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

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Pastoral Pondering

Self-Sufficient Strength Or All-Sufficient Strength?

"Not that I am speaking of being in need for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me." ~Philippians 4: 11-13

Every Christian wrestles with discontentment. You wish you had a different job, or your health always seems to be a struggle or maybe there's a relational strain in your life that just doesn't seem to get better. Perhaps, for you, the weekly bills always seem to add up more than you anticipated or the regular demands of life just don't slow down, and you feel like you are barely keeping your head above water. We are often tempted to believe that "if only _____ were different, then I could be content." So what is this secret Paul speaks of where he can so boldly declare that in **any** and **every** circumstance he can be content?

First let's look at this word content. The word Paul uses means self-sufficient. It was a virtue of that culture to be able to support yourself without the help of others. Interesting word choice. Another way to read it could be that Paul has learned to be satisfied with what he already has in himself. Okay, so is Paul saying he doesn't need help from anyone and that it really doesn't matter to him whether he is hungry or full, cold or warm, beaten or honored because he has learned how to be satisfied no matter what? We'll have to keep reading.

Let's also consider the broader context of this passage. The apostle Paul has actually been rejoicing in the aid the believers in Philippi have sent to support the ministry God called him to in spreading the gospel to the Gentiles, but it appears there was a length of time they could not send aid, and they were concerned for Paul's wellbeing. That's a godly concern motivated in love, but in this letter Paul expresses that as much as he is genuinely thankful for God's provision through them (and their provision was truly helpful), at the same time he also comforts them in their concern by reminding them of an all-sufficient strength within him to complete the ministry calling he has been given. Where is Paul's inner sufficient strength coming from? Look at what he says, "I can do all things **through Him** who strengthens me," meaning the secret Paul has learned is to walk daily by the inner strength that God provides in any and all circumstances. How

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Pastoral Pondering

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sufficient is the strength of God? ALL-SUFFICIENT!

Whether you are currently lacking in supplies or have much, whether you are suffering or being honored, be comforted that the ever-present, all-sufficient strength of God is available to you through the dwelling of the Holy Spirit, to empower you to continue walking in the calling you have been given by God. By the way, this means we need God's strength in times of plenty too, always recognizing He is enough and He is better.

Our old pattern before Jesus was discontentment: ever searching, ever striving after the wind. It was a life of vanity, consisting of pointless achievements, a life of pride always ending in great falls, a life never satisfied in the accumulation of possessions that no matter what would always be moth-eaten, rusted, or stolen. We were never satisfied, never content. But now we have Christ!

Though we will at times wish our circumstances were different, we must not tie up our contentment in them. For, if your contentment is bound up in circumstances, how long will you actually be content, considering the constantly changing circumstances of your life?

The fact is, God directs our path, and along that path will be times of need and times of plenty, times of suffering and times of honor, and in each and every circumstance God is teaching us rest-filled contentment in His ever-present, all-sufficient supply of strength. More than merely supplying stuff, God supplies more of Himself. Thomas Goodwin, a Puritan theologian, wrote concerning the best thing God gives to us, saying "not only God doth bless with all other good things, but above all by communicating himself and his own blessedness."

The strength that God provides is the work of the Spirit who continuously communicates the steadfast love of God. Paul's secret IS Jesus. Our secret is Jesus. Jesus is enough; He is better and because of that truth, I can walk in any and all circumstances, leaning upon His all-sufficient strength.

~Pastor Paul

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This Week's Scheduled Events:

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 15	Meal Team 6 ~Baked Potato Bar
Nov 22	Meal Team 7 ~Sloppy Jo/Hotdogs

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

This Sunday's Worship Songs:

1. *Man of Sorrows* ***2*** *10,000 Reasons*
3. *In Christ Alone* ***4***. *Jesus Paid it All*
5. *What Love, My God*

- ***Safety And Security Meeting:*** Safety and Security Ministry members are requested to attend a 30-minute meeting in the prayer room after the service. Please grab your lunch and head into the meeting. You will have head-of-line privileges so you can make it to the meeting. Please bring dates you may be available to begin your ministry service for the rest of the year and for the first quarter of 2027.
- ***New Baby In Our New Life Family!*** Praise the Lord! Ben & Carly Wilson welcomed a healthy baby BOY! Luther Daniel came home Thursday. If you are interested in providing a meal, just click the Meal Train Link posted on the Megaphone group. In addition, let's stock Ben and Carly with diapers and wipes for the little man by placing items in the white laundry basket in the entryway.
- ***Did You Know?*** Every Sunday morning before our service, people are encouraged to gather in the prayer room to pray for whatever is on our hearts. Whether it be our church community, families, children, our schools, our church leaders, etc. Prayer *does matter* so please consider joining us!





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.



Have you visited our bookstore lately? Our shelves hold so many great books to help you grow in your knowledge of and love for God and to help guide you in your daily walk with Him. Perhaps you'll find a book to read with a friend or form a book group with! We also have many great resources that you may want to consider for your gift-giving needs for the young or old and all ages in-between. Come check us out after service today.



Today's Passage:

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

Matthew 1:2-16

SERMON NOTES: