



NEW LIFE

BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

44 Salusbury Road, London NW6 6NN

Charity No. 1060655

Tel: 020 7328 0869 (Manse); 020 7372 6858 (Office)

Email: newlifeblondon@yahoo.co.uk

Website: www.newlifebpc.co.uk

Preacher & Church Administrator: Mok Chee Cheong 07921 929515

"For the Word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev 1:9)

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Dear Readers,

Will They Use You as an E.G.G.?

We've all used the letters "e.g." when giving an example in our writing. But ever wonder what they stand for? They abbreviate the Latin words *exempli gratia*, which when translated, roughly mean "for the sake of an example;" as in: "I don't like the coffee in cafe franchises; e.g. Starbucks" for "I don't like the coffee in cafe franchises; Starbucks, for the sake of an example." The letters "e.g." are used so frequently in writing because examples are themselves frequently used; being the same even in speech.

Jesus Used E.G.s

When Jesus was on earth, he often used examples so that the people could understand his teachings. We see it in the parables. When Jesus gave the parable of the sower, it was an example of the truth he wanted to convey – that the seed, being an example of the Word of God, can only grow and bear fruits when it falls on good soil, being an example of a believing heart.

Jesus did this many times in his ministry, speaking about the prodigal son, the rich farmer, and the hidden treasure, etc. One reason why Jesus taught by examples was to reveal the truth to some and hide the truth from others. But perhaps another reason why he used examples was because people learn by example and not by precepts or instruction alone. Examples are like pictures and illustrations – they speak a thousand words.

And the Word of God, in instructing us to be holy, gives us examples of holiness, that we might follow them.

Paul and Timothy Were Good E.G.s

In our quest to be instructed and sanctified, we are to follow godly examples. Paul told Timothy to be an example to the believers. 1 Timothy 4:12 says, "but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." Paul himself told the Corinthian church to be followers of him. 1 Corinthians 11:1 says, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." The word "followers" literally means to mimic. He was telling the Corinthian church to imitate what he did.

Naturally, Paul and Timothy would've taught and instructed the people how to live holy lives, but they themselves were worthy examples of the Scripture that they preached. So when Paul asked the people to follow him, he was saying that he was a living example.

But a living example of what? They were examples of God's grace. Once Paul was a persecutor and a hater of Christians, who desired nothing else but to be honored. However, when the grace of God worked in him, he was changed to one who desired all things Christ's. They weren't just examples, but they were examples of grace working in their lives.

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The Pharisees and Scribes Were Bad E.G.s

And if there were examples of grace, there were also examples of disgrace. In Matthew 23:2-3, Jesus speaking to the multitudes and to his disciples said, "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not."

The Pharisees and scribes were men who were learned in the Word of God. But their knowledge of the Word didn't bear fruit in their lives – they hadn't experienced the in workings of grace in their lives. And though much of what they taught concerning the Moral Law was still valid, they themselves didn't practice it. And here, Jesus warned the people of these Bible teachers who didn't practice what they preached, and their example was to be disregarded.

As much as Paul and Timothy's lives were to be examples to learn from, the Pharisees and Scribes were examples from whom we ought not to learn, even though their teaching was to be kept. In other words, Jesus told the people to retain the words and disdain the works.

So what examples of the Pharisees' works did Jesus want the people to disdain? Here are a few:

Fault Finding

In Mark 7:20, we see that when they saw some of Jesus' disciples eating bread with unwashed hands, they found fault. These Pharisees were hard men, always looking for fault, especially in Jesus. They couldn't see the weightier matters of the law, such as faith, mercy, and justice. They found fault wherever they went – they became the moral standard for what was right. This speaks of their zeal without knowledge.

Uncompassionate and Impatient

In Matthew 23:4, we see that these Pharisees and Scribes put heavy moral burdens on the people, but they themselves wouldn't lift a finger to help them. There are those by reason of infirmity and immaturity who don't understand certain Scriptural principles – such as the holiness of the Sabbath, Christian liberty, etc – things which take time to be taught. But the Pharisees would have had no tolerance for failure. This speaks of their lack of compassion and patience.

Jealous

In Matthew 23:13, we see that Jesus leveled an invective against them, accusing them of shutting up the kingdom of heaven against men, preventing others from believing the gospel. They did everything they could to prevent men from coming to Christ – the only way to God, doing their best by keeping them from following him. This speaks of their jealousy and their pride – that they would be promoted rather than Christ.

Hypocrisy

In Matthew 6:5, Jesus instructed the multitudes not to pray as the Pharisees, who prayed to be seen. This speaks of their covetousness and hypocrisy. And since their true spiritual works were really deficient, they had to assert themselves in other ways.

It's sad when those who stand for the Word of God and profess to be of God don't always do the works of God. What's the use of believing and teaching the Word of God when you don't allow it to work in you and you manifest the grace of God?

The Unbelieving World Looks for E.G.s

Because we're Christian, the world looks at us differently, expecting us to be better than they. And because of their expectations, they will tolerate less from us than from others – we're held to a higher standard. How we often hear that people don't want to become Christians because all Christians are hypocrites. Naturally, we ARE hypocrites – only Christ is not. But certainly, we're to live according to the standard of God's Word – not simply by preaching but by doing.

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And if we don't, then all our words to them about Christ will fall on deaf ears. We may lament how hard it is and that we're trying to live godly lives in Christ Jesus and to be examples unto others. But trying is not enough – we must BE examples. Even one of their own prophets said, "Do, or do not. There is no try." But what's more is that we will be examples when we don't resist the working of God's grace in our lives. And it'll be in our lives and examples that people see Christ.

In John 14:10,11, Jesus told Philip, "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake." Christ himself said that his works proved his deity. And our examples will prove the truth of the Gospel. Brethren, how hard are we working on our Christian example? Are we examples of God's grace?

Exempli Gratiae Gratia (E.G.G.)

But instead of being mere examples, let us be examples of God's grace. What will people say of us? "In my block, there are many kind and genuine Christians; e.g.g. Mr John" – "In my block, there are many kind and genuine Christians; Mr John, for the sake of an example of grace."

God puts us in places where we can be examples of God's grace. It may not always be the way of our choosing that God uses, but that's where God wants us to shine for him. There was the example of Jim Eliot who ministered to the Auca Indians. He lived among them, taught them, and befriended them – doing nothing but good among them. But shortly after contact and with a short lived ministry, the Auca Indians murdered him. They, of course, were motivated by superstition. But years after through the ministry and example of his wife, Elizabeth, the Auca Indians believed.

Listen to what he said at the age of 22 – "I see tonight that in spiritual work, if nowhere else, the character of the worker decides the quality of the work. Shelley and Byron may be moral free-lancers and still write good poetry. Wagner may be lecherous as a man, and still produce fine music, but it cannot be so in any work for God. Paul could refer to his own character and manner of living for proof of what he was saying to the Thessalonians. Nine times over in the first epistle he says, 'Ye know,' referring to the Thessalonians first-hand observation of Paul's private as well as public life. Paul went to Salonica and lived a life that more than illustrated what he preached; it went beyond illustration to convincing proof. No wonder so much work in the Kingdom today is shoddy – look at the moral character of the worker."

You see, there is a link between your true moral character and example with your ministry as a believer to unbelievers. Another marvelous example is Robert Murray M'cheyne. He said, "I feel there are two things it is impossible to desire with sufficient ardor – personal holiness, and the honor of Christ in the salvation of souls." And indeed, it was this inseparable combination of holiness and preaching that characterized his ministry. His example is a sobering one and a rebuking one (especially to this writer) – he died at the age of 29 with many works to show. And that was an answer to his plea that he wrote in a hymn – "Chosen not for good in me, Wakened up from wrath to flee, Hidden in the Savior's side, By the Spirit sanctified, Teach me Lord on earth to show, By my love how much I owe."

What is our example? The world is longing to see a Christ revealing life. How will the Lord speak of us to those we parent, teach, lead, and reach out to? Will he say to them to follow what we teach but not what we do? Will our actions and example speak of a fault finding zeal? Will they speak of a lack of compassion and patience? Will they speak of our jealousy and pride? Will they speak of our covetousness and hypocrisy? Or will they speak of how they can see God's hand in our lives? May the Lord be merciful to all of us, that others might speak of us and use us as e.g.g.s.

*Preacher Mark Chen
Life BP Church, S'pore*

WELCOME TO NEW LIFE B-P CHURCH LONDON
CHURCH THEME: STRIVING TO LIVE ABOVE OUR SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS
IN CHRIST (Ephesians 1:3)

Our worship services begin promptly at **11.00 am and 4.00 pm.**

Please stay back for Bible Study and fellowship lunch after the morning worship and for tea after the evening service. Do invite your friends to come to Church.

Worship Services			WELCOME
Morning	Today: 17/09/2006	Next Week: 24/09/2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We extend a warm welcome to all worshippers this Lord's Day. We also welcome Peter Wong to our worship service last week.
<i>Chairman:</i>	Seetoh Yoong Chiang	John Poh	
<i>Speaker:</i>	Pr. Mok Chee Cheong	Pr. Mok Chee Cheong	
<i>Message:</i>	The Comforter Has Come	Christ the Source of all Comfort	
<i>Text:</i>	John 16:5-24	John 16:25-33	
<i>Organist:</i>	Anthony	Yanning	
Evening			
<i>Chairman:</i>	John Poh	Alvin Chow	
<i>Speaker:</i>	Pr. Mok Chee Cheong	Pr. Mok Chee Cheong	
<i>Message:</i>	The Third Commandment	The Fourth Commandment	
<i>Text:</i>	WLC Questions 111-114	WLC Questions 115-121	
<i>Pianist:</i>	Yanning	Anthony	
Other Duties			NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS
	Today	Next Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chairman & Ushers: Please take note that there will be a short meeting after this morning's worship service. • Areas of Service: For those who are interested to serve (as ushers, Sunday school teachers, pianists, organists, kitchen, ...), please see Mok, Jonathan or Daniel. • Cancellation of Wednesday Prayer Meeting: Please take note that the Wednesday prayer meeting has been cancelled. This will be replaced by a bible study session that will commence on 27 Sep. • Maasai Mission: Pray for the settlement of the land title and the safety of the workers. Continue to pray for Sis Pui Meng as she ministers to the Maasai community.
<i>Ushers</i>	Alvin/Daniel	Alvin/Yoong Chiang	
<i>Sunday Sch:</i>	Esmeralda	Carol	
<i>Lunch:</i>	Maureen	Maureen	
<i>Washing-up:</i>	YAF Group 1	Yetta/Prema	
<i>Bible Study:</i>	No DHW Class	DHW – Genesis 27	
Appointments of the Week			
Fri 22 Sep	7.00 pm	Young Adults Fellowship: Spkr: Pr. Mok	
Sat 23 Sep	4.00 pm	Prayer Meeting & Bible Study: Spkr/C'man: Alvin	
Last Week's Worship Service Collections			
Offering:	£522.39	Love Gift: £250.00	
YAF:	£58.33	Lunch: £33.00	
<p>Evening Service: Westminster Larger Catechism</p> <p><u>This week:</u></p> <p>Q111. Which is the third commandment? Q112. What is required in the third commandment? Q113. What are the sins forbidden in the third commandment? Q114. What reasons are annexed to the third commandment?</p> <p><i>Do stay back and find out the answers from the Word of God.</i></p>			<p style="text-align: center;">~~~~~</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>God of Hope</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Great God of Hope, how green Thy trees, How calm each several star. Renew us; make us fresh as these, Calm as those are.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">For what can dim his hope who sees, Though faintly and afar, The power that kindles green in trees And light in star?</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>From: Amy Carmichael's Toward Jerusalem</i></p>