



# 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

Sun, February 26, 2023

Vol. 16, Issue 20

## Pastoral Ponderings

I have been meditating lately on James 1. I often find this book challenging. For me it seems to fit perfectly between the old and new testaments. Sometimes it seems reflective of the Law and at others it is filled with Grace. This week I have been particularly “tested” by the third verse. **“For you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.”** We often read this verse and think, “That which does not kill us makes us stronger.” For some reason we believe that our faith will have to go through the times of testing to prove to someone how strong it is. Indeed, in the very next verse James finishes with **“And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”** When you read them together with our current use of these particular words it often sounds like “I have this little faith that will be tested over and over again through this life and I have to muster up the strength to complete these frequent tests to the best of my ability and if I struggle through steadily without wavering I can get a high enough score on my test that I will be perfect”. This week as I dug a little deeper into the verse, I saw something different. A lot different.

I always love to look at the words of scripture in the old languages. Sometimes it just makes me think newly about a word I have come to use differently than the original language. As I was pondering verse three of James one, just such a renewing of my mind happened. I was looking at the word “testing” and it made me think of all the times that the word is used. Nine times in the ESV. It seems like the Bible often speaks of tests and trials. What surprised me was that this word for testing was only used four times in the Bible. In the New Testament it is only used twice. The word used here is like trustworthiness or proof. Like it is a thing that exists and not so much a thing to be done. When I looked at the word in Strong’s it is described as a noun. This is what caught my eye. This is not something we do. That would be a verb. This is something that very much already “IS.” More of an Entity than a task to be accomplished. Studying the cross-references of the usage helped me. (It is easy when there are only a couple.\*\*\*) The only other New Testament usage of the word is found in 1 Peter 1:7. **“so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”** Clearly Peter is referring to a thing not a process. Something even

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## Pastoral Ponderings cont.

more precious than gold. The already proven tested genuineness of your faith. It is highly unlikely that the actual testing process is worth more than gold. In fact, in the very next line the word he uses is a related word based on the same root, but this time it is a verb used when talking about the process to purify gold. My point is that the testing in James is not a test we have to pass but more of a proof of the existence of our faith. OK so what is the difference?

One way it reads “I have all these tests I have to pass to show I have great faith.” It all depends on me and my strength. How good am I? What can I do? What if I fail?

The other way it reads “Know that your proven genuine faith brings about patient endurance” and, verse 4, “this patient endurance has a finished work that is complete in all its parts with nothing wanting.” In this way faith is in me and it is doing a work that leads to true completeness. The focus is no longer on how strong my faith is but more like the strength of that faith is based on the object of the faith not the faith itself. Put another way, faith is the on/off switch, but the brightness of the light depends on the Source. So, when there is a trial, our faith proves/shows/illuminates the power of God in Jesus Christ.

There is no doubt that we will have challenging times. This world has fallen, and the result of that fall is hardship. We can look at that hardship as a personal attack and something we must conquer in our own strength, or simply as part of God’s grand design and a chance to reflect His glory in our lives. Whenever I am faced with two ways of understanding Gods Word, both being correct, I choose the answer that would seem to show God’s glory and omnipotence the best. So, let us choose to consider it pure joy and an opportunity to glorify God whenever we are faced with various kinds of temptation or trials. God grant us the will and the strength to be able to find, like Paul, contentedness in all circumstances. In plenty and in want. In trial and in triumph. That we may be the switch that lets the light so shine that others may see your glory and be drawn to worship you. In all things to God alone be the Glory.

~Rene Milner

*\*\* I love BLB or E-sword for study. They are amazing. Feel free to ask me if you would like to know how to use them.*

## Ministry Directory

### Building & Grounds Ministry

Jim Judkins, 715.338.8837  
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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 Relief Ministry

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### Missions Outreach

Lorraine Milner, 715.557.0661  
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### Music Ministry

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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  
bjdarnell@hotmail.com

### Transportation Services

Art Behr, 715-557-1890  
behrden1@charter.net

### Video Ministry

Jim Mabee, 651.470.4172  
jmabee@centurytel.net

## Check out New Life Online newlifechristiancommunity.org

### This Week's Schedule of Events

Mon	Prayer Night @ the Barton's-6:30 pm
Tues	Men's Bible Study- 6:30 am
Wed	Every Man's Battle- 6:00 am
Wed	Immerse- 6:15-7:30
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)

### Meal Teams

3/5	All Church Potluck
3/12	Meal Team 6 (Casseroles)

Contact *Barbara Judkins* if interested  
in joining a meal team.

### Fellowship Tip for February

Consider the needs of our widows and widowers among us at New Life. A simple phone call, visit, or invite to your home, is an immense gift to them and to you.

### February Memory Verse

"Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God and God abides in him.  
"1 John 4: 15-16"

### Pastoral Eldership Team

Pastor Tony Minell	715.417.1982 galatiansii20@yahoo.com
Pastor Paul Linzmeier	320.226.5581 pastorpaul.nlcc@gmail.com
Pastor Jeff Warren	316.308.0833 pastorjeff.nlcc@protonmail.com
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Dale Mattson	715.566.2302
Greg Mattson	715.417.2444
Rene Milner	715.557.0185
Jim Nelson	651.283.2132
Jay Swisher	763.587.3472

## Announcements

**Hall of Men:** Men young and old(er) this evening is Hall of Men @ 6:30pm. It is always a time of conviction and encouragement to walk as men of Christ now in our generation as we hear about the lives of men from the past where Jesus was honored and glorified. There is no meal but your welcome to bring a snack to share.

**Genesis study** this Tuesday 2/28 @ 6:30 at the Melling home: 1821 184<sup>th</sup> Ave. Somerset, WI 54025. Bring an instrument, your bibles, and an eager heart to grow in Christ. See you then!

**Men, Save the Date:** Men, make room on your calendars for the St. Croix Valley Men's Retreat taking place Friday April 14<sup>th</sup> and Saturday April 15<sup>th</sup>. The location is Oak Forest Retreat Center in Frederic, WI. The first session on Friday begins at 7pm and the retreat ends Saturday around 5pm. Fathers are encouraged to bring their sons! Registration forms and pamphlets with cost breakdowns will be available shortly. Any questions just talk to pastor Paul.

**Monday night prayer** now meeting every Monday evening @ 6:30 at the Barton home.

## Potluck Sunday

Reminder Potluck next Sunday!!  
If you able, please bring a dish to pass as we break bread together around a good meal.

## 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

## Today's Passage



**ACTS**

Pastor Tony will be teaching from  
the book of Acts.  
Our passage for today is Acts 27:33-44.

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[newlifechristiancommunity.org](http://newlifechristiancommunity.org)

Sunday service starts at 9:30 am • [nlcc.dresser@gmail.com](mailto:nlcc.dresser@gmail.com)

Join New Life Connect by emailing Pastor Paul at [pastorpaul.nlcc@gmail.com](mailto:pastorpaul.nlcc@gmail.com)