



"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." 2Cor5:17

SUNDAY, JANUARY 11, 2026
VOL. 19, ISSUE 15

Pastoral Pondering

The Labor Of Love In Discipleship

1 Thessalonians 2:8... "So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us."

Discipleship is on the mind of the elders at New Life. Discipleship is a word like grace that Christians use and hear often, but what does discipleship mean? Simply put, it first starts with you following Jesus as His disciple, united to Him by faith. Then, to disciple others, is where you intentionally walk alongside others calling them to follow Jesus by pointing them to Him.

Discipleship can come in a variety of forms: formal ways of Bible studies, Sunday preaching, walking with another through a gospel resource, or leading others in purposeful acts of service that Jesus commands. Discipleship comes in many organic ways too, through regular phone calls, lunch conversations, inviting others into your everyday life activities demonstrating by example how you follow Jesus in them, and in so many more ways. Many of you have people in your life that you credit with leading you closer to the Lord and you are ever thankful to God for them as they have and/or continue to point you to Jesus. They have discipled you to follow Jesus.

Some of you may have attended the recent celebration of life for Vernelle Rasmussen. Something became very apparent during the sharing time, and that is, Vernelle discipled countless people in her many decades of life. One simple question she would always be asking her family, friends, and anyone who entered her home was, "How is your walk with the Lord?" A straightforward question that gets right to the heart of the most important priority of our life: our walk with Jesus. So many during the service stood up and shared how she was discipling in all she did and said. Vernelle shared Christ and she shared herself with so many and those impacted by her care knew it was her affectionate love towards them because of Christ in her.

You might be thinking that you don't know how to disciple. That you're not versed enough in the Bible, or you're not good at teaching anything. Regardless of what you believe may hinder you, God has called you as a believer and commissioned you to go and make disciples, teaching others to know Him and obey His words. Discipleship is not meant to be complicated, but it is hard and an act of faith. To get an idea of the breadth of what pointing others to Jesus looks like, I chose to do a quick flyover of 1 Thessalonians chapter 1 and 2 with the lens of discipleship on. Please read the chapters along with this summary and let the Word motivate and shape your thinking on this subject.

Chapter 1:

- (Vs. 2) Discipleship always begins with prayer and continues full of prayer
- (Vs. 3) Discipleship is a labor of love, act of faith, and requires steadfastness of hope
- (Vs. 6) Discipleship occurs in the midst of suffering
- (Vs. 6) Discipleship aims for imitation

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Pastoral Pondering

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- (Vs. 7) Discipleship occurs as you live out an example of faith
- (Vs. 9) Discipleship involves leading others to be turning to God from idols to serve the living and true God
- (Vs. 10) Discipleship teaches one another to be patient and to wait for the coming of Jesus, the true judge of all situations

Chapter 2:

- (Vs. 2) Discipleship often occurs in the context of conflict or persecution
- (Vs. 4) Discipleship is walked out not to please man but to please God
- (Vs. 5) Discipleship is a role every believer must walk in as those entrusted with the gospel
- (Vs. 7) Discipleship comes in gentleness like a nurturing mother
- (Vs 8) Discipleship requires sharing the gospel of God
- (Vs 8) Discipleship requires sharing our own selves or our life with others
- (Vs. 10) Discipleship requires living by example with "holy and righteous and blameless" conduct
- (Vs. 11) Discipleship comes like a father with his children exhorting, encouraging, and charging all in the way Christ commands us to walk
- (Vs. 13) Discipleship means acknowledging God's work in one another by thanking God constantly
- (Vs. 18) Discipleship includes endeavoring eagerly with great desire to be face to face (in person)
- (Vs. 19-20) Discipleship is done in hope with the reward of joy and crowns at the coming of Christ

Wow! There is so much here in just these first 2 chapters that can shape our thinking as to what discipleship is and looks like. But I want to end on one aspect that is essential in all these examples, and that is, all discipleship must be done in the manner of Christ's love. Just as Paul demonstrated in saying "*you had become very dear to us.*" (2:8) All this discipleship is to be walked out in an affectionate love that flows from knowing Jesus which in turn bears fruit of a tender love towards others. Discipleship lacks good fruit without this love. And this love springs forth from the Gospel as we follow closely to Jesus and motivates a Christ-like love that longs for others to know Him more too.

So in memory of the loving intentional words of our sister Vernelle, with the heart of discipleship in mind, "How is YOUR walk with Lord?" Are you being HIS disciple? And WHO has the Lord brought into your life that YOU can commit to be intentionally pointing to Jesus?

With the affection of Christ, Pastor paul



MINISTRY DIRECTORY

Building & Grounds Ministry

Jim Judkins 715.338.8837
oldoutboardjim@hotmail.com

Coffee Ministry

Ana Smith: 715.566.3740
ajoysmith05@gmail.com

Finance Administration

Colleen Firkus (Treasurer): 612.889.7581
financeministry@newlifechristiancommunity.org

Greeting Card Ministry

Lynn Nelson: 651.373.1426
lynnjimnelson@gmail.com

GriefShare Ministry

Robin Mattson: 715.566.1945
robinmattson27@gmail.com

Immerse Ministry

Paul Linzmeier: 320.226.5581
pastorpaul.nlcc@gmail.com

Meal Train Relief Ministry

Kristin Stephan: 651.235.1681
kristin@kageinnovation.com

Missions Outreach

Lorraine Milner: 715.557.0661
lrmilner@gmail.com

Music Ministry

Jeff Warren: 715.553.2405
pastorjeff.nlcc@protonmail.com

Newsletter Administration

Dawn Holm: 715.472.8453
djhholm@lakeland.ws

Resource Center

Cory Mattson: 715.417.0945
cory79mattson@hotmail.com

Sunday Meal Services

Barbara Judkins: 309.269.0556
bjdarnell@hotmail.com

Video Ministry

Jim Mabee: 651.470.4172
jmabee@centurytel.net

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastoral Eldership Team:

Pastor Tony Minell 715.417.1982
galatiansii20@yahoo.com
Pastor Paul Linzmeier 320.226.5581
pastorlpaul.nlcc@gmail.com
Pastor Jeff Warren 715.553.2405
pastorjeff.nlcc@protonmail.com
Cory Mattson – Secretary 715.417.0945
Zachary Fugate 715.379.2918
Brian Gates 651.230.6554
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

This Week's Scheduled Events:

Tues Men's Bible Study– 6:30 am
Tues Young Adults 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 Women's Study– 6:30 pm
Thurs Men's Bible Study– 6:30 pm

January Memory Verse:

Proverbs 24:13-14 (ESV)

"My son, eat honey, for it is good, and the drippings of the honeycomb are sweet to your taste. Know that wisdom is such to your soul; if you find it, there will be a future, and your hope will not be cut off."

January Fellowship Tip:

Often January is a time for new beginnings. Reflect this month on the "new beginning" you have in Christ by sharing with someone the story of how God has worked in you to bring you to saving faith in Jesus, and by His grace, what He is currently doing in your life to draw you to treasure Him above all things.

Sunday Meals and Fellowship:

Jan 11 Meal Team 1~Pizza

Jan 18 Meal Team 2~Chili

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

This Sunday's Worship Songs:

How Firm a Foundation; Come Praise and Glorify;
But for the Cross of Christ; I Will Glory in my
Redeemer; In Christ Alone

- **Annual NLCC Partnership Meeting:** Annual partners meeting **TODAY, Sunday January 11th at 12pm**. Partners please stay and if anyone who is not a partner you are welcome to stay as well.
- **Young Adults Bible Study:** Will be meeting **Tuesday this week, 6:30 pm** at Peter and Rosemarie's home in Taylors Falls. Address: 32344 Upland Road. Bring your bible, a friend, and an instrument to play! Older saints, please consider investing in and receiving the blessing of knowing our young people through attending these studies.
- **Immerse:** Wednesday night Immerse classes for all ages are back this **Wednesday 6:15-7:30pm!** Bring the whole family for a mid-week gathering to learn and grow in Jesus.
- **Men's Bible Study:** Men! **Thursday evening** Bible Study is starting back up **this week**. We will continue meeting weekly from **6:30pm-8pm** in the banquet room. Questions, just contact Pastor Paul.
- **Ministry Team Fair in January:** There are lots of new faces here at New Life eager to connect and use their gifts. To aid in making those connections we're organizing a Ministry Team Fair, after service on **Sunday, January 25th**, where you can meet all the ministry leaders and get to know some of the practical ways you can be involved and serve. In the newsletter you will find some of the main formal ministry teams listed. A good handful of these teams need more help or perhaps are looking to pass the baton of leadership off to another. Please carve out some extra time after service to pass through the fair and pray about ways the Lord would move you to serve the body of Christ.
- **Women's Bible Study:** Women's **Thursday night** Bible Study is starting a new 12-week study of Philippians using a John MacArthur study guide on **February 5th at 6:30 pm** at the New Life building. Sign-up sheet is in the lobby. Contact Colleen Firkus with any questions. 612-889-7581
- **Housekeeping:** If you are using any of the classrooms for overflow lunch seating please clean all dishes and food scraps before leaving and place your lunch garbage in the large bins in the banquet area. The classrooms and small garbage containers in them are not checked or cleaned by the meal teams. Please help us keep these rooms clean and tidy and ready to use for the next group. Thank you!

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 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.



Jesus

Proclaimed
to the
Colossians

SERMON NOTES:

Today's Passage:

Pastor Tony's message is from the
New Testament book,
Colossians 2:16-23