

Join Us As We Celebrate Only Jesus



# 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, December 11, 2022

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## Pastoral Pondering

### Count It All Joy

As I have "pondered my pondering" these last couple of weeks, it has been like a game show inside my head. Dr. Mattson's pondering started me musing about the point of suffering in the span of our years. A conversation around testing and trials made me think about God's plan and His role in the things we often call "bad" or "evil." The study of the physical bodily return of Jesus coupled with the coming Advent season gave me pause to continue beginning to look at the amazing concept of Immanuel, God with us. No kidding, the voices in my head have gotten so much louder this week. I started to write only to find that each thought seemed stunted and wrestled with the next thought. For some reason there was no resolution to any of them until I once again paused to "enter the house of the Lord" with some of God's men.

I first want to say that although I am writing this, I have only appropriated the thoughts from men much greater than myself. As you can tell from the above paragraph, the initiation of all these thoughts and the resolution that came later, came through my interaction with the Body of Christ. How thankful I am for each and every one of you that continue in Him to spur one another on, to build each other up and to live life with each other in Christ. This should never be taken lightly or for granted. The real impact on individuals and generations will only be seen in the light of that glorious Eternity.

It all began as I thought about trials and temptations. What is the point? Could I ever respond to the loss of my children or even the loss of their souls with that sweet, content, phrase "it is well with my soul"? Someone asked me, "Why does God test us"? That made me think about how we often think about difficulties from a man centered perspective. Truly, being trapped in this mortal flesh how could we not? But that perspective is not God's perspective. God indeed tests no one, but each of us is tested of our own desire (James 1:14.) I began writing on this, but I could not help but think, "to what end?" If God does not test us, then is there a point to these trials and temptations that we go through? Enter the next intrusive thought.

The Ising is "coming." God was. He Is. And He will physically, tangibly, really come again. Not that He ever left. Through all this He Is. In the real sense. He always Is. Ever, only, always IS! If this is true, there is an end point. Not that eternity has an end point, (I always find it peculiar that we focus on "end" times amid the concept of eternity) but there is a time when He will come again and there will be a reconciliation of accounts. That means there must be an accounting or purpose to these trials. Enter next thought off the top rope.

John the Baptist. In the men's Thursday study, we are visiting the Gospel of John. John the Baptist is mentioned briefly but as I ponder his purpose it is curious to me that God sent a man to tell about Jesus at the same time that He sent Jesus. No radio. No news

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## Pastoral Pondering

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station. No internet. And the Real thing was right there all the while. Does not seem like much of a prophecy when you can see in real time the very thing that is being prophesied about. John the Baptist would have little impact in His current day and yet right from conception his whole purpose was to turn people away from their own selves as God and toward the self-existent God. Seems redundant and yet some would describe John as the greatest prophet that ever lived. Perhaps because his whole life pointed away from Himself and towards Jesus. Then it all made sense.

Whatever is, is all for the Glory of God. Your temptation? For the Glory of God. Your trial? For the Glory of God. Your promotion, your success, your failure? No matter what is, it is all for the Glory of God. Final random thought. (I promise.)

Remember the parable of the workers? How they all worked differing amounts of time, and yet all received the same financial reward? The early workers (and I would suggest we) feel that this is unfair. We often reconcile this with the idea that God has the right to give what He wants. I would suggest to you that they did not all receive the same reward. The early workers did not have to wait for death to receive some sort of "crown" as a reward. As they toiled and were tried and tested. As they faced temptations to give up or mistrust the Master each one continued on and in so doing gave glory and honor and first place to the Him. They each got to work for the Master's glory and this is in itself the true reward. The sooner and deeper they accepted that, the greater their reward. Like John the Baptist, each of us can live more or less of our time on earth, giving glory to the Master in greater or lesser ways through all our trials and joys. This is the meaning of the Prophets' life. No matter the circumstances, may we always recognize they are ordained by the Master for His glory alone and do all that we can in every moment to bring glory to His name. To God alone be the Glory.

Rene Milner



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 and meal after service today. We would love to meet and get to know you and for you to get to know us more.

## MINISTRY DIRECTORY

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Pastoral Eldership Team:

Pastor Tony Minell	715.417.1982
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Rene Milner	715.557.0185
Jim Nelson	651.283.2132
Jay Swisher	763.587.3472

### This Week's Scheduled Events:

Tues	Men's Bible Study– 6:30 am
Tues	Young Adult Study– 6:30 pm
Tues	Women's Precepts– 6:30-8 pm
Wed	Every Man's Battle– 6:00 am
Wed	Immerse– 6:15-7:30 pm
Thurs	Men's Bible Study– 6:30 am
Thurs	Ladies Bible Study– 10:00 am
Thurs	Ladies Bible Study– Noon
Thurs	Ladies Study– 6:30 pm
Thurs	GriefShare– 6:30 pm (Adults & Youth meet separately)

### December Memory Verse:

John 1:14 (ESV)

"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us , and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."

### December Fellowship Tip:

As we enter this season of Advent, share with someone a tradition you have that helps you stay centered on Jesus during this busy time.

### Sunday Meals and Fellowship:

Dec 11	Team 5 ~ Breakfast
Dec 18	Team 6 ~ Hotdishes

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

Check out New Life Online  
[newlifechristiancommunity.org](http://newlifechristiancommunity.org)

- **Young Adult Study:** Young adult study in Genesis meeting this coming **Tuesday, December 13th at 6:30pm**. It will be hosted at Matt Rogers home in dresser: 321 W. State Street Apartment #1. See you all there!
- **Immerse:** **December 14th** is our last Immerse gathering for the fall season and will resume January 11th. On the night of the 14th we will celebrate Jesus and His work among us with hymn singing, prayer, and fellowship time to wrap the night up. Plan to bring a little holiday treat to share and a board game or two.
- **Christmas Eve Service:** Add to your calendars our Christmas Eve service **Saturday evening, December 24th at 6:30pm**. We will gather to sing, pray, and be encouraged through the Word. There are simple invites on the welcome table that you can take and hand out to invite family, friends, neighbors, or co-workers to the service. If you wish the worship wouldn't end Saturday evening, don't fret, we'll meet again in the morning for a Sunday Christmas service.
- **Annual Partners Meeting:** New Life Partners make sure to add to your calendars our Annual Partners Meeting **Sunday, January 22nd at 12:30pm**. Items that will be voted on include the 2023 Budget, Colleen Firkus filling the Treasurer position, Phil Rice being added to audit committee, and the elder board would like to recognize Brian Nelson as a new elder. If you haven't gotten to meet these brothers and sisters we encourage you to take a moment and connect with them before the meeting in January.
- **Storage Area Safety:** Please remember that the storage area is meant to store things, and is not a safe place for gathering or playing. In general, using it as a passageway is also discouraged. Thank you!



### Meal Team Ministry

*Are you looking for a way to use your talents or time to serve God? Consider joining a Sunday Meal Team. If interested, please, Contact: Barbie Judkins (309) 269-0556, Barb Manship (612) 804-9793 or Rosie Swisher (763) 458-1261*

### nlcc resourcecenter

The wondrous, expectant and exciting season of Advent is upon us! If you would enjoy reading an Advent devotional book to help focus your days, the Resource Center has two titles: Love Came Down at Christmas by Sinclair Ferguson and The Dawning of Indestructible Joy by John Piper. Advent books abound but these two authors are excellent. Come check out our other resources as well -- perhaps you'll find an item for someone special on your Christmas list!



Today's Passage:  
Pastor Tony's message is from the  
New Testament book,  
**Acts 24:1-9**

Sermon Notes: