



new life news

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF NEW LIFE CHURCH OF CHRIST

JULY 2019

Ratzon La Adonai: Mercy, Compassion, and Blessing

Luke 4:16-21

¹⁶ He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read. ¹⁷ The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: ¹⁸ “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, ¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” ²⁰ Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, ²¹ and he began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

This is a **key passage** because in it **Jesus announces his purpose and plan**. He has come to proclaim the Lord’s favor and he is going to work with the poor, the prisoners, the blind, and the oppressed. He even goes so far as to say that he is fulfilling the scripture right then. In the chapters immediately following this passage we see Jesus reaching out to those who are often rejected by society and interacting with them in meaningful ways. He talks to them, touches them, even heals them. In doing this he is showing them mercy and compassion and being a blessing to them.

The Hebrew phrase for The Lord’s Favor is *Ratzon la Adonai*. We flesh out the meaning of this idea by three terms: mercy, compassion, and blessing. **Mercy has to do with the way we view people.** We see someone with eyes of mercy when we remember that we do not know their story and/or their situation. We see them in light of their value in God’s eyes rather in light of our reactions to them.

Compassion has to do with moving from emotion to action. When we are motivated to act in a helping or kind way, we are acting in compassion. Compassion seeks to meet needs and provide active help in a given situation.

Church Events

- **July 4th**
Office Closed
- **July 13th-20**
Honduras Mission Trip
- **July 17th**
Comfort & Joy Sewing @
5:30pm
- **July 18th**
Senior Moments Event
@ 12:00pm
- **July 28th – August 2nd**
Missouri Mission Trip

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The final word is blessing. We often think of blessings as “things” we receive from God. However, **another way of viewing the idea of blessing is thinking of people.** A person is a blessing to us when they care about us, when they are there in our lives, when they help us. God is a blessing to us by His involvement in our lives. We can be a blessing to people in the same way.

Jesus came to show God’s favor to us. And He calls us to be like him. **We can show God’s favor to others by seeing them with the eyes of mercy, reaching out with the hands of compassion, and being a blessing in their life!**

~Steve

Showing Compassion

One of the many amazing attributes of Christ is his level of compassion. **His compassion is seen all throughout his life on this earth** and all throughout the Old Testament (*Psalm 145:9- The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made.*) We see in Luke (¹⁸*“The Spirit of the LORD is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, ¹⁹to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor.”*) that this was part of Jesus’ purpose for his life. He showed compassion to so many people and **he never treated people like a burden or inconvenience.** He wanted all to hear his good news and feel his level of compassion. And the hard part is, **this is what he expects from us, his followers.** Sometimes we go through our days, minding our own business, and are never faced with the choice of: am I going to show compassion, or get annoyed. A couple of weeks ago, Chris and I were faced with this choice and there was no avoiding it. I had come in early on a Sunday morning to get the coffee ready when I noticed him. **There was a man all wrapped up in a sleeping bag and all his few belongings spread out by the main entrance, fast asleep.** At first, if I’m being totally honest, I was a bit startled and had no idea what to do. So, I went and got Chris. We called both Steve and Kyle to see if there was a certain way they wanted us to handle it, but the realization soon set in, we were going to have to wake him up and talk to him. I am so thankful Chris (who is a lot better talker than me) was there and took the lead. We awoke him only to be greeted by his dog that was sleeping in the bag with him. We did not get much of his story, but he was super tired and wanted a place out of the rain. Now the choice was in front of us: tell him he could not stay and send him on his way, or show him some compassion. **He was offered the restroom, a drink, and, most importantly, an invitation to join us for worship.** He declined all offers; he wanted some advice on where he could go and get more sleep and went on his way. I wrestled all week with that encounter, did I do enough? Did I show enough compassion? I was mad at myself because in the beginning I had a small level of annoyance (I did not want to deal with him this morning). I’m thankful the Holy Spirit was able to quickly get those thoughts out of my head within seconds. **My only hope is that a seed was planted** (and the man will meet people throughout his life that will water that seed), and it grows and he finds Christ and the wonderful life He offers.

~Jason

Christians Are Responsible for their Words... Even on Social Media

“But speaking the truth in love, let us grow in every way into Him who is the Head- Christ.” -Ephesians 4:15

“Your speech should be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you should answer each person.” -Colossians 4:6

Social media can be a good thing. It helps us to keep connected with friends and family that are far away. It allows distant grandparents, aunts and uncles to see young ones grow up, and can help us keep current with the events in loved ones’ lives in real time. Living twenty hours away from a close friend or family member can be hard, but now it’s not as hard as it used to be. Everyone is a call or a click or a video chat away.

But, as with all things, people have found ways to corrupt something that has a strong potential for goodness and use it as a platform for evil. As Christians, we need to take care that our behavior online is wholesome and Christ-centered so that we are a presence for Him in our online life. So what does this look like?

When we realize that the written (or typed/texted) word is an extension of the spoken word, with just as much force and meaning, then we begin to see how carefully we should handle ourselves in social media. God is very concerned with our words, both spoken and written. Our words reflect our character and are reflective of who we really are. Social media gives the feeling of distance from those we speak to. But the words are communicated all the same. **Here are some ideas to help guide our behavior online taken from the two passages above:**

1) **Speak truth.** Truth matters to God. Social media has become the ideal platform for those who want to spread ideas quickly to large masses of people. It is a digital soapbox that gives the comfort of being far away from the crowd but increases the audience being reached exponentially. The problem is that in the information age it is easy to come across a lot of bad information. **Not all sources are equal. Not all reports are honest.** Many interviews undergo heavy editing. Christians should be sure that what they are putting out for the world to see is actually *factual*. We have been entrusted with the Truth of all truth. **Do we take time to fact check what we read or hear against the Truth we see in Scripture? Do we take time to prayerfully consider ideas before we accept them and disseminate them?** We must speak the truth. Most importantly, the specific Truth Paul is talking about here is the truth that is rooted in the Gospel. That is the message that gives clarity to all other messages. Is this clear in how your social media time is handled?

2) **Communicate lovingly.** Being a jerk doesn't help anyone. We live in an age where disagreeing=hating. But this is a false equation. It is possible to dialogue lovingly. It is possible to promote truth lovingly. And love should permeate all we do. **If what is posted or sent through the veins of social media is not kind or loving, it ought not to be sent.** Paul says in Colossians that our speech should be "gracious, seasoned with salt." If what is posted is vague in its communication of love and if it isn't gracious, it isn't worth posting.

Even if you are right, there are wrong ways to say the right thing. Carefully, graciously, and lovingly communicating in all forms is what the Christian is called to. If a person can't communicate truth graciously and lovingly, they ought to think twice before posting.

3) **Allow your faith to be seen in your social media use.** What pictures are you sending? What words are you using? What jokes are you posting? Do they reflect a follower of Christ? Just because they haven't been shared in person or through the spoken word doesn't mean that social media sharing doesn't matter to God.

Our social media usage is a part of our actual life, not a second kind of life that doesn't matter. It represents you. It is a window into you. Are you posting as if you were aware of that?

There are opportunities to use social media in great ways. **When we use social media with Christ as our standard we can be sure to use it appropriately.** Let's be sure to share online in ways that honor the Lord.

~Kyle

July Birthdays

1 – Robert McCready

3 – Carol Cogar, Cliff Hardin

4 – Evan Basye, Kiona Cover

5 – Lauren Johnson, Riley Johnson,
Alex Kistler

6 – Addison Noe, Rich Tucker

7 – Jon Beveridge, Kim Landis

8 – Kim Dixon, Cari Johnson

9 – Brad Sharp

10 – Jennipher Fletcher, Phyllis Shaffer

11 – Martha Hamilton, Karla

MacTavish, Dan Noe

16 – Jason Sharp

17 – Tabi Hamilton, Ginger Kunz

19 – Ralph Walker

20 – Becca Sharp

22 – Carla Armstrong

24 – Chris Mulpas

Greetings in the name of Jesus! **I am thrilled to have this chance to serve New Life as worship minister!** When I came in January as an interim, becoming a worship minister was not on my radar, but I have always strived to go where the Lord opened doors and where I could help churches. In the meantime, **my family and I have really enjoyed being here, and are now very happy to call this our church home.**

I wanted to use this opportunity to tell you a little more about myself and my family. **My dad baptized me at a week of Round Lake camp when I was 10 years old.** Some of you know my parents, Craig and Darlene, and my uncle, Ken. **My wife Amy and I have been married for almost 21 years.** We met in algebra class at Kentucky Christian University our sophomore year, and have been together ever since. **We have two boys, Carson who is 11 and going into the sixth grade and Aiden who is 6 and going into the first grade.** We homeschool, and are excited to be part of the homeschool group that meets here at New Life.

While growing up in a ministry family, I was never pressured to go into ministry. Yet when I was 15, I believe that God was calling me to serve Him in that way. **For over 20 years I served the Lord preaching at churches in Ohio, Kentucky, and Illinois. After serving as preaching minister in Dover, Ohio for almost a decade I was called to start a new traveling ministry of music and preaching in 2017.** Since then I have held concerts, revivals, conferences in locations all over the country as far as Kansas and Florida.

When Steve and the elders approached me about staying here permanently, **I had a couple of concerns, especially that I had not been trained as a worship minister.** In the local church, I have never had a ministry other than preaching. While my traveling ministry is centered on music, it is very different than what I am doing here at New Life. As I have expressed to the leadership and the worship ministry, **I ask for grace as I am leading this ministry.** In some ways I am learning on the job, which can be a positive because the worship team and I are learning together. **A big part of my job will be training and encouraging those currently serving, as well as bringing on new recruits.** I assure you that worship services will not be perfect, simply because our very talented singers and instrumentalists are working with me, who has not been trained to make everything technically perfect. **Thankfully, while God deserves our best, He doesn't require perfection. In His Word, we see that He longs for worshippers who have a heart for Him.** It is my prayer that our worship will be directed toward our God and reflect our grateful devotion.

My second concern was that I am not ready to give up my traveling ministry. I continue to believe that God called me to travel to churches across the country to encourage the saints and challenge the lost with the message of Jesus. **The arrangement that the leadership and I have come to is that I am part-time here at New Life, and that I will be given freedom to continue to travel with my ministry.** I hope and pray that the church here at New Life will be praying and encouraging my ministry when I am somewhere else, just as much as when I am here leading worship.

My favorite verse of Scripture is "Be faithful to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life" (Revelation 2:10 CSB). **That is my goal: faithfulness.** I pray that as I come alongside each of you, we will be found to be faithful to the Lord together. Thank you for this opportunity to serve, and may God bless you!

-Chris

