

FAITH MATTERS



NEW HORIZONS

The horizon is the farthest point of land or water that a person can see, where earth and sky meet. Yet the universe extends far beyond what the eye can behold. The truth is that God knows and sees far beyond what we can see in the natural. He calls us to step forward in faith towards the horizon. We can't see what is beyond, it is the unknown, outside of our comfort and safety zones. We can, however, step forward having confidence in our all knowing God.

Every Blessing

Pastor John.

Keeping in touch

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Reflections: Our Identity in Christ



In October we have continued our series, 'Our Identity in Christ' and victorious Christian living in which every born again Christian should be walking. However, it is vital that we know what our identity in Christ is before we can reflect that identity in our lives. We have been looking at who we are in Christ regarding the following: as heirs, enlightened saints, God's masterpieces and holy vessels for service.

Heirs – Paul wrote to the Ephesians, "In Him also we have obtained an inheritance" (Eph 1:11). Paul describes our inheritance in these terms:

1. "blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ" (Eph 1:3)
- 2 "exceeding riches of His grace" (Eph 2:7)
- 3 "treasure in earthen vessels" (2 Cor 4:7)
- 4 "riches of His glory" (Eph 3:16)

"Victorious Christian Living: not a theory to be admired, but a reality to be experienced."

November Programme

Sunday 10am and 12noon
in our Church building

10 am Service Streamed
on Facebook

11am Catch up via Zoom

Wednesday 7.30pm

4th and 18th Prayer
Meeting

11th and 25th Reflections

Thursday

Throwback Thursday

Mon to Fri

Daily Devotionals

Daily Verse

Our inheritance in Christ Jesus is so glorious, vast, and tremendous that our finite minds cannot even comprehend it. Indeed nothing of benefit or goodness has been withheld from us. Our identity as believers must always be based upon what we know to be true in God's Word, not on how we feel or what others say about us. We must never draw our identity from what the world would portray or say. The world bases its conclusions upon comparison, and if we compare ourselves to others, then we will lose on every point. Why? Because there is always somebody who has more, does more, possesses more, achieves more that we can do in any given area of life. God calls us to compare ourselves to Christ Jesus alone. The word of God is very specific about our inheritance in Christ. Among many things promised to those who are in Christ, there are three specific things:

We shall be like Christ (1 John 3:1-2)

We will reign with Christ (Eph 2:6)

We'll have a heavenly home with Christ (John 14:2-3, Rev 21:4; 22:1-5)

Our inheritance is guaranteed by the Holy Spirit (Eph 1:13-14) who is dwelling within us and is the proof that God has given that ours is a glorious inheritance, that He is going to bring to full fruition in us.

Enlightened Saint – We are given Christ's ability to make wise decisions and sound judgements. In Eph 1:8, Paul speaks of the riches of God's grace that abound towards us "in all wisdom and understanding." God has "made known to us the mystery of His will" and given us "the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him" (Eph 1:9; 1:17-19).

Our Identity in Christ cont.,

Paul identifies three things we are to understand – the hope of His calling on our lives (2 Tim 1:8-9), the riches of the glory of Christ’s inheritance in the saints (Eph 1:18), and the exceeding greatness of Christ’s power (Eph 1:18-23). Paul’s desire in Philippians 3:10-11 is not knowing about Christ but knowing Christ. The more we know Christ the more we: know what He desires for us to do in each and every circumstance we face, develop an ever-deepening, intimate relationship with Him, value who He is transforming us to be, know the richness of our identity, know Christ and rely upon Him for daily strength, know His power in us.

God’s Masterpiece - (Eph 2:10). We are God’s supreme “work in progress” – a work that will conclude in perfection. We will be perfect, whole, complete – just as He is perfect, whole, and complete. Our perfection is not of our own doing, we are His workmanship. Indeed the process of our perfection may at times be painful but in those times we are to deepen our trust and reliance upon Him and grow in our relationship with Him. We are clay in His hands, the potter’s hands (Jer 18:1-6). His perfecting work is a work of removing the dross, the impurities from our lives so that we might more perfectly reflect Him. God alone does the work of perfecting us – of making us, remaking us, refining us. What is our part in the process? Our part is to receive by faith what it is that God says He is doing in our lives. God is always behind the scenes of our lives, turning all things toward an eternal benefit for us. We are His workmanship and He never removes His grace from our lives. He never withdraws or takes His hand of us. We are always in His everlasting arms and what God begins, God completes (Phil 1:6)

Holy Vessels for Service – God made you with a purpose in mind which He planned before the foundation of the world (Eph 2:10). He knows not only what you are capable of doing but also what you will excel in doing and what will give you great satisfaction. God supplies what we are lacking and what we need, When we are weak, He gives us strength. When we are without resources, He supplies the resources. When we lack courage, He gives us boldness. It is all from Him. We are not only created for good works, but are called to be Christ’s witnesses, proclaiming Jesus’ death and resurrection, to be bold in sharing with others about God’s love, mercy, grace, and free offer of forgiveness and eternal life. We are God’s ambassadors (2 Cor 5:20). As citizens of heaven, our journey here on earth is only temporary. Our true home is in heaven. We should seek to make the most of our earthly time and resources for the eternal reward that await us. Do you see yourself as a vessel of God intended for His purposes of ministry on this earth - purposes that involve the doing of good works and the proclaiming of the good news?

GRACE WILL LEAD US HOME

Through many dangers,
through many snares
we have already come.
Lord, through the fire, and
through the flame
But we were not overwhelmed

We have known grace upon
grace. You have shown love
unfailing love. We believe the
grace that brought us safe this
far is the grace that will lead us
home

When we consider the stars
above and yet we’re called by
name.

We’re lost in wonder, we’re
lost in love,
And our hearts are over-
whelmed

Father we will thank You for
Your grace,
We thank You for Your grace
Lost in wonder, love and
praise, we thank You

And one day heaven, no great-
er joy, no greater grace than
this

For we shall see You just as
You are,
And how much You paid for us

We have known grace upon
grace. You have shown love
unfailing love. We believe the
grace that brought us safe this
far is the grace that will lead us
home

New Beginnings



We are living through exceptional and challenging times with a global pandemic which has brought unexpected change to everyone's daily life. Change, however, is inevitable in life and indeed history bears witness to this, never mind the weather which changes daily and the varied seasons throughout the year. In Ecclesiastes 3:1, the writer says, *"There is a time for everything, and a season for*

every activity under heaven." The verses that follow (v2-8) give a comprehensive list of activities relating to human life. Change brings a whole mixture of emotions and varied responses ranging from: excitement, sadness, boldness, fear, resistance, embrace, reminiscing the past, hopes and dreams. 'Change' never stands still but is constantly on the move.

"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven."

"And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

There are quite a few people in the Bible who were 'on the move' for example: Abram, Moses, Joshua, Jesus and Paul. Indeed, in the book of Exodus, we read the account of the Israelites wandering around the desert for 40 years, pitching their tents and moving from place to place. However, significantly they were not alone. Exodus 13:21-22, *"By day the Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night. Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people."* Well, how is that for GPS (Global Positioning System)! Furthermore, their Sat Nav didn't need updating either! Moses in Deuteronomy 31:6 declares to the Israelites, *"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you."* Through the changes, God was with them. We can be assured that no matter what changes we may face today, and, in our tomorrows, God is with us. In Matthew 28:20, Jesus promised, *"And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."* In a world where changes seem to be ever more increasing, and at times hard to keep up, I'm glad that I can totally depend on God who does not change (Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8; James 1:17) according to the recent philosophy, fad or latest opinion poll.

New Beginnings cont.

The Israelites in the desert did not settle down for long but were 'on the move'. It is easy as Christians to 'settle down' on the journey of faith and enjoy all the blessings, comfort and just cruise along towards the sunset and joy of heaven. However, God wants us to be 'on the move' perhaps not physically regarding location but certainly spiritually. The Apostle Paul urges the churches in Galatia in Galatians 5:25, "...let us keep in step with the Spirit." In other words, 'Keep Up!' This does not involve being still, but rather being active, participating, not dragging behind, or rushing ahead but keeping in time with Him. A regular visit with our spiritual eyes to the cross will activate change within and the subsequent response of being lost in wonder, love, and praise. It is all about Him! God has enlisted us on 'His Majesty's Service', for His agenda. We join His cause, not invite Him to join our cause. Praise God that He has fully equipped us for what He wants us to do. All He asks of us is to trust and obey His call. So, get ready to be on the move spiritually with God.

Just a little thought, everyday brings spiritual change. Lamentations 3:22-23 declares that God's mercies are '*new every morning.*' Indeed, we can echo the following words of that great hymn 'All I have needed, thy hand has provided, *great is thy faithfulness*, Lord unto me'.

I am reminded of that great old hymn '*Through All the Changing Scenes of Life*' by Nicholas Brady, 1659-1726 and Nahum Tate, 1652-1715.

No matter how we perceive and respond to change, the one thing that remains constant is God's Word, love and the praise, honour and glory that He alone deserves. To settle, No! Content in the changes with the peace of God, Yes, knowing that all the way my Saviour leads me.

In conclusion, I want to take this opportunity to say 'Thank You' to the Leadership Team and what an honour and privilege it has been to serve you all here at Elim Pentecostal Church Sunderland over these past 8 years. I believe the best days are ahead of Elim Pentecostal church Sunderland and I pray God's continued blessing upon you all as you serve the local community in and through Christ's love and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Pastor John

THROUGH ALL THE CHANGING SCENES OF LIFE

Through all the chang-
ing scenes of life,
in trouble and in joy,
the praises of my God
shall still
my heart and tongue
employ.

O magnify the Lord
with me,
with me exalt his
name!
when in distress, to
him I called
he to my rescue came.

To Father, Son and
Spirit, praise!
to God whom we
adore
be worship, glory, pow-
er and love,
both now and ever-
more!

Nicholas Brady and
Nahum Tate

Saturday Bible Smiles

Q. Where was Solomon's temple located?

A. On the side of his head

Q. What did the Pastor say to a man with a Twitter addiction?

A. Sorry I don't follow you

Farewell...

This Sunday we say farewell to Pastor John. We have 2 services: 10am and 12noon with the 10am being live streamed via Facebook. The 10am service is now full but there are spaces for the 12 noon. Each service will have a slightly

different emphasis and a service will be posted on Facebook and You Tube later in the day with elements from both. Please pray God's guidance upon John, the Leadership Team and Paul Hudson. Paul will be visiting Sun 29th Nov

Solitude is a gift from God, isolation is a tool of the enemy

Staying Connected.

We give thanks to the Lord for the opportunity to gather together on a Sunday morning. It has been a blessing to so many. For various reasons, however, we are not all able to attend in person. Indeed we are still a scattered flock for the majority of the time. The next few months are going to bring various challenges. Winter approaches with worsening weather, increased rates of ill health and potential further lockdowns. As a Leadership we recognize the importance of staying connected as a church family on our spiritual, physical and mental wellbeing. The formation of a Pastoral Care team has been something we have been praying into for a few months.

Finding ourselves as a Leadership Team of two, we recognize that we alone are unable to connect regularly with each individual. We give God thanks that as we've been praying, he's been stirring hearts of individuals to serve in this way. We now have a team of people who will help Tracy and myself 'stay connected'. They will be in regular telephone contact to listen, encourage and pray with individuals. The Leadership Team will be made aware of any support that is required, practical or pastoral, so that we can ensure needs are met. Team members are: Sue Nichol, Christabel Heike, Chiwenga and Fannin Ngami, Granville and Pauline Hawkins.

We are also still available to individuals by contacting 07387 775011.

Thanksgiving

We thank God for His financial provision and for your continued financial support. The scaffolding is now in place in preparation for the work on the roof to begin next week. Once again the Foodbank has been blessed with donations of food allowing the Church to practically minister to the community, each family also receiving an autumn addition of the New Life Newspaper



“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.”

Children’s Church and Sunday Youth Church

As we reach the Half Term Holidays the children and youth are having a well-deserved break for all of their hard work. We’ve made some changes to our Zoom sessions so they are the same as they would be in the church building with games, quizzes, prayer time and teaching, with worship to come in the future. They received another goodie bag with activities, worksheets and small gifts at the beginning of the holiday to enjoy over the week. As you can see in the photos, they were very excited to receive (especially when they found the sweets).

Children’s Church have been looking at more of Jesus’ parables including the parable of the lost coin and lost sheep. In our Zoom meeting, we looked at the difference between the

parables Jesus told and real life accounts in the Bible. We have also learnt of the birth and mission of John the Baptist. This has been reflected in the children’s workbooks in church with activities and reflections for them to draw on.

SYC have continued to examine what it means to accept a commission to be a follower of Christ. This month, we have looked into why it is imperative for us to spend time alone with God to build our relationship with Him; committing to time for pray; being kind and encouraging to others we have relationships with in person and on social media, and finally committing to letting our light shine in the darkness for Christ.



Elim Pentecostal Church
Sunderland

We passionately believe that God has a plan and purpose for you. He loves you and wants you to come to know him through Jesus. We are a Christian community for all generations and nationalities.

We would love to hear from you too, so please send in any news, stories, prayer requests or praise reports.

Thank You..

And Finally..

An emperor had no children. He decided to select a suitable successor to his throne from the boys of his empire. He proclaimed that the interested boys should assemble in the palace on a specified date.

When he arrived he said, "There is a simple test for you. I will give each of you a seed. You must take it home and carefully plant it in a pot. Tend it, giving all possible care and bring the pot to me the same time next year. I will examine the pots and appoint my successor.

The boys carried the seeds home. One of the boys found that his seed did not sprout even though he gave it all possible care. He continued to tend the pot and water it daily but did not get any growth. The others tended their pots and grew beautiful healthy plants. Some even developed buds and flowers.

After one year all the boys returned to the palace. The poor boy sat alone without any plant to display. The emperor examined each pot and returned to his throne. He summoned the boy who had not grown a plant to come to him. The other boys laughed as he stood holding his barren pot.

The king stood and declared, "I gave each of you a seed which was cooked in boiling water to destroy it and ensure it wouldn't grow. All except this honest boy attempted to gain the throne by fraudulent means. Honesty, truthfulness, courage, and integrity are the qualities I require.

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