

Evidence of New Life – January 10, 2010

Winter is an odd time of year. In the fall, all of the deciduous trees lost their leaves, flowers lost their blooms, and pretty much everything dries up and looks dead. During the winter, pretty much everything except for the evergreen trees looks dead. Now, things aren't really dead, as they'll come back in the spring, but there really doesn't appear to be any evidence of life.

For a few years, I have had a plant on my desk at work. I give it a little bit of water every workday and it has done pretty well. Occasionally one part of it will grow too long and start to lose leaves / wither up, but there are always new parts coming up from the root to replace it. Every Christmas, however, I am away from the office for over a week and there is nobody there to water the plant. When I return after New Year's Day, it usually looks pretty pitiful. It's all withered and dead looking. The soil is all dried out. It usually takes quite a bit of water to get it moist again. Usually, within a day or so, the youngest part of the plant will have sprung back to life and the older part of the plant will be hopelessly dead. That part gets cut off and thrown away. This year, there weren't too many parts of the plant left to lose and fortunately, within a day or so, the entire plant was filled with new life. In fact, the plant was so excited to get water again and feel that life rushing through it once more, that it popped out a flower. It's like it thought it went through winter and was blooming for spring. I've seen the plant growing really well, I've seen parts of the plant die off, I've seen it look kind of scraggly, alive, but not so hot, and I've seen it look really healthy, lush, and full, but when I see little flowers popping out, that's evidence that there's new life flowing through that plant: it's "spring," there's new life, and it shows!

John 13:34-35

34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

Romans 12:9-21

9 Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. 10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another; 11 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; 12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; 13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. 14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. 15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. 16 Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. 17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. 18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. 19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. 20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. 21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

It's a new year! I know each week is no different than the week before, but this is a time of year when so many people make a big deal about making new year's resolutions or renewing commitments for the year. Let's all take a moment to evaluate our lives and personalities. Is there new life flowing in you? Where's the evidence? So, just like my plant popped out a flower because of that life flowing through it, let's allow that new life in us to be evidenced by a life that exclaims the goodness of God, serves Him in every way, reaches out in love to those that need to know the Lord, and reacts in genuine care and concern towards our fellow brothers and sisters in the body of Christ.