

# ***Pastor's Ponderings***

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## ***"Real Life"***

by

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***"For these rules were only shadows of the real thing, Christ himself."*** Colossians 2:17 NLT

***"Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits at God's right hand in the place of honor and power. <sup>2</sup>Let heaven fill your thoughts. Do not think only about things down here on earth. <sup>3</sup>For you died when Christ died, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup>And when Christ, who is your real life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory."***

Colossians 3:1-4 NLT

Jesus Christ is the real deal. He is our real life. Heaven is our real home. God really did send Jesus to die on the cross for you. Jesus really did pay in full the penalty for your sin. Your debt really is cancelled. Jesus really did die. He really was buried in a borrowed tomb. God really did raise Him bodily from the dead. Romans 10: 9 & 10 say, ***"For if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup>For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved."***

If you've accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior you really are chosen, accepted, adopted and an heir to all the glories of heaven (Eph 1:4,5,&14 & Rom 8:17&30).

We are starting a new adventure with a four congregation cooperative parish. There will be many challenges, opportunities, and frustrations as we learn and grow together. And we are going to grow. Bible studies will be offered in each community of faith, preaching will be the proclamation of God's Word, and all of our ministries will be Christ

centered. We will keep our eyes fixed on Jesus (Hebrews 12:2).

I truly believe we will grow spiritually and numerically when we are all about Jesus. We must ask ourselves at every juncture, "Is this for me? Is this for the church? Is this for Jesus?" I believe if the answer is anything but for Jesus, we need to recheck our motives.

I can't find anywhere in my Bible where God said, "Go ye therefore and make committees." Jesus did say, "Go ye therefore and make disciples..."

My prayer is, as we form this new parish, we will not get so hung-up on doing committee work, we forget to do Kingdom work. I am sure you know committee work must be done. However, it should not take precedence or priority over what we are really here to do.

We are not here to maintain the church. That would make us *caretakers*. We are not here to give the church a decent burial. That would make us *undertakers*. We really are here to help Jesus, through the power of the Holy Spirit, build His church. That makes us *risk takers*.

That's scary for most of us. Most of us don't feel qualified to lead others to Christ. People might think we're weird or something. To reach out to others in a way which causes them to consider their eternal residence is risky. They might say, "No."

I've searched my Bible (I encourage you to do the same) and I can't find anywhere, where God has asked us to be caretakers, or undertakers of the church. However, the pages of the Bible are filled with people taking risks for the cause of Jesus Christ and His church.

I have high hopes for all four of our congregations. Not because of my abilities. Not because of your abilities. Not because we want it to happen. Not even if we will it to happen. I have high hopes for the Real Life that can be, because it is God's will that we grow and are what God intends. I have high hopes for all four congregations because Jesus Christ gave His life for us. I have high hopes for these congregations because I believe in resurrection power. Real power + real faith = real life! The Real Life God wants us to have.