

NEW COVENANT PRESS

NEW COVENANT CHURCH "NEWSLETTER" Georgette Snook, Editor Issue #3 June 2018

NEW LIFE

Every year, when Springtime arrives, it seems like things are all fresh and new once more. Especially out in nature. Most of us, no doubt, have a yard surrounding our house, and we are well aware of all the weeds as well as the things we have planted in our yard. When Walter and I moved to Grass Valley almost a year and a half ago, we saw that the former owners had loved many kinds of growing things. There are all sorts of leaves in the garden that had no flowers with them in November by which to identify what they were. And not just in the garden, but all over the yard, here and there, helter-skelter. There were even some fruit trees. There were bulbs in the ground, too, that we did not know about until the leaves came up later on. But the weeds came up with them. Too many of them. And I am a weeder! So I got busy as soon as I could.

This year, there are not so many weeds, but lots of them had already dropped their seeds by the time we moved here, so there were still plenty to pull up. Most of them are gone by now, and the roses and other wonderful things are a lovely sight to see. But there's still work to be done.

Isn't the Christian life somewhat like that? When we are saved through Jesus' sacrifice for us, there are a lot of 'weeds' to be pulled up before our lives can become beautiful. Jesus must pull them out for us. And the seeds of sin can still come up unexpectedly at any time. And just like the bulbs hidden in the ground, there can be all sorts of wonderful qualities in us that we did not suspect before we came to know this Master Gardener who took charge of us. So let's just give Him control so that He can make our lives into something beautiful for others to see if we let Him do it. Out with the Old, and in with the New! Let's ask the Holy Spirit to accomplish this New Life in us.

SPIRITUAL FRUIT

Galatians 5:22-23 (love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, gentleness, faith, meekness, temperance). This wonderful passage tells us of the new fruit we can bear as Christians. Once we have new life in Christ, these qualities are how we express it to the watching world around us. It has been the testimony of many people who lived worldly lives before salvation that accepting Christ changed them completely. Is it important to us to live new lives in the Spirit? Or do we just want to go around happy that we are saved, and forget that we must grow into spiritual, mature Christians? Do we go on our merry way without giving much thought to how our actions and attitudes affect others? In the midst of our busy schedules we can so easily lose our initial enthusiasm and pay no attention to the quiet voice of God's Spirit within us. Let us renew our prayers and desires to be obedient to the Lord's directions, and show the World that we are new persons, by expressing the Fruit of the Spirit. We won't be on our own, for the Holy Spirit will be with us to make us all He wants us to be.

INTO NEW LIFE

We recently lost one of our members, Lynn Glenn, as she entered into the true New Life. Even though our church misses her, our loss is her gain. Her old life is over now, but the new has begun, and will last eternally! She will never again have to go through the trials of this life. And the best thing is that we will see her again! While we must give our condolences to those who loved her, we may praise the Lord and rejoice with her for where she is now. We have also had prayer requests for other of our members who have lost some of their friends and relatives. We give our condolences to them, hope that the departed ones knew the Lord, and praise Him for the ones who did.

But we have the good news of the birth of little Ronan into the Blandford family, who entered into his new earthly life on April 17th, after much travail on the part of Janae. and stole the show here in church on the following Sunday morning. So we congratulate them, and pray for little Ronan as he grows into what God wants him to be. We pray that he will have eternal life too.

A NATION DIVIDED

Jesus' words to His Jewish listeners were not meant only for them. They also apply to our world today, even to us here in the United States right now. He said in Mark 3:24, "And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand." And in the 26th verse, He used the word house instead of kingdom. Furthermore, In Luke 12:51, He said that He came to bring division. Is the Bible not known for asking for unity? But Jesus' words don't sound like that, do they?

While we strive for and pray for unity among the brethren in church, this is not what is going on out in the world. Anything but. During the lifetimes of most of us, there has never been so much serious and continual division in our country, not to mention the rest of the world at war with each other. And Jesus came to bring that? Is not this terrible, ungodly strife a result of the good and the evil in mankind's heart? Some folks are on a godly path, while others are listening to the devil's desires. Division. Good and evil do not work well with each other!

We are going to be voting (aren't we?) for various candidates and propositions on June 5th. Some of our choices will be more on the side of godliness, while others may not be so much. Some of will be better for the good of the country than others. People are often as much against someone as much as for someone else. But either way, there is a real division, and it is not pleasant to see. And how about those riotous protests the losers engage in that only make the divide greater? Wouldn't it be great if we all had the mind of Christ? But God has His reasons; there will always be a Great Divide between sinful and godly behavior until Jesus returns to this earth, and it will only increase as the time grows nearer.

After all that, let's LAUGH A LITTLE

A HUMOROUS DICTIONARY: Ice cream----but only when I'm frightened.

SMILE: A police officer came to my home and asked me where I was between 5:00 and 6:00. He seemed irritated when I answered "kindergarten."

SENIOR SMILE: Don't let aging get you down. It's too hard to get back up. (AMEN!)

FOUR PERSPECTIVES

The painter Adrian Ludwig Richter tells in his memoirs of how he and three friends set out to paint the same landscape. They each were committed to produce as accurately as possible what they saw. Nevertheless, the result was four different pictures, as different as the four personalities of the artists.

The same thing happened when four well-known artists painted the portrait of the United Nations hostess, Maria Lani. Each of them knew her personally and saw her from a different perspective, and the result was four remarkably different pictures.

This helps us understand why there are four Gospels in the New Testament. One Gospel alone would give us the life of Jesus as seen from only one perspective, and that would mean a very inadequate portrait. Jesus is too complex to be seen from only one perspective. God inspired four different men to write the life of Jesus, for each of them gives us unique insight into Jesus that you do not get in the others.

Mark gives us the perspective that is most popular in our modern world. Wycliffe Bible Translators have made Mark the most translated book in the world. There is no other book in the world in so many different languages. It is the shortest of the Gospels, and, therefore, the fastest to translate and to read.

From a sermon by Glenn Pease contributed by Walter.