



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, November 22, 2020

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PASTORAL PONDERING

THE SAFEST PLACE TO BE

"The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous man runs into it and is safe."
Proverbs 18:10

There has been so much talk this year about where it's not safe to be. It's not safe in inner cities where riots are happening; it's not safe in large gatherings where you could catch a virus; it's not safe to live along the ocean during one of the worst hurricane seasons on record; it's not safe to live in tornado alley, it's not safe to live in the wooded wildfire-prone regions of California, and on and on. We want to be safe, and we want to protect our lives. This year one could come to the conclusion that the safest place would be on a desert island in a bunker underground far away from people while wearing a hazmat suit. I am exaggerating a little, but when things before us look dangerous, we immediately run toward what we think is safe. Let me encourage you to flee the advice of the world and take your counsel from the Lord in His Word. Remember, the world does not have the right perspective and will promote, and even demand of Christians, to escape to their man-made refuge along with them. Our refuge, however, in any storm, any circumstance, any danger is found in our relationship with Jesus Christ our Savior. Christians will be and are being condemned in the world's eyes for not running away with them to their hope and refuge.

The believer and the unbeliever don't share the same safe place of refuge because the believer does not share the same perspective on what is truly dangerous. We recognize from God's Word that the greatest danger we face is our own sin and the wages of that sin is eternal death. We cannot save ourselves or preserve our life from death, no matter how fortified a city we create. We were at one time, as Paul says to the [Ephesians](#) in chapter 2:12-13, *"separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world."* (talk about being in danger) *"But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ."* God, being rich in mercy, has provided us salvation and He says the **only true refuge**, the **only safe place** is in my Son. Our hope is not in the preservation of our bodies but in the saving finished work of Jesus who went to the grave and on the third day rose! This is good news of truth and life. Brothers and sisters, let us be a people active in speaking and displaying a life of walking in this hope and good news before a world that is lost, walking in darkness, and thinking they are safe by means of their own strong tower.

Let us as a church family strive together in one heart and one accord, setting our hope and seeking our refuge in Jesus and allowing His Word to mold and shape our thinking and decision making. The best place to start is in prayer. This topic is not unique to the year 2020 but has been felt in every generation. I have included a prayer written many years ago from the book *The Valley of Vision* titled "Refuge."

continued on next page ...

O Lord,
 Whose power is infinite and wisdom infallible,
 Order things that they may neither hinder, nor
 discourage me,
 nor prove obstacles to the progress of Thy cause;
 Stand between me and all strife, that no evil
 befall,
 no sin corrupt my gifts, zeal, attainments;
 May I follow duty and not any foolish device of
 my own;
 Permit me not to labour at work which Thou wilt
 not bless,
 That I may serve Thee without disgrace or debt;
 Let me dwell in Thy most secret place under Thy
 shadow,
 where is safe impenetrable protection from
 The arrow that flieth by day
 The pestilence that walketh in darkness
 The strife of tongues
 The malice of ill-will
 The hurt of unkind talk
 The snares of company
 The perils of youth
 The temptations of middle life
 The mournings of old age,
 The fear of death.
 I am entirely dependent upon Thee for support,
 counsel, consolation.
 Uphold me by Thy free Spirit,
 and may I not think it enough to be preserved
 from falling,
 but may I go forward
 always abounding in the work Thou givest me to
 do.
 Strengthen me by Thy Spirit in my inner self
 for every purpose of my Christian life.
 All my jewels I give to the shadow of the safety
 that is in Thee—
 my name anew in Christ
 my body, soul, talents, character
 my success, spouse, children, friends, work,
 my present, my future, my end.
 Take them, they are Thine, and I am Thine,
 now and forever.

Let us be praying together about this, casting all
 fears and doubts and worries on Him because He
 cares for us. May we take counsel from His Word
 and put our trust continually in Jesus, our only
 refuge, the master of our soul, and the author of
 our salvation. May we go where Jesus calls us to
 and do what He told His Church to do even in the
 midst of what appears dangerous. For where Jesus
 is, there His bride will be with Him in perfect
 eternal safety.

Resting in Him,

Pastor Paul

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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This Week's Scheduled Events:

Tues Men's Bible Study-6:30 am

There will not be any meetings, for Immerse, special group, or Bible studies this week due to Thanksgiving.

November Memory Verse:

Ephesians 5:18-20

"...but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ..." ESV

November Fellowship Tip:

Have you committed yourself to invest in the work of gospel ministry here at New Life and want to learn more about what it means to become a partner? Take a moment and talk to one of the elders or pastors after service and they would be glad to begin that conversation with you.

Sunday Meals and Fellowship:

December 6	Meal Team #4
December 13	Meal Team #5

For the immediate future, meals will be served on the 1st and 3rd of each month. As the teams grow and volunteer base increases, we can move to sharing a meal every Sunday. Contact Barbara Judkins if interested.

- **Wednesday Night Immerse Classes:** No Immerse Classes on Wednesday the 25th, and all events on Thanksgiving Day (Thursday the 26th) will not be meeting.
- **New Life Partner Meeting:** On **Saturday January 10th** we will be holding our annual New Life Partners meeting. It will be held here at the building at **10:00am**, so put this important meeting on your calendar. Following the meeting will be lunch. Being a partner means you are an active participant in this annual meeting where you have the chance to vote on other members filling certain offices/roles in the body, where the current year's budget is reviewed and next year's budget is voted on, and also where the pastors and elders reflect on the past year and share visions leading into the next year. Even if you are not a partner, you are welcome to come reflect and prayerfully seek the Lord together in the year to come.
- **Hall of Men:** Men, our monthly Sunday night gathering will be temporarily taking a break. That means our previously planned November 29th night is postponed...Hey, turn that frown upside down, it won't be for too long, just let the anticipation build till we meet again. Keep your eye out for announcements as to our next gathering.

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. In addition, you're invited to join us for our meal after service. We would love to meet you and get to know and for you to get to know us more, and what better way to meet someone new than sharing a meal together.

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Greeting Card Ministry

Do you know someone that needs encouragement, support, or celebration? Please remember that New Life has a ministry just for that! Contact Lynn with your request via email: lynnjimmelson@gmail.com or call her cell at 651-373-1426.

Hosea

The Call to Return to the Savior

Today's Passage:
Pastor Tony's message is from the
Old Testament book,
HOSEA 13:4-11

Sermon Notes: