



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, April 12, 2020

Vol. 13, Issue 26

PASTORAL PONDERING

THY KINGDOM COME

In my previous two ponderings (November 10, 2019 and January 19, 2020), we began to unpack *"The Lord's Prayer"* (Matthew 6.5-15). While the prayer of our Lord is a model prayer for us to follow, it is also a concise summary of the Christian faith as a worldview (an idea explored more thoroughly in *A Transforming Vision* by William Edgar).

Today let's discuss the phrase, *"Thy kingdom come."* This brief prayer is loaded with meaning and offers tremendous hope—especially during a time such as this.

The kingdom of God is the central theme of the Lord's Prayer, the central theme in Jesus' life and teaching, and the central theme of the Bible. Consider Jesus' first recorded words in the Gospel of Mark: *"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."*

The kingdom of God is the reality in which His creation is restored, and lost people are redeemed. And this kingdom *has come*, and *is coming* in the world today, and *will arrive* in all its fullness in the world to come.

We are now in the already-not-yet of the coming of the kingdom. That means the kingdom has indeed come, but in time and space we're still waiting for it to be brought to full completion with the physical return of Jesus to this world.

Many of the Jews in the first century were convinced that God's kingdom would come soon, but through military and political force. When Jesus came, He disappointed those people (including even His disciples). He said things like, *"My kingdom is not of this world"* (John 18.36), and He rebuked His disciples when they wanted to fight (Luke 22.49-51). The great day of God's judgment would come, but not right away.

Yet, in a sense there was another great day of God's judgment that *has come*. What did Jesus really mean when He said, *"It is finished"* as He died on the cross? God's righteous judgment for sinners was unleashed and poured out on Jesus, who willingly absorbed it in full so that we sinners no longer have to. When He said, *"It is finished,"* He meant (at least in part) that our debt has been paid in full. We are therefore now acquitted of our crimes and can be forgiven freely and forever since the price has been paid.

God's kingdom in general is everything God has made. But the redemption and restoration of His kingdom is accomplished through who Jesus is and what Jesus has done, and therefore the redemption and restoration of the kingdom has already come.

Yet we still live in a fallen world in which something like COVID-19 can make such a powerful mess. We can receive forgiveness and salvation right now and take part in God's kingdom work. And yet, we're still living in a world infected by the Fall, we still struggle with sin, and bad things still happen. That's the *not yet* part—we await and expect God to make

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PASTORAL PONDERING

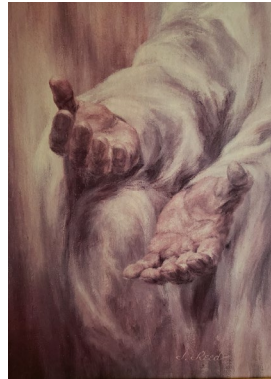
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good on His promise to one day return and put all things right.

When we pray *thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven*, we are asking God to continue to break through and transform all of human life. We're asking that God's will be done here on earth. We're longing for a world free of COVID-19, sin, suffering, and death. And because the King died and was raised, we long with hopeful expectation for His return. Happy Easter! Come, Lord Jesus.

Pastor Bennett

Editorial by Dawn Holm



Come Unto Me

I grew up with this painting in my childhood home. Well actually, it is a Giclee (pronounced jee-klay) of the original painting done by Joann Reed in 1967, titled "Come Unto Me."

I was so used to seeing it that I had actually become blind to it. Never questioning the meaning behind the art nor giving it a 2nd thought until after my parents had passed away. Then it finally became visible to me again. Because we were in the midst (and still are) of remodeling, it was boxed up and put in storage until just recently,

As I contemplated which finished room to hang it, I really looked at it. Clearly the artist was depicting Jesus' invitation to come to Him. Many of us as believers understand what it means to 'come to Christ' but what does it really look like?

I remember when I first came to Jesus. I was filled with joy and enthusiasm. Filled with renewed hope in the knowledge that my human weaknesses were forgiven. I couldn't contain myself and had to tell everyone. I think I even scared a few people because I was no longer the introverted me. Perhaps many of you have felt the same way when you came to Christ. But as the trials and tribulations of everyday life press upon us, we soon discover how committed we actually are to Jesus.

Our pastors have faithfully taught us that we must make everything we do, be about Jesus. There is a very good reason they teach us this way. That being, there is a richer purpose beyond just coming to Jesus. Our Lord also wants us to abide in Him.

We are not promised a 'life of Riley' just because we have come to Him. Just as Jesus bore the pain and suffering before and during being hung from His cross, we too will have trials to endure. When we come to Christ we are promised a new life in Him. By abiding in Him, Jesus carries us through the peaks and valleys of our lives here on earth until we are called home to Him in heaven. By abiding in Jesus, we are sustained through these trials by our love and hope in Him.

To abide in Jesus, we build a relationship with Him. Abiding protects us from becoming blind to Him. If you find that your trials here on earth have put a damper on your relationship with Jesus, come back to Him. Get into the word and seek His face. This is where you can build (or rebuild) your personal relationship with Jesus. to be renewed in your faith and the promise of everlasting life.

This COVID 19 pandemic is a trial on a global scale, effecting each of us in varying degrees of concern and fear. But if you truly are abiding in Jesus, you can take heart knowing that He will carry you through.

"The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; he knows those who take refuge in him." ~ Nahum 1:7

Blessings of peace awaits you in Christ!

Announcements

- ❖ During the **Livestream of the Service** as you are listening and thinking through the sermon text, we encourage you to take those questions to our chat room or make comments on our Sunday Service Post on New Life Connect and discuss the text together. Shortly after the service the sermon will be uploaded and available anytime thereafter to view.
- ❖ If you have not been added to **New Life Connect**, please call or email one of the pastors to sign you up. This is a safe and secure way to post prayer requests, share encouragements, attach links to helpful articles you read, and so much more. Also, If you have a smart phone, make sure to download our New Life App where you can listen to past sermons, read our blog, receive notifications, view the most recent newsletter, and much more. Our pastors have been busy posting morning chats and podcasts that you won't want to miss!
- ❖ You may have been accustomed to giving financially through the offering box at the building and now are wondering how else you can be giving. There are a few other great ways to keep supporting the ministry financially at this time. You can give online thorough the website under the **"Giving"** tab and also through the app under "Give Cheerfully". Just follow the prompts on the screen to set up a one-time or recurring gift amount. You can also mail a gift in the form of a check to the New Life address at 201 State Road 35 North, Dresser, WI 54009.
- ❖ Hey church family, let's update the **New Life Directory!** If you consider New Life your church home, please send your names, address, phone number(s), email address(s) to Julie Minell at mrs.minell@yahoo.com, (even if you think nothing has changed from previous editions, it's good to ensure your info is currently accurate.) If you have an updated picture, send that along as well.
- ❖ Have you checked out the pastor/elder **Morning Chat** videos? Each morning (except Sundays) one of the pastors or elders posts a short video chat. The videos range in topic and length and are done to be a blessing, for building up, and to keep the conversations and fellowship going as much as were able during this time. You can find these videos on our Facebook page, on the website (newlifechristiancommunity.org), on the New Life phone App, and you can find it as a post on Connect. If you need help navigating these sites or would like a DVD with these videos, please reach out to any of the pastors.

"And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by then in dazzling apparel. And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them 'Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen.' Luke 24:2,3, 5-6 ESV

Hallelujah!, our Lord is Risen! Wishing you all a happy and joyous Easter!

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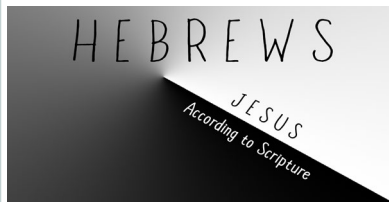
ALL OF NEW LIFE'S WEEKLY EVENTS ARE CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

April Memory Verse: **Galatians 5:24-25**

"And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit." ESV

April Fellowship Tip:

Be sure to be reaching out to your New Life family often! Get creative in ways to bear one another's burdens and encouraging one another daily. Consider phone calls, video chats, writing letters, sending cards, etc.



Today's Passage:

Pastor Tony's message is from the New Testament book,
[Hebrews 13:20-21](#)

Sermon Notes: