



THE NEW DOVER HERALD

October 2023

Vol. 204

*A Ministry Newsletter of New Dover United Methodist Church
Celebrating 175 Years 1848-2023*

Honoring the Past, Blessing the Present, Transforming the Future

Abe's Church That



Flock,

Grace to thou and peace...

Well good people who now call thyself New Dover United Methodist Church, it hath been a long time since we had a prattle. Some of thou mayest, but most of thee mayest not, remember me, but I am Reverend Abraham Owens, and in the year of our Lord 1848 Providence saw to it that I was the first Methodist Minister to stand in thy pulpit and shepherd thy congregation once construction of the sanctuary was completed. To this day I consider it an honor to have served thee all those years ago. Further, I understand felicitations are in order, as thou art marking 175 years of the Lord's work here midst the farms, fields, and forests of what thou now calleth North Edison.

For thou who art new here (having been added to the flock sometime over the past 170 or so years), I was a rider on the Rahway circuit before I arriveth on the hill here in what was thence called "Dumplingtown", so named for the apple, cherry, and peach dumplings for which the hamlet was noted. In my time with thee I was blest time and again with savory dumplings offered up in charity and kindness by the ladies of the church.

But I digresseth. Before mounting thy pulpit I served the Mechanicsville Methodist Episcopal Church in Readington Township, Hunterdon County. The sanctuary at Mechanicsville had yet to be constructed, so I first delivered the Word from ye olde blacksmith shoppe located on Main Street. I was their pastor when the first church was erected the following year. The location of the Mechanicsville Church was on the south side of the turnpike, at the lower end of the village where a cemetery now doth stand. The sanctuary was most plain, without a spire, and the cost came to about \$1600. A rather steep price at the time, but it was the Lord's house after all!

Other than my gifts as a preacher, it may hath been my experience erecting their sanctuary as one reason why the Bishop appointed me to thy nascent congregation, for thou had been worshipping out of doors in all manner of weather up to that time. Even though Mr. Samuel Wood

donated the land, the cost of thy church far exceeded that of Mechanicsville: a most exorbitant and embarrassing \$2,700! Perhaps that was because, unlike Mechanicsburg, thy church came with a steeple, picket fence, and horse shed, which I and my trusty mount found most convenient. Such luxuries. We perchance may hath taken heed of the wisdom of Proverbs 11:4: *“Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death.”*

Well, ride on to the next meetinghouse I must, so it is with sadness that I once again taketh my leave of thee. I had the chance to converse with both of thy current circuit riders, and I must say, it warmeth my heart (*I soundeth like Dr. Wesley!*) that thou hast a most pleasant, gifted, hard-working woman serving as thy Associate Pastor. It is about time the church recognize the Lord’s call unto women. Amen!

I doth hath one issue however that needs addressing- the maelstrom hovering about thy Senior Pastor’s bookshelf and desk! Well should he heed the words of the Apostle who taught thou us in I Corinthians 14:33, *“God is not a God of disorder.”* He also mayest taketh a lesson from me as my “office” is atop a saddle and my entire “library,” a Bible and hymnal, is contained in the pocket of my vest!

Haveth thou a most blessed 175th!

Rev Abe

PS: I hope perchance to see thou at the 175th Banquet on October 8th at Pines Manor. I understand a few of thee have yet to procure thy tickets. I yearn that thou heedeth the words of the Prophet Habakkuk: *“He who is coming will not delay!”*



KEEP US IN YOUR PRAYERS



Manny & Nora De La Paz
Debbie Ladym
Shirley & Lamont Shaffer
Beverly Vollmar
Evelyn MacKenzie
Fran Livecchia
Gail Engel
Service men & women
Veterans

Homeless, unemployed
& uninsured
The People of Ukraine
The People of Maui
Victims & their Families of
mass shootings
All Elderly of NDUMC

Pray for all those affected by Natural Disasters, those suffering with addictions, those suffering from depression, Victims of terrorism & violence, all national leaders, and all those serving at New Dover UMC.

All doctors, nurses, EMT, teachers, grocery store workers, janitors, and all other frontline workers. Thank you and God Bless.

If you wish to add anyone to the 2023 permanent prayer list, please contact Karen Rowland at krowland648@yahoo.com

FROM YOUR PRAYER FELLOWSHIP

PLEASE JOIN US FOR PRAYER FELLOWSHIP EVERY
WEDNESDAY MORNING AT 10 AM

In This Issue:

- Abe's Church Chat
- Keep Us in Your Prayers
- Sermon of the Month
- D2C and YAYA
- UWF Fall Conference
- October Birthdays and Anniversaries
- UWF News
- 175th Celebration Invite
- Membership Blog

**Prayer is not a spare
wheel that you pull out
when you are in
trouble. Use it as a
steering wheel that
keeps you on the right
path throughout your
life.
Amen.**

SERMON OF THE MONTH

“It’s Time to Unlock”

(Preached on September 10, 2023)

Psalm 135:15-18/Matthew 13:10-17

This sermon was inspired by a posting I saw on Facebook that’s been shared by quite a few clergy who feel they can relate to its message. It was written by a Presbyterian minister named Alexander Lang, and it’s entitled “Departure: Why I Left the Church.” Lang was a 2007 graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary, a place of which I’m intimately familiar! Here’s what he wrote:

“This past Sunday, I preached my last sermon as the pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Arlington Heights. I have made the decision that I’m not only leaving my post as head of staff, but I’m going to be leaving the pastorate all together. I no longer have a desire to serve as a pastor in the church... I told my congregation that I was exhausted from writing, memorizing and preaching sermons week after week for 10 years...

I have become part of what is known as the Great Pastor Resignation that came in the wake of the pandemic. Barna did a national survey of pastors and, as of March 2022, 42% of pastors considered quitting. The reasons for this are myriad, but the top five reasons given are as follows:

The immense stress of the job: 56%

I feel lonely and isolated: 43%

Current political divisions: 38%

I am unhappy with the effect this role has had on my family: 29%

I am not optimistic about the future of my church: 29%”

As of September 4th, Alexander Lang’s article has been viewed more than 130,000 times, so, like I said, it’s striking a chord among the clergy. But that’s not the part of the article I’m going to talk about here. Instead let’s dive into another topic that Reverend Lang brought up: “growth mindset” verses “fixed mindset.” He writes:

“A growth mindset is when a person is willing to take chances, enjoys learning new things and is not afraid to fail.

Conversely, people with fixed mindsets don’t like to be challenged. They perceive failure as the limit of their abilities. They tend to be scared of learning new things, particularly if it disrupts their current worldview.

I am firmly in the camp of growth mindset and I assumed that was the entire purpose of the church. When I became a pastor, I thought that the reason why this group of people gathered every Sunday was to explore deep questions about life and to push ourselves to become better humans. What I have learned over the last 10 years is that my assumption was wrong. Although there are definitely some people who come to church for the reasons I outlined above, the majority of people who attend churches are in the fixed mindset category.

Most Christians don’t want their thinking challenged. They come to church to reinforce what they’ve believed their entire lives. From their perspective, the job of the pastor is not to push them to grow, but to reassure them that they are already on the right track. (To such fixed minded Christians) any learning should support the party line and comfort them that their investment of resources in the church will result in a payoff somewhere down the line, particularly once they reach the afterlife...

This is the exact opposite of how I function. Although I always try to end my messages with a sense of hope, my goal was to make you think... I eventually came to the conclusion that my particular skillset and perspective is a mismatch for the institutional church. What I offer is not what most Christians are looking for...”

My first question for Alexander Lang would be this: Really?! Did you *really* expect everyone in the church to immediately respond to your sermons, “*Wow! I want to hear what this young man has to say! Is that a new teaching, ‘cause I’ll accept that right now!*” Hmmm. Does that sound realistic to you?

Regarding his observation that the majority of the people in the pews have “locked minds,” maybe the next question should be, “Is this not unexpected?” Around 3,000 years ago the psalmist writes:

***The idols of the nations are silver and gold, the work of human hands.
They have mouths, but they do not speak; they have eyes, but they do not see;
they have ears, but they do not hear, and there is no breath in their mouths.
Those who make them and all who trust them shall become like them.***

What the psalmist is saying is that we often become like that which we idolize. That whatever our idols may be, that’s probably the way our mindset will go. What are some of those idols we have? Well, our politics can be an idol. How about our favorite pundits on cable news or the Internet? The psalmist teaches that all who make idols and then place their trust in them will become like them, having eyes but not seeing and ears but not hearing. Such people are the locked-minded ones that Lang describes in his post. Why do you suppose so many of us choose to keep our minds locked in one position? Those of us who do really ought to ask ourselves, “What idols have I made? What idols do I trust?” Do we trust the promises of our politicians more than the teachings of Jesus? Do we put the words of pundits over the Word of God?

Isn’t this exactly the situation Jesus walked into? Think about it- did Jesus ever go up to a group of Pharisees outside the synagogue and say, “*Hey fellas, here’s what I think God wants us to do- we should elevate all the people we’ve been putting down and mingle with the ones we’ve been calling unclean! How about it guys?*” So, did the Pharisees then look at one another, smack themselves in the forehead and shout “*Yes! Of course, Jesus! Let’s do it!*” No, of course they didn’t! AS the gospels tells us, their minds stayed firmly in the locked position. After all, that’s how Jesus ended up on a cross, right?! He wasn’t crucified because whenever he preached about the love of God everybody simply fell in line and agreed with him! He didn’t end up on a cross because the Priests, Pharisees, and Saducees had open minds. He ended up on a cross because the religious leaders said “*Ugh! We don’t care to be challenged. We’ve been this way our whole lives and guess what, Jesus? We’re gonna stay this way! We have no desire to let anything new in because that’s way too threatening to our way of thinking.*” Jesus in turn quoted Isaiah when referring to such locked-minded people:

***“You will indeed listen, but never understand,
and you will indeed look, but never perceive.
For this people’s heart has grown dull, and their ears are hard of hearing,
and they have shut their eyes; so that they might not look with their eyes,
and listen with their ears, and understand with their heart and turn...”***

Matthew 13:14-15

Here Jesus is teaching us that true transformation can only occur if we unlock our minds! A similar thing happened to the Apostle Paul who was preaching a new way of seeing God at work in the world; a new way of seeing Jesus, crucified and resurrected. Paul preached that faith in Christ was all we need for salvation. So after he had spent years preaching this gospel of freedom from the law to the Gentiles, who shows up? None other than the Apostle Peter, who came up from Jerusalem. Peter says, “*Hey, hold on a minute here, Paul. This faith thing is cool, but we still have to practice circumcision; we still have to adhere to the dietary laws; we still can’t sit at table with those unclean Gentiles.*” You see, Peter represented that old, more legalistic school who had their minds locked-up! Paul’s passionate retort is recorded in his Letter to the Galatians where he writes,

“But when Cephas (Peter) came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood self-condemned; for until certain people came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But after they came, he drew back and kept himself separate for fear of the circumcision faction.”

So you see, even in the early church there were Christians whose minds were locked-up, who had no desire to move beyond their habitual legalism. Throughout the centuries, similar locked-minds have proven dangerous to the faith because they always seek to prevent us from moving forward!

So, after hearing from the Psalms, Jesus, and Paul, the question we have to ask is this- *where do we find ourselves? Are our minds open or locked?* And Saints, we need to be honest with ourselves when we answer, because if what Alexander Lang says is true, than over half the congregation here this morning, have locked-minds, are totally unwilling to listen to, let alone accept any new teaching. Is that true? If so, what can we do about it?

Mark Twain once said this about a person he knew with a locked-up mind: *“It is discouraging to try to penetrate a mind like yours. You ought to get it out and dance on it. That would take some of the rigidity out of it.”* So maybe that’s one way we can open our minds- do a little dancing on it! Bring some joy into the situation- perhaps that’ll free us up!

Having locked minds in and among us isn’t just a detriment to those of opened minds; above all, lock-minded individuals hurt themselves by retarding their own spiritual growth! Entrepreneur and educator, Frank D. Prestia, wrote, *“The saddest thing about ‘know-it-alls’ and/or ‘closed minded people’ is not their ignorance, but that they are basically admitting they have maximized their potential. These people are the antithesis of the expert or master, who as a direct result of their knowledge knows they do not know everything, so strives to learn more.”* Who here wants to be the person who claims that they know everything they ever need to know? *“That’s it, I’m closing my mind down- nothing more to learn here!”* So sad! By contrast the open-minded person has the courage to hear of new things.

By the way, locked minds exist across all religious and political persuasions. One of my favorite couplets by Robert Frost is the only free verse poem he ever wrote, and it’s short and sweet:

*“I never dared to be radical when young
for fear it would make me conservative when old.”*

What Frost suggests is that even those who are liberal when young can get so set in their liberal mindset, that it may ultimately make them conservative when older, because they have no desire to change even as the world changes around them! Saints, there’s nothing wrong with being liberal or conservative *per se*, But a locked liberal mind, or a locked conservative mind? There’s a lot wrong there! It means we feel no desire to listen to those on the other side. Gee, that doesn’t happen in our country at all does it (*sarcasm alert!*)?

What we’re talking about here is our capacity to experience new things. Shouldn’t that be the reason we attend church on Sunday morning? Contrary to Alexander Lang’s conclusion, aren’t we here to experience something new, or do we come to worship thinking, *“Boy, he better preach about something I already know to be true or I’m plugging my ears!”* Such a locked-down mindset will pretty much guarantee that he or she will be exactly the same person leaving worship as they were when they came in!

In contrast hear Jesus address the disciples who are attentive to his teaching:

“But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. Truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it.”

Saints, when our mind is open, when we are willing to take in this Word of God in all of its newness and power, we are going to hear things and see things that many of the prophets and righteous people of the Bible didn’t even get to see or hear! But here’s the thing- it’s one thing to talk about having this capacity, but how can we actually see what Jesus wants us see and hear what Jesus wants us to hear? To do that we need to find a way to unlock our mind! But how to pick that rusty lock?!

For one thing we have to admit to ourselves that we don’t know *everything*. In fact, we should confess that we really don’t know *ANYTHING!* Because that means we see ourselves as an empty vessel, just waiting to be filled. Saints, we need to be more like Job, right?! Remember how he and his buddies sat around for thirty-some chapters trying to figure out what God was up to in light of Job’s tragic losses? *“Oh Job my friend, I’m going to give you the answer!”* *“Listen pal, I know exactly what God is up to!”* And Job, a learned man himself, is smack-dab in the middle of the discussion. But in the end, God arrives out of a whirlwind and shouts, *“Job, where do you and your buddies get the idea that you can understand my thoughts? Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Speak up if you possess such understanding!”* And suddenly Job’s mind has been opened, and he receives God’s wisdom. What can he do but fall prostrate on his knees and humble himself before God, saying,

***“...I have uttered what I did not understand,
things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.
‘Hear, and I will speak; I will question you, and you declare to me.’
I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you;
therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”***

The lesson God teaches us through Job and others in the Bible is simply this- it doesn’t matter if we’ve been attending Sunday School from the time we could crawl- in the vastness of the mystery of God, we really don’t know anything! But that ought to get us really excited! Why? Because that means every time we open up the scriptures, we should anticipate hearing something fresh and new!

Albert Einstein once said this: *“I don’t need to know everything, I just need to know where to find it when I need it.”* So where can we Christians find what we need? *Duh!* The Bible of course! Saints, we also know where to find what we need in our church, don’t we? In our Sunday School classes for youths and adults, in our Bible Studies, in classes like Hot Topics, and in groups like the United Women in Faith and our Wednesday morning Prayer Fellowship.

Remember how in one of Jesus’ parables a farmer threw his seeds, representing the Word of God, into four different places, but only a quarter of them fell upon fertile ground. Turns out that fertile ground is a perfect metaphor for having an open mind. The other seeds unfortunately fell onto hard ground where their roots couldn’t penetrate, or out in the open where the birds would eat them, or a place where the plants would be choked off by thorns and weeds. Those unproductive grounds symbolize locked minds, and as such they lack the capacity to receive the Word of God. For that reason they produced no fruit.

Another way to open our minds is found when Jesus taught us to become like children once again; to never lose touch with that little girl or boy who’s inside of us. And how do children perceive the world around them? With great wonder and mystery! Kids desire to know more, to learn, to experience the mystery all about them. *How does a flower open? How can a cow give milk? What makes the colors of a sunset?* Saints, we ought to approach the Bible just like that—with a childlike sense of wonder!

There’s a passage in Isaiah 55 that reads,

***“For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven,
and do not return there until they have watered the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose...”***

How does the Word of God accomplish what it purposes? Through those of us who choose to open our minds! Come on, don’t we earnestly desire to be a big part of God’s plans going forward? After all, we know how this all ends, right? Don’t we want to be on the winning team?! The only way to be on that victorious team is to open up our minds and pray, *“God what do you have for me that’s cutting edge? What do you have for me that’s going to change my understanding; that’s going to change my life? Lord, help me unlock my mind!”*

Jesus says in Revelation, ***“Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me.”*** But Saints, we have to be willing to hear that voice of his, because, if not he’s going to be standing outside that door our entire lives knocking and knocking but because we choose not to listen that door will never, ever open. You know, anyone can claim to believe in Jesus, but only a few believe in him enough to actually hear his voice. Again, here’s what he says to those who do:

“...blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. Truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it.”

Saints, it’s time to open up.



New Dover's Disconnect to Connect (D2C)
 Creative Space for Peace &
 Mental and Emotional Health,
 An Intergenerational Ministry
PART 4

By New Dover D2C NEEDleworks Group



Special 175th Anniversary Church Banner

Thank you everyone who created your pieces for this memorable church-wide group project. Come to the 175th Luncheon on Sunday, October 8 (Pines Manor) to see the completed Banner for the first time.

D2C will continue to meet for Fall-Winter. You're all invited to the time of learning new handiwork skills or just come to help and share your stories. We're here to listen to you, resonate with you, and be your friends and companions. There is NO AGE or SKILL requirements for your participation.

<i>2023 Fall-Winter Meeting Dates</i>	NEEDleworks (Crochet & Quilt)
D2C runs from 2-4PM on the meeting dates*	September 16
	September 23
	October 14
	October 21
	November 11
	November 18
	December 9
	December 16

Text Rosie Pang or Stephanie for questions at 732-423-6171.

Youth and Young Adults

Youth and Young Adult Fellowship

Meeting Locations for YAYA Saturday meetings may vary

October 21 November 18 December 16

We will be collaborating YaYA meetings with neighborhood church youth groups this year. YaYA members are invited to your Weekly Saturday Service Opportunities from 4-6PM. (No services on above meeting dates.)

*All dates are subject to change without notice.

Greater New Jersey



United
Women
in Faith

Fall Annual Celebration

Saturday, October 21, 2023

Meg Isbitski, LSW,

Somerset Co. Dept. of Human Services, Mental Health Administrator

TEACHING RESILIENCE:

Healthy Perspectives for Children (& all)

9:15am Meet & Greet

Location (hybrid - live & Zoom*):

10:00am Welcome to all

GNJ Mission Resource Center

11:45 Lunch (\$10, please register*)

205 Jumping Brook Rd.

12:30 Annual Business Meeting

Neptune Twp, NJ 07753

*Registration questions: holly.cyrus@faa.gov 609-226-5337

Here is the registration form for October 21st Fall Meeting, to let us know if you will be attending in person or by zoom:

<https://form.jotform.com/232335931767159>

You are invited to a Zoom meeting, if you would like to attend virtually:

When: Oct 21, 2023 09:30 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

*Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEpcu6uqzgiEtLXWHneOZvppQ5MTNijeWV9>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

October Birthdays

- 1 *Nalini Dialle*
2 *Charles Greve*
6 *Claudine De Simone*
7 *Lisa LaFauci-Gilmore*
8 *Ed Laydm*
Oliver Vyas
9 *Anita De Simone*
10 *Patrick Kingsly*
11 *Subhas Budala*
13 *Chelsea Nyema*
14 *Marian Jones*
Lori Perrine
15 *Will Sanders*
Kyle Sanders
16 *JayR Manglapus*
Tyler Rademacher
17 *Charlie Owsiany*
Anthony Sarno
19 *Wilson Christian*
22 *Sunitha Reddy Thumma*
27 *Rachel Aludino*
Sylvia Boyd
29 *Marilyn Kimball*
30 *Anaiah Lewis*

October Anniversaries

- 17 *Robert & Kyle Becker*
21 *Jim & Peggy Silva*
30 *Anthony & Alyssa Sarno*



United
Women
in Faith

Our October 11th meeting will include a presentation entitled "Healing Touch: Reiki and Relaxation" by our own, Eleanor Campbell, retired Physical Therapist. The meeting will begin at 6:30pm. All women of the church are invited to join us. See Dianne Petersen with any questions.

The United Women of Faith are having a Fall Drive for used eyeglasses to be donated to a local charity. Please look for the eyeglass donation box in Fellowship Hall.

A vertical invitation poster with a dark blue background. At the top, the words "You are Invited" are written in a white, bold, sans-serif font, surrounded by a colorful, splattered paint effect. Below this, a yellow-bordered box contains the text "175TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION" in yellow, "NEW DOVER" in white, and "UNITED METHODIST CHURCH" in white. Two stylized, glowing cross symbols are positioned on either side of the church name. Below the box, the text "SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8, 12-4" and "PINES MANOR BANQUET HALL" is written in yellow, followed by "2085 Lincoln Hwy, Edison, NJ" in white. At the bottom, a small white box contains the text "A LIMITED NUMBER OF TICKETS ARE STILL AVAILABLE!" in all caps, followed by "\$35.00 for Adults, \$20.00 for Youth (age 6-12) and \$15.00 for children (age 5 and under)" in a smaller font.

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

PERSISTENCE

For the most part, the Bible presents persistence as a positive character quality. Persistence is linked closely with endurance and perseverance. Jesus praised persistence in prayer with an illustration to explain it. His parable in Luke 18:1–8 tells of a widow who was not receiving justice for her case, so she continued to pester the judge and would not take “no” for an answer. Because the widow persisted in her pleas for justice, the ungodly judge finally relented and gave her what she asked. Jesus then challenged His followers to persist in their prayers the same way.

Persistence is positive when the goal is righteous. Persistence in prayer (Luke 18:1), in faith (Hebrews 11:13), and in doing good (Galatians 6:9) are all commended because the motivation is right. However, persistence is wrong when the motives are self-serving. If we persist in sin, the Bible commands other Christians to rebuke us (1 Timothy 5:20; Matthew 18:15–17). In fact, those who persist in sinful lifestyles are not true Christians; they have not been born again (1 John 3:4–10). Persistent, willful sin is evidence that the Holy Spirit has not yet transformed our natures so that we desire godliness (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Persistent complaints are not praiseworthy, either. Proverbs 21:9 says it is “better to live in a desert than with a quarrelsome and nagging wife.” A spouse’s persistent nagging or complaining is a sign of selfishness, not godliness. To persist in lustful desire is also wrong. King Ahab is an example of such persistence, and in his case it led to murder (1 Kings 21:1–16) and a pronouncement of judgment (1 Kings 21:17–26).

For us who desire to please the Lord, persistence keeps us from straying. We persistently put one foot in front of the other as we walk the path God has designed for us (Proverbs 4:25–26). Neither temptation, doubt, nor discouragement can destroy those who persist in following Christ. Isaiah 40:31 says, “Those who wait for the LORD will gain new strength; They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary” (NASB). Waiting for the Lord means persisting in righteousness until we receive His answer or His deliverance.

So the Bible shows two opposing aspects of persistence. Jesus told His followers that, despite how difficult things became for them, those who persisted in faith to the end would be saved (Mark 13:13). Failure to persist in our Christian walk indicates that we were never Christ’s to start with (1 John 2:19). The opposite of that is persisting in sin. Our sinful nature loves having its own way. We are not to give in to it, knowing that “the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God’s law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God” (Romans 8:7–8, ESV).

Persistence is part of a godly character when its objectives are godly; it is part of a worldly character when its objectives are worldly.

(from gotquestions.org)



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"A Caring Community"



