



New Life Christian Community

Join Us As We Celebrate
Only Jesus

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2026
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"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

Pastoral Pondering

Union With Christ – I Am The True Vine

During Christmas a few weeks ago, I was reminded of the beauty and reality of being united with Christ. The Apostle Paul uses the supporting phrase being "In-Christ", and this phrase is found over 90 times in the New Testament, it is such an important theme. I also realize that my finite mind cannot fully understand or comprehend the depths of this amazing and glorious truth. **Union with Christ is the essence of what it means to be a Christian.**

John Calvin writes in his institutes of the Christian Religion, "When considering our salvation, our mystical union with the Lord should be given the highest degree of importance."

Jesus teaches us; "***I am the True Vine and My Father is the vinedresser***" (John 15:1). This is the last of the seven "I am" statements of Jesus which is only recorded in John's Gospel. These "I am" proclamations point to His unique divine identity and purpose. At this time, Jesus was preparing the remaining eleven men, Judas had already departed, for His pending crucifixion, His resurrection, and His subsequent departure for Heaven. He had just told them that He would be leaving them (John 14:2). Knowing how disturbed they would feel, He gave them this lovely metaphor of the True Vine as one of His encouragements.

The main truth Christ is teaching in this metaphor is the importance of abiding in Him to bear fruit. Scripture uses metaphors to further support the reality of our union with Christ: Jesus is the Vine, and we are the branches. Jesus is the Head, and we are His body (Colossians 1:18). Jesus is the Cornerstone, and we are the living stones built upon Him (1 Peter 2:4-7). He is the bridegroom, and we are His bride (Ephesians 5:31-32). We are crucified with Christ (Galatians 2:20).

Jesus wanted His friends, not only those eleven, but those of all time, to know that He was not going to desert them, even though they would no longer enjoy His physical presence. His living energy, His spiritual reality would continue to nourish and sustain them just as the roots and trunk of a grape vine produces the energy that nourishes and sustains its branches while developing their fruit. Jesus wanted us to know that, even though we cannot see Him, we are as closely connected to Him as the branches of a vine are connected to its stem. **Our desire to know and love Him and the energy to serve Him will keep flowing into and through us as we abide in Him.**

Jesus went on to remove any misunderstanding about what He meant (John 15:4). He said that no branch can live, let alone produce leaves and fruit, by itself. Cut off from the trunk, a branch is dead. Just as a vine's branches rely on being connected to the trunk from which they receive their energy to bear fruit, Jesus' disciples depend on being connected to Him for their spiritual life and the ability to serve Him effectively. The fruit we produce is that of the Holy Spirit – love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, kindness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

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Pastoral Pondering

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Our source of life and spiritual fruit is not in ourselves; it is outside us, in Christ Jesus. We can live, live rightly, and serve Him effectively only if we are rightly connected to Him in a faith/love relationship.

So, we depend on Jesus for everything, starting with our very life – **“For in Him we live and move and have our being”** (Acts 17:28) and including our reconciliation with God through Him (Romans 5:10). No one can serve God effectively until he is connected with Jesus Christ by faith. Jesus is our only connection with the God who gave life and who produces in us a fruitful life of righteousness and service.

As the Father cares for the Son, so He cares for those joined to the Son by faith. That glorious truth is the central point Jesus is making. **It is one of the most sublime truths in all Scripture. Believers are united by faith to the beloved Son of God.**

Rest in this Biblical truth!

Your brother in – Christ, Jim Nelson



nlcc
resourcecenter

If you haven't visited the Resource Center lately, Come check it out! 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! Not sure what you want, our resource center helpers will be happy to help you out. Come check us out after service today.



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.

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This Week's Scheduled Events:

Tues	Men's Bible Study– 6:30 am
Tues	Young Ladies Study– 7:15 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

February Memory Verse:

Daniel 12:2-3 (ESV)

"And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above, and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever."

February Fellowship Tip:

Did anyone say Chicken Soup? Cold and flu season is upon us and it doesn't have to be all negative. It provides the body of Christ more opportunities to care for one another in love, even simply through a pot of warm chicken soup and a short prayer at the door reminding one another our Lord is good to us.

Sunday Meals and Fellowship:

Feb 15	Meal Team 6–Baked Potato/Salad
Feb 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. All My Boast Is In Jesus
2. O Lord My Rock and My Redeemer
3. O the Deep Deep Love Of Jesus
4. Jesus Strong and Kind
5. Holy Spirit

- **Missions Meeting:** Missions Meeting **today after service!** If you are interested in learning ways to better care for our missionaries and creatively communicate updates to the New Life body for prayer and support needs, please attend our missions meeting today held in the "Green Room" at **11:45** (feel free to bring your lunch).
- **Preaching Guild:** Preaching Guild meets **this Sunday evening (tonight) at 6:30pm.** Fellow brothers, if you are willing to be challenged to dive deeper into the scriptures, lean more on Christ, and grow in the practice of preparing and giving of a sermon, consider attending tonight! New Life family please join in prayer for our men who are laboring in the studying and preaching of the Word of God.
- **Hall of Men:** Hall of Men **next Sunday, February 22nd!** All ages encouraged to come. We're reaching back into the annals of history to blow the dust off the writings and work of faithful men of old. For our encouragement, we will listen to a presentation on the life of one of these men, celebrating the grace of God through Christ in him and how by faith he was able to stand firm in the Gospel in the midst of the trials and temptations of his own generation.
- **2026 Men's Retreat:** Let's talk about spring! The 2026 Men's retreat is now on the calendar for **Friday and Saturday April 10th and 11th.** We will be continuing our journey through Ephesians diving into Chapter 4 this year.

2 Easy ways to register! Take a picture of the QR Code on the welcome counter to lead you to the registration website or open our New Life App and click the registration menu option. Just fill out your information and either pay online or select "I'll pay by check" under the "Men's retreat Payment" dropdown menu and you can pay at the retreat.

Registration deadline is Sunday March 22nd! Once registered you should be getting a follow-up email with more information about your stay at Oak Forest. If you have any questions about registration or scholarship funds to attend just reach out to Pastor Paul.





Jesus

Proclaimed
to the
Colossians

Today's Passage:

Pastor Tony's message is from the
New Testament book,
Colossians 4:2-4

SERMON NOTES: