

Welcome to New Life !

We are very pleased you are here. It is an honor to have you worshipping with us today! This information is provided to help you feel welcome and "at home."

Worship in Singing & Giving

- We leave how to worship up to you as an individual. During **singing** worship some people remain seated, some stand, others kneel, many clap, and some lift their hands. The outward expression is not the issue - it is what is in your heart that counts. Just relax and enjoy the presence of God.
- If you would like to receive personal **prayer** during worship with singing, you may go to one of the Prayer Teams located at the back of the sanctuary.
- Invitation is given for **tithes and offerings**. If you are our guest, please do not feel obligated to contribute when God's tithes and offerings are received.

Worship in Sharing God's Love

Expressions of greeting and God's love are extended to all, especially to our guests.

Worship in Meditating on God's Word

Teaching from the Bible for about 35 minutes.

We encourage you to use our **staffed Nursery** [which has a private nursing room] and **Children's Churches** during the service. Please ask an usher for assistance in locating the various rooms.

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Pastor Roger Wendt

February 8, 2009

Taking the Next Step

"Becoming contagious with God's love"

Matthew 5:13 msg

God wants us to be **contagious** with His love.

Colossians 3:14 "Beyond all these things **put on love** ..."

1 Corinthians 14:1 "**Pursue love** ..."

Philemon 1:5 & 7 (NCV) ... I hear about the love you have for all God's holy people and the faith you have in the Lord Jesus ... I have great joy and comfort, my brother, because the love you have shown to God's people has refreshed them.

• Make it our mission to **strengthen the journey with Christ** of those in our sphere of influence.

Matthew 5:13(msg) "Let me tell you why you are here. You're here to be salt-seasoning that brings out the **God-flavors** of this earth."

HOW do I take the **RIGHT** next step

to strengthen my own -- and someone else's journey -- with Christ?

1. Make **Today** Count

"You will never change your life until you change something you do daily. What you become is the result of what you do today." ~John Maxwell

• The only way to **change** our yesterdays is by making good decisions today. And good decisions today will give you a better tomorrow.

• To take the right next step takes a firm understanding of who we are in Christ.

• Nothing will take care of our yesterdays and bring fulfillment to our tomorrows like **hearing and responding** to God's voice today.

John 10:26-28 (msg) "You don't believe because you're not my sheep. My sheep recognize my voice. I know them, and they follow me. I give them real and eternal life."

2. Develop a **Spiritual** Appetite

Matthew 5:6 (msg) "You're blessed when you've worked up a good appetite for God."

• A true spiritual appetite for Jesus will move us from just **loving Jesus** to falling **'in love'** with Jesus.

Digging Deeper

For personal or small group study

Week of February 8, 2009

- Following Jesus and helping others to do the same **should be the focus of all our life's journey.**

Luke 9:23-24 (msg) “Then he told them what they could expect for themselves: “Anyone who intends to **come with me** has to let me lead. You’re not in the driver’s seat—I am. Don’t run from suffering; embrace it. **Follow me and I’ll show you how.** Self-help is no help at all. Self-sacrifice is the way, my way, to finding yourself, your true self. What good would it do to get everything you want and lose you, the real you?”

3. Don’t Travel Alone

- None should be left to walk the trail alone ~ it’s the principle of discipleship.

- To fail to make disciples is to fail to live yourself.

Hebrews 10:24 “And let us consider how we may **spur one another on** toward love and good deeds.”

“For we will become like our closest friends.” ~ Dee Brestin

Proverbs 13:20 (NCV) “Spend time with the wise and you will become wise, but the friends of fools will suffer.”

2 Timothy 2:22 “... enjoy the company of those who call on the Lord with pure hearts.”

- In our walk of faith, we all follow someone’s steps. None of us are the first to walk the trail.

1 Corinthians 11:1 “Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ”

2 Timothy 3:10 (NCV) “But you, Timothy, have followed what I teach, the way I live, my goal, faith, patience, and love. You know I never give up.”

- To reproduce our faith in another person is the essence of the Christian journey and Jesus’ calling for every believer.

Acts 20:24 (LB) “Life is worth nothing, unless I use it for doing the work assigned to me by the Lord Jesus – the work of telling others the Good News about God’s mighty kindness and love.”

What does it take? You have to be salty. You need a plan to make today count. You need a firm grasp of who you are in Christ, accompanied by a hunger and passion for God that will spur others on in their spiritual journey with Christ.

Today ... take the right next step -- the step of love.

What spoke to you the most this week from the message? If you were asked to preach a sermon next week, what would your topic be and why?

GROUP DISCUSSION or PERSONAL REFLECTION

1. What does it mean to be contagious? Describe a time you had a contagious disease, as a child or as an adult, and how it affected you and others? What do you think of when you think of being spiritually contagious? What has to happen for us to be positively spiritually contagious? Can we be negatively spiritually contagious? How?
2. Read Matthew 5:13 in several translations. The Message version is used in the notes. Also read Mark 9:50 and Luke 14:34-35. What is Jesus saying to His disciples and to us in these verses? Give some practical examples of how we can apply this truth in our day to day lives.
3. Author Neil Anderson says, “Understanding who you are in Christ is absolutely essential to your success at living the Christian life.” What are some traits of being in Christ? [Matthew 5:13-14; John 1:12; John 15:1, 5, 15-16; Romans 8:17; Ephesians 2:10, 19; Philippians 3:20] How does it make you feel when you are reminded of these traits in the previous verses? Of what importance is it to believe God’s truth about who you are in Christ?
4. Share a time when you took a trip with good traveling companions and then a time that you traveled with bad ones. What was the difference? What is your definition of a good traveling companion? Why is it so important to have close friends that will love you and challenge you? How do you feel when you are around one of these friends? What opportunities do you have to be a wise friend to another? [1 Samuel 23:15-16; Proverbs 13:20; 27:6; 2 Timothy 2:22; Hebrews 3:13]
5. Find a friend in your group and share with them how you plan on taking the right next steps? Discuss the following questions:
 - Who are you following?
 - When you get to where you are going, will it be where you intended?
 - What kind of trail are you leaving for others to follow?
 - If someone follows your steps, will they arrive at the right place?