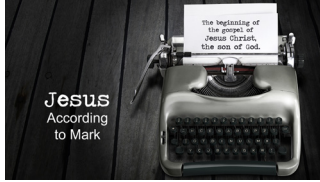


## Today's Passage



Pastor Tony will be teaching from the Book of Mark.  
Our passage for today is Mark 1:29-34.

## Sermon Notes



# 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, June 26, 2016

Vol. 9, Issue 38

## pastoral ponderings

It was in Nazareth of Galilee where Mary was told she was to give birth to a son and call His name Jesus (see Luke 1:26-31). But a few months later, through the events of a seemingly benign decree of Caesar Augustus, the Lord moved Mary and Joseph to "the city of David, which is called Bethlehem" (Luke 2:4). Bethlehem would become the very first place the creator would breath the air of His creation.

Those who have studied of the life of Christ have found a whole ocean of study in Luke 2:7. The implications of this verse are the foundations of the manger scenes found in so many of our front yards in the late days of December. It was in a food trough in Bethlehem where the Messiah would spend His first sleepless nights.

Days, or perhaps years, later Matthew tells us that Joseph and Mary took Jesus and fled to Egypt (Matthew 2:13-14). When finally the one who sought the life of Jesus was dead, Joseph and Mary were implored by God's messenger to return to Nazareth (Matthew 2:19-20).

It wasn't until Jesus was 12 years old that we hear more about his livelihood. Jesus and His parents were said to have traveled to Jerusalem once a year. Jesus found Himself so at home in the Temple, that it was three days later that His parents had finally discovered His whereabouts (see Luke 2:41-46).

Where did Christ sleep for those two or three nights?

The gospel stories fast forward Eighteen years to when Jesus' public ministry began (Luke 3:23). This was marked by the events that we have already studied in the book of Mark – the baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3:13-17, Mark 1:9-11, Luke 3:21-22, implied in John 1:29-34).

Following Jesus' baptism, we see Jesus travel into the wilderness. He was there for forty days. Imagine those forty nights. Upon what did He lay His head?

There are scant traces in the gospels indicating the places where Jesus would have called "home." We learn about His home town – Nazareth (Matthew 13, Mark 6, Luke 4, John 4) but these are all references to the 30 years prior to His public ministry. Moreover, though we know the name of His "hometown" we know more about the various *travels* He had in those 30 years than about His home-life in Nazareth.

What about His three years of ministry? Where did Jesus call home during His three-year ministry that led up the cross?

We don't know. There are implications (some will/have been discussed in our study of Mark) that Christ probably stayed here or there (all of which is conjecture), but on the whole, the New Testament is curiously silent about Jesus' "home."

In fact, Scripture goes out of its way to indicate that the conspicuous absence of such a pillow is due to the fact that Christ did *not* have a home (Matthew 8:20, Luke 9:58). While He walked upon His creation, Jesus called no place home.

*Continued --->*

# Visitor Card

We'd like to get to know you. Please take a moment to fill out this card then drop it in the wooden offering box near the back of the room.

- First-time Visitor  
 Returning Visitor

Name

Date

Email

Phone#

## How to access the sermon archives:

To download sermons for **free**, go to [newlifechristiancommunity.com](http://newlifechristiancommunity.com)

For a CD or DVD (\$2 charge), please fill out the form below and drop it in the wooden offering box near the back of the room. Your order will be available for pick up at the video booth the following week.

Name

Sermon Date

Scripture Passage

# Prayer Card

If you are in need of prayer or would like to share a praise report, please share it below and drop it in the wooden offering box near the back of the room.

Please check a box below

- This may be added to our congregation prayer wall.
- Share this only with the pastors and elders.

Optional:

Name

Email

Phone#

If you would like someone to pray with you today, you may come to the front immediately following the service.

**Save the date!**  
**This year's Pastor Race will be held Saturday evening, July 30<sup>th</sup>.**

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## pastoral ponderings cont.

Jesus simply traveled. Taken together, the gospels paint an illustrious picture of a Rabbi who perpetually traveled. He was always on what we would call "a road trip." He was never home. He was never settled.

As you are reading this, many of you are wondering, when will you get to the point! What is this all about?! You say, "Yes, so what!? So, Jesus did not have a home."

Earlier this summer Julie and I were on a road trip. While on this road trip we visited a church in Wichita. Invariably, as a visitor, I felt like I could just go to the service without the need to engage in ministry. Thoughts akin to, 'since I am a visitor, I can simply slip in and slip out' or 'Our family can just attend and leave.' After all, I wasn't called to pastor this congregation!

My earthly thoughts are completely contrary to the life of the one I claim to follow. The fact that I am a visitor should never cause me to sit back in the proverbial pew. This tendency (not unique to me) reveals a problem in the Western Church. We believe "our church" is not the bride of Christ. Our actions reveal that we believe "our church" only meets in Dresser Junction.

This is a sad and sobering thought for me. I have spent hours wrestling and praying – earnestly desiring to guard against the temptation to pledge allegiance to a building rather than Jesus – and yet, I fell into the same trap when I visited another building!

The many synagogues Jesus entered – He entered as a visitor. Was His ministry hindered by the fact that He was perpetually a visitor? Looking at His life implies the opposite – Jesus loved ministering to strangers.

So, what does this mean for New Life? There are three groups I'd like to speak to:

1<sup>st</sup> let me speak to the visitors (warning: please read the following words as words of love and grace): You are Jesus Christ to New Life. As a visitor, we invite you to engage in conversation with people you don't know. Take a lesson from Christ, and engage in His ministry. Don't let this be a "day off" for you. If you know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, you have been given the commission to "go" (implying you'll often be a visitor) and make disciples! New Life wants to be a place where the Bride of Christ (not merely New Life) has the opportunity to thrive. Engage! Whatever you do, don't leave wondering – why didn't that church minister to *me*? That question has the shoe on the wrong foot.

2<sup>nd</sup> let me speak to those who have been coming to New Life for several weeks or even months. Have you invested in what Jesus is doing here yet? If so, you embody what it is

to be part of the Bride of Christ! Still others may be thinking, 'I just don't think I (or my family) fit in...or, 'There isn't a ministry here that matches with *my* gifting – therefore, I'll just keep coming as a consumer until the elder board takes notice and does something for me!' Sadly, most churches are comprised in large part by this group (mind you, I don't feel that this is an issue at New Life – we are a unique bunch!). Church hopping becomes the norm for this attitude. Let me just say, we want everyone to be able to minister! If first time visitors are being encouraged to minister – how much more are you?! Get your hands dirty (literally and actually) by getting involved in the meal or by praying for someone you don't know (or praying for someone you do know). Introduce yourself to someone you've never met – they are on a mission to minister to you – you, likewise, ought to be on a mission to bless them.

3<sup>rd</sup> let me speak to the partners. If Christ thrived in ministry as a visitor, how much more must we be looking for opportunities to minister to each other and to our visitors? If you are viewing your "partnership" like we often view a membership to a club – for the purpose of *getting* perks etc., you are viewing your partnership backwards. We expect you to be the perk/blessing to our visitors. Engage. Never should a person walk into this facility and walk out thinking – 'no one cared I was there!' If that happens, there is a grave chance that we have missed an opportunity to minister to Jesus Himself. God forbid that happen among us.

Looking throughout the book of Acts and the rest of the New Testament reveals a community of saints who were passionately eager to minister to each other regardless of location or friendship. The vast majority of those Paul ministered to – were strangers. Imagine how sad it would be if Paul decided that He first must "feel at home" with a group before He could minister to them???

May the same Spirit that drove those first century Christians be the Spirit that fills our hearts.

Perhaps a better way to view Christ is not as a perpetual visitor. Perhaps He is better described as one who was always at home. Though we look forward to our ultimate Home with Him in heaven, may we, as His disciples continually find ourselves at home and ready to serve Him wherever we are.

Blessings,  
Pastor Tony

## June Memory Verse

### Romans 1:16-17

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith,[a] as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."



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