New Life Christian Community

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passsed away; behold, the new has come." 2 Cor 5:17

Join Us As We Celebrate
Only Jesus

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2026
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Pastoral Pondering

Jeremiah 20

Often, we view our earthly heroes with whimsical glasses that magnify only their strengths. As such, the finite hero quickly morphs into an impossible – larger than life – character. I experience this phenomenon often when reading little bits of Scripture. If left to my mere imagination, and a verse here and there, my biblical heroes can become completely distorted. Fortunately for my untethered imagination, Scripture, when read in context, has a way of corralling my thoughts. It always presents each character as he/she really is.

I recently experienced this as I meditated upon Jeremiah 20. As we enter chapter 20, Jeremiah is in the midst of proclaiming God's message to the leadership of God's people – and, evidently, his strong words have been 'hitting the mark' (miraculously, reading any of the biblical prophets still has a way of hitting even the reader right in the peepers). The leadership in Judah is not happy.

So much so that the priest Pashhur *"beat Jeremiah the prophet, and put him in the stocks…"* (20:2). I can't imagine how difficult this must have been for Jeremiah – for having proclaimed what God had instructed him to say – he was being repaid with a literal beating (and not his last beating). The next day, when Jeremiah is released, rather than easing off the strong words against the leadership, Jeremiah turns it up – and declares, *"The Lord does not call your name Pashhur, but Terror on Every Side. For thus says the Lord: Behold, I will make you a terror to yourself and to all your friends…"* (20:3-4). After hearing this, we could conclude that Jeremiah was a mountain of a man with a boldness larger than life.

But Jeremiah's words, starting in verse 7, tell us a different story. There was a battle raging within Jeremiah. He writes (and remember, Jeremiah writes these very exposing words for all to read), *"O Lord, you have deceived me, and I was deceived; you are stronger than I, and you have prevailed, I have become a laughingstock all the day, everyone mocks me…"*

Jeremiah's honesty illustrates that it's not wrong to be afraid or even frustrated with the situation in which you find yourself. But here is where the rubber meets the road - God calls us to obey Him, in spite of our feelings (that's right – you may need to 'spite' your feelings). Clearly, Jeremiah's strong words to Judah have been in spite of his feelings.

Far too often I am controlled by my feelings. My behavior is, time and again, dictated by the whims of my feels (I do realize that this is improper grammar – but, hey, I'm feeling it). So how do we spite our feels? Well, in and of yourself, you cannot. We are a people who feel – and then act. We feel like eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil – and so we do. But there is another way forward. If we continue reading, Jeremiah reveals his secret to obedience.

Jeremiah, with a conflicted heart, describes what is going on within him, *"there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot"* (20:9). In

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Pastoral Pondering

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other words, there is a miracle of God happening within Jeremiah. He cannot help but obey. The strength and courage that we see in Jeremiah on the outside is actually a miraculous work of God within Jeremiah. To use Jeremiah's word in verse 7 – God has *"prevailed."*

When we are faced with a choice, it is our Lord who calls us forward. And by His Spirit, in that moment, like Jeremiah, we may find that the only way to describe what is happening is a burning fire shut up our bones. When that happens – God gets the glory, and we find ourselves obeying – in spite of ourselves and our feelings. It is a miraculous work of grace through faith and not of us – and as such, no one (not even Jeremiah) can boast in himself.

Obeying regardless of how I feel is what it means to walk by faith (rather than walking by feeling). Faith implies trusting and believing in something *other than myself* or *my feelings.* We, as Christians (Oh, I do pray that you'd come to know Christ – and so be identified as a Christian) recognize that if I am not trusting in Christ Jesus, I will readily choose the sin. But we who are in Christ are, by faith, filled with His Spirit – a Spirit described in Acts 2 as a fire (did you ever realize that the fire in Acts 2 is seen in Jeremiah 20!). His grace takes us and, indeed, He by the fire, refines the 'old man' and gives us *new* desires in our heart.

Oh Lord, fill Your people with the fire that comes from You and prevail in the hearts of Your people today.

Indeed, when that happens, we who are finite, are acting in the power of the infinite – the only Biblical Character who is *actually* – larger than life – the Savior who prevails, Jesus Christ. To Christ be the glory.

Pastor Tony

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 Book Store in the front foyer to pick up a welcome bag we have for you. Please join us for fellowship and a meal after service today where we would love to meet and get to know you and for you to get to know us more.

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This Week's Scheduled Events:

Tues	Young Adult Study– 6:30 pm
Wed	Immerse– 6:15 pm
Thurs	Men's Bible Study– 6:30 am
Thurs	Ladies Bible Study– 10:30 am
Thurs	Ladies Bible Study–Noon
Thurs	GriefShare– 6:30 pm
Thurs	Ladies Bible Study– 6:30 pm
Thurs	Men's Bible Study– 6:30 pm

November Memory Verse:

2 Timothy3:14-15 (ESV)

"But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus."

November Fellowship Tip:

What's cooking at your house? Let not Sunday mornings be the only time of connecting with fellow brothers and sisters. Who could you have over this week or what meal could you bring to another's home, together breaking bread and building up one another in Jesus?

Sunday Meals and Fellowship:

Nov 8 Meal Team 5 ~Breakfast
Nov 15 Meal Team 6 ~Baked Potato Bar

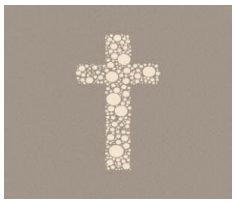
Contact Barbara Judkins if interested in being on a meal team or a helper.

This Sunday's Worship Songs:

1. *All Hail The Power Of Jesus' Name*
2 *All Praise To Him*
3. *What Love, My God* ***4***. *All Glory Be To Christ* ***5***. *How Great Thou Art*

- ***Men's Meeting Reminder:*** Preaching Guild and Hall of Men will be taking a break for the months of November and December. We will pick back up again in January 2027.
- ***Building Usage Reminder:*** Our church building is a place we all share, and it takes everyone to keep it clean, neat, and welcoming. As we go about our activities and fellowship, please be mindful of picking up food crumbs, disposing of trash properly, wiping down tables and counters, and returning items to their designated places. We also ask everyone to be especially mindful about keeping doors closed when not in use and making sure food and supplies are properly stored. When you use the kitchen, fellowship area, classrooms, nursery, or any other area of the building, please take a moment to leave the space clean and orderly for the next person and especially empty any discarded food. These little acts of consideration make a big difference in maintaining a safe, sanitary, and welcoming environment for everyone. Thank you for doing your part and helping us take good care of our building!
- ***Young Adults Study:*** Young Adults Exodus Study is **Tuesday this week 6:30pm** at the Melling home! Address: 1821 184th Ave. Somerset. Bring a bible, a friend, an instrument, and if you would like, a snack to share. See you there!





New Life Messaging

New Life Christian Community has a secure online community designed to engage the body of Christ in between Sundays. If you would like to be part of this online community, consider joining by downloading our app or through a link posted at the top on our website. Feel free to ask any of the Elders for help.



Today's Passage:

Pastor Tony's message is from the New Testament book,

Luke 1:1

SERMON NOTES: