



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, September 20, 2020

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PASTORAL PONDERING

LET EVERYONE BE SUBJECT TO THE GOVERNING AUTHORITIES

Yep, I went there. No, I am not going to tell you how you should vote or what Christian civil disobedience should look like. I think sometimes we go to the Bible and read a passage that makes us squirm and then we do all kinds of mental jujitsu to make it fit what we think it should say or what someone else told us it should say. In fact, if the truth be known, and you are anything like me, it is more than sometimes. How do we prevent that innate tendency to hear what we want to hear and tell ourselves what we think is good for "me"? Well the best answer is to have a true body of believers who hold the Word of God foremost, The Glory of God utmost, and the love of God's people to the outermost edge of their comfort zone. Praise God for this gift in the many different study groups at New Life.

Thursday morning the men got to walk through Romans 13:1-5. This would seem like a timely passage. Given our current state in the US, but given a little discipline and some strong leadership, we were able to put a "hold" on the political thoughts and really look at what the passage was saying. I thought that this would be a good place to share some of that accumulated wisdom from the group.

Paul is talking to a group who is being persecuted and facing increasing persecution on several fronts. He has just finished telling them to transform their minds and offer their bodies as a sacrifice. He now gives them a pragmatic approach to living in an imperfect world. They are to not think too highly of themselves but to place importance on others. To love with them, laugh with them and weep with them. He is very practical about how we should act toward others and what our "transformed" mind should look like on the outside when it is working on the inside. In the end we need to overcome evil with good.

After describing what makes this happen and how it looks with brothers and gentiles he moves on to our response to the governing authorities. These are the people who carry out the logistics of Law and order. Just like everyone else we are to live with them peaceably. For this group this means being under them. Submitting to their decisions and direction. The current climate makes us want to ask, "Why would I want to do that?" Hold that thought.

First let's make sure we know what that statement clearly means. We are to be under who? The governing authorities. Too often when we think of that we become fearful. What if they don't choose like I would choose? What if they honor someone I don't want to honor? What if they allow something I think is evil?

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How strictly “American” is all of that? If the only authorities we will submit to are ones that follow our line of thinking then they are authorities put in place by us. Our power, our decisions, or our votes.

This is not what scripture says! They are put in place by God. And I would say God alone. The confusion we sometimes have is that they are not a replacement for God. They in turn are under His authority. They are just the hired hands put in place to maintain order down here in a very real way. We should fear them if we don’t submit and we should seek their approval in doing good. Where do we go wrong? It is not the authority that is wrong. It is our expectation of that authority. It is us who seek our safety and dare I say, even our sovereign protection from the governing authorities.

That is perverse. God alone can supply that protection. Whatever other structures are in place to carry out directions, we cannot turn to them for security. “Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God.” Yes, we vote, but the outcome of that vote changes nothing in our security. Man makes his plans, but God determines his course. This is not to say that we will like it or that it won’t hurt but we are secure through all of it.

So why do I submit? The easy answer is that God says so. Deeper than that, it is directly in line with what the last chapter taught us. Live peaceably, approve what is right, and overcome evil with good. By doing this God is glorified. I would hazard to say unbelievers are rarely drawn to God by demonstrations, anger, and arguments. Likely they are often drawn by Kindness, Love, and cooperation. Knowing that God absolutely controls all outcomes, perhaps what we do is less important than the motive and how we do it. Don’t get me wrong, I do believe that there is a battle to be fought, but while we are fighting down here with our anger and our careless words the real battle rages on around us. The weapons of that warfare are not of the flesh, but just perhaps our love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control are more than just fruit but quite possibly weapons to offer access for others to the kingdom of God.

To God Alone Be the Glory.

Rene Milner

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This Week's Scheduled Events:

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| Sun | Shut-in Hymn Caroling-noon |
| Tues | Men's Bible Study-6:30 am |
| Wed | Immerse Studies-6:15 pm |
| Thurs | Men's Bible Study-6:30 am |
| Thurs | Ladies Study-Mattfhw-10 am |
| Thurs | Ladies Study- 6:30 pm |

September Memory Verse:

James 1:12

"Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love Him." ESV

September 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.

Busy Bag Users:

We love being able to supply Busy Bags for your children during service. As a courtesy to the Busy Bag ministry, please put your Busy Bags back where you picked them up following today's service. This will be very helpful. Thank you!

➤ **Come Sing Hymns to Shut-ins: After service today**, you are invited to join a group from New Life that will be gathering to go out Fall Caroling (Hymn Singing) to shut-ins from our church body. Please join us in loving our brothers and sisters that are unable to be with us in person. We will have guitar accompaniment and also copies of songs. We plan to caravan around to a few homes and be done within 2 hours or so. We plan to meet at the Building and leave to sing around 12 o'clock.

➤ **Women's Book Study:** Ladies of New Life, Sara Gallagher is kindly opening her home again for a women's book study. This group will begin meeting **every third Monday of the month** starting **Monday, September 21st at 7:00 pm**. If you are interested in attending and would like to know more, feel free to reach out to Sara, 715-294-0748.

➤ **Hall of Men is Back!** Men young and old, starting **Sunday, September 27th at 6:30 pm** and continuing to meet the last Sunday of each month, come and learn about the lineage of faith as it has been displayed through men throughout Church history. Come prepared for a comradery and fellowship that is centered on the core confessions of our faithful Savior, Jesus Christ.

➤ **Every Man's Battle:** This is a men's fellowship and accountability group that starts **Wednesday, October 14th, 6:00-7:30 am**. The mission of this group is not to focus on a particular sin but to point men towards Christ, with a specific focus on building one another up in Him and battling together in the fight against lust - in all its forms. This group will involve candid discussion, study, and prayer. Men, young and old must know, they are not alone in this fight. *"Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working."* James 5:16. Contact Marc Vanderhoof with questions 802-779-2793.

Hosea

The Call to Return to the Savior

Today's Passage:
Pastor Tony's message is from the
Old Testament book,
HOSEA 9:1-9

Sermon Notes: