



NEW LIFE

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

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THE CHRISTIAN AND STUDENT LIFE

COLLEGE life holds many pitfalls for the Christian, and not a few who enter upon it lose their way. The shelter of family life and the intimate friendliness of the home church are removed, and the believer is suddenly exposed to a world of unbelief and scepticism. For some, conviction is strengthened and faith matured, but for others life becomes full of uncertainties and mental turmoil.

Many Christian students find university life a battlefield on which they must engage in an intellectual and spiritual struggle. They enter college with certain basic religious convictions: belief in God as the Creator and Sustainer of the world; in Jesus Christ as God's eternal Son and the only Saviour; in man as created in the image and likeness of God, but now fallen and sinful and guilty; in miracles, and in the world to come. Suddenly they are confronted by an intellectual atmosphere that is alien to Christian belief, and in which those fundamental convictions are regarded as belonging to an earlier pre-scientific age and as deserving of no more serious consideration than the idea that the world is flat, or that there are fairies at the bottom of the garden. Scepticism, or at best agnosticism, is the order of the day. We do not suggest that there is anything essentially new about this: unbelief, opposition to God, atheism and materialism are simply a part of human depravity and have been in the world since the Fall. The Apostle Paul felt the full force of such a spirit when he preached on Mars Hill in Athens and was made a laughing-stock to many because he believed in the resurrection. Nevertheless, if the situation is not new, it is very real and dangerous.

SOME PITFALLS

It may help to enumerate some at least of the pitfalls facing the Christian:

1. The first is that his faith is severely damaged. He continues to bear the name of a Christian but manifests very little of the character. He is unhappy and confused-in all, a sad bundle of contradictions. He is at home neither in the world nor in the church. Only time will tell whether this is a temporary set-back to his faith in the Saviour or the beginnings of spiritual apostasy.
2. The second danger is that the Christian preserves his faith by separating it from the intellectual problems which arise from his studies and from student life in general. His faith and all his religious convictions he places in one compartment, whilst confining his learning to a separate compartment, and so the two never meet. It appears to be an easy way out of the difficulty, but, like certain modern drugs, it has some very bad side-effects. An unbiblical dichotomy is created between the head and the heart. He fails to give practical recognition to the Lordship of Christ over a crucial area of his life. No...

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part of our lives can ever be placed outside the boundaries of faith. Modern education lacks a unifying principle, and so is confused and disorientated. Christianity alone can provide a view of life which embraces all knowledge and every experience to which the human personality is subject.

3. There is the moral danger arising from an atmosphere of spiritual bankruptcy. Ungodliness always leads to unrighteousness. Our colleges and universities are now feeling the full effects of the liberalism and modernism that swept the churches at the end of the last century. Men thought they could reject the great doctrines of the gospel but still hold on to the moral teaching of the Sermon on the Mount. We have reaped the bitter fruit of that folly. The morality of our colleges is the inevitable consequence of Darwin's theory of evolution: what he thought would raise and ennable man has served only to debase him and stifle still further the fear of God. The Christian student is not immune to the temptation to immodesty, uncleanness, promiscuous behaviour, and all breaches of the seventh commandment. He is tempted in this realm and in others to adopt the standards of the world.

THE CHRISTIAN AND THE PURSUIT OF LEARNING

Our sub-title is really far too ambitious. At least it serves to remind us that these two may walk together in perfect harmony. Christianity is no friend of ignorance or obscurantism. There is found hidden in Christianity an impulse, an incentive, to scientific investigation and all true artistic expression. It would be easy enough to prove this historically from the era of the Reformation. Scripture, a higher authority than history, represents man as being created by God in His own image, placed in God's world and commanded to subdue the earth. The world, even in its sinful state, is governed by the decrees of God and so is full of God's purposes. So, as the Christian looks at the world, he sees it not as 'a heap of stones loosely thrown together, but on the contrary a monumental building erected in a severely consistent style' (Abraham Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*). Such a world calls for study and research, not only that we may enlarge the horizons of our minds, but that we should glorify God.

Therefore the Christian can in this sense rightly feel at home in a college. The pursuit of learning is a valid calling. The Christian student is to apply himself to his studies with all his might, not simply to please men but to please God. However indolent and half-hearted other students may be, and whatever failures may be present in the academic staff, the Christian is to work with diligence and perseverance, knowing that he must one day give an account of his stewardship.

For the Christian, learning can never mean the blind, indiscriminate acquisition of the contents of lectures and books. He is a student in a modern ungodly university. 'It is sheer folly for the student to think that he can learn knowledge and science at the university and not be affected by it in the depths of his being. For better or worse, the university will change him greatly' (Paul Schrottenboer, 'The Christian Student in the Modern University', *International Reformed Bulletin*, October 1965). The lecturers may claim to be unbiased and concerned only with facts, but behind all that they say lie hidden presuppositions- basic assumptions which rarely come to the surface, but which control the way in which the facts are handled. The Christian student must be aware of this, and so be all the time on his guard. All his studies are to be undertaken in the fear of God. 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.' This fear is the fear of faith and love and reverence. The world we study is God's world, and every fresh discovery we make of its treasures of wisdom and of beauty should draw forth from our hearts praises to our God.

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SOME PRACTICAL DIRECTIONS

1. You must remember that you are a **Christian** first of all, and only in the second place a student. Faith in God and in His Son Jesus Christ must take priority over everything else. Pleasing your Lord and Master is more important than pleasing either your fellow students or your lecturers. Remember that you are 'not your own' but you have been 'redeemed with the precious blood of Christ'. All that you have and are is Christ's; therefore glorify Him and serve Him with your whole heart.
2. You must realize that you are a Christian **student** first of all, and not a missionary or a CU president. These are years in which you must apply yourself to study and to mastery of the disciplines of academic life. Time must be given to reading; assignments must be completed, and all for Christ's sake. Christians who do the minimum of work during the term, and who scrape through examinations because of time and energy given to witnessing and organized Christian activities, dishonour God and cheat the local Education Authority, whose financial grants is given to enable them to study.
3. You have, nevertheless, a testimony to bear. God has placed you in college to be the 'light of the world' and the 'salt of the earth', and there are three basic principles which you need to keep before you. First, evangelism is the concern of every Christian. Nowhere in the New Testament are we taught that only ministers and preachers are to have an active, loving concern for the souls of men. The Great Commission was given by our Lord to the whole church. Second, evangelism has to do not so much with something the Christian does as with what he is. The Christian is one in whom Christ lives by His Spirit. The more deeply you experience the life of Christ, the more powerful will be your testimony to the world. So Paul reminds the Christians at Corinth that they are living epistles, 'known and read of all men'. If your spoken testimony is not accompanied by a holy life it will carry little weight- and worse, it will bring shame upon the Saviour's name. Third, evangelism is to be carried on in the wisdom and power of God. Nothing but the almighty power of God can save sinners. It was because the apostles believed this that they eschewed all worldly methods and gave themselves to earnest prayer (see 1 Corinthians 1 & 2).
4. Opportunities for fellowship with other Christians are not to be neglected. To meet for prayer and Bible study with others of like mind will be a means of mutual encouragement and edification. Such student fellowship should always be subordinate to the fellowship of the local church. Often the crying need among Christian students is for true pastoral care. It is a temptation to officers of Christian Unions to attempt to fulfil a role for which they have neither the calling nor the gifts. Far more use should be made of local evangelical ministers in the realm of pastoral counselling.
5. Finally, because what you are as a Christian matters most, you must seek to cultivate daily communion with Christ. No amount of outward zeal, or knowledge, or attendance at meetings, will compensate for failure in the realm of private prayer and fellowship with God. By prayer we obtain God's blessing upon every other area of our lives. If your life is to make an impact upon other students, then you must learn to obtain the needed spiritual grace and power from secret communion with God. We serve an unchanging God, and cannot therefore expect to obtain spiritual power on terms any different from our forefathers in the faith- that is, by prayer and trials and humble obedience to the Lord.

Neil C. Richards

(Adapted from Evangelical Times, UK)

WELCOME TO NEW LIFE B-P CHURCH LONDON

CHURCH THEME: WALK IN THE NEWNESS OF LIFE (*Romans 6:4*)

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: 09/12/2007	Next Week: 16/12/2007	We extend a warm welcome to all worshippers this Lord's Day. We especially like to welcome Dn Lee Hock Chin and his family to the evening worship service last Lord's Day.
<i>Chairman:</i>	John Poh	Jonathan Kim	
<i>Preacher:</i>	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	
<i>Message:</i>	The Heavenly Banquet	Tbd	
<i>Text:</i>	Luke 14:15–24	Tbd	
<i>Organist:</i>	Yanning	Anthony	
Evening			NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS
<i>Chairman:</i>	Jonathan Kim	John Poh	
<i>Preacher:</i>	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	
<i>Message:</i>	The Demands of the Cross and the Gospel	Tbd	
<i>Text:</i>	Luke 14:25–33	Tbd	
<i>Pianist:</i>	Sophia	Joy	
Other Duties			
	Today: 09/12/2007	Next Week: 16/12/2007	
<i>Ushers</i>	Wah Soon/Sharon	Chin Kiong/Esmeralda	
<i>Sunday Sch:</i>	Esmeralda	Carol	
<i>Lunch:</i>	Maureen	Volunteers	
<i>Washing-up:</i>	Volunteers	Volunteers	
<i>Bible Study:</i>	DHW - Genesis	DHW - Genesis	
Appointments of the Week			
Fri 14 Dec	7:30 pm	Young Adults Fellowship: YAF Meeting	
Sat 15 Dec	4.00 pm	Prayer Meeting & Bible Study: Led by Pr Mok	
Last Week's Worship Service Collections			
Offering:	£497.51	Lunch:	£33.00
Memory Verse			
Last Week (Dec 07 Wk 1): Hebrews 12:2			
Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.			
This Week (Dec 07 Wk 2): John 6:35			
And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.			