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GriefShare Ministry

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Immerse Ministry

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Meal Train Relief Ministry

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Music Ministry

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Missions Outreach

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Newsletter Administration

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Resource Center

Cory Mattson: 715.417.0945
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Sunday Meal Services

Barbara Judkins: 309.269.0556
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Transportation Services

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Video Ministry

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastoral Eldership Team:

Pastor Tony Minell	715.417.1982
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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	Young Adult Study– 6:30 pm
Thurs	Men's Bible Study– 6:30 am
Thurs	Ladies Bible Study– Noon
Thurs	Ladies Study– 6:30 pm
Thurs	GriefShare– 6:30 pm (Adults & Youth meet separately)

August Memory Verse:

1 Thessalonians 5:5-6 (ESV)

"For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober."

August Fellowship Tip:

Share your favorite memory verse with someone today. If you don't have one, begin to memorize God's Word and practice reciting it to others.

Sunday Meals and Fellowship:

August 13	No Meal
August 20	Team 1 ~ Pizza

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

Check out New Life Online
newlifechristiancommunity.org

➤ **Prayer Night:** Join us as we gather for prayer at the Barton's on **Monday, August 14th at 6:30 pm.**

➤ **Young Adult Study:** Just a reminder for August we are returning to meeting the **first and third Wednesday of the month.** Eager to look into God's Word with you. Please contact either Erik at 715-417-1596 or Katie at 715-417-1595 with any questions.

➤ **Men's Camping Weekend:** Men young and old you're invited to join a New Life camping weekend on the St. Croix River late this summer. The trip will **begin Friday afternoon September 8th and end Saturday afternoon the 9th.** This camp out is for fellowship together centered around Jesus Christ. Consider it a time to invest in one another while enjoying the outdoors. If you are interested in going just contact one of the pastors. FYI, a free camping pass is required and will need to be obtained in advance and access to the campsite is by boat or canoe only.

➤ **Immerse:** Immerse season is coming soon! These are our Wednesday evening bible classes for all ages. There are multiple classes for our younger ones starting from nursery age all the way up to junior high. We will also have 2 adult studies this fall where parents and their young adults can study side by side. Classes will **begin Wednesday, September 13th and go from 6:15-7:30pm.**

These classes are rich and wonderful ways to be growing in Christ and in fellowship with one another mid-week.

If you're interested in helping teach or assist the children's class, please reach out to Pastor Paul, Ana Smith, or Mindy Havlish.



The logo for the New Life Christian Community (nlcc) Resource Center. It features the lowercase letters "nlcc" in a bold, sans-serif font, with a light blue swoosh underneath. Below "nlcc" is the word "resourcecenter" in a smaller, lowercase, sans-serif font.

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. Take a look today after service.

Romans

Living In Christ

TODAY'S PASSAGE:
Elder Jim's message is from the
New Testament book,
ROMANS 8:5-9

SERMON NOTES: