



NEW LIFE

BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

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THE TESTIMONY AND DUTY OF THE CHRISTIAN STEWARD OVERSEAS

Introduction

We are all called to walk worthy of the Lord in our several vocations (Ephesians 4:1) including that of a Christian student or worker overseas. Some of us have the privilege and joy of studying or working overseas and that comes with it certain responsibilities as well. There are two outstanding overseas workers among others in the Old Testament. Daniel was religiously faithful to his spiritual convictions in a foreign land Babylon (Daniel 1:1-11) and Joseph was also morally tested and passed the test in idolatrous Egypt and was promoted in the end (Genesis 39:1-12). Abraham was posted overseas permanently to start a new generation of people in a new land of Canaan (Genesis 12, 15, 17) and God blessed and prospered him greatly. We need to emulate their worthy examples and fare well in a foreign land as good witnesses and testimonies for our Lord Jesus Christ as well.

Our Lord, the apostles Paul and Peter and others used six metaphors to depict and describe the Christian life appropriately and here they are.

1. Stewards of God

The world emphasises ownership but the Bible says that we are not owners but called to be custodians, managers or trustees of the manifold grace of God and there is accountability to God one day.

1 Peter 4:10, 11 - *"As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."* Everyone has a gift and we are to be using it for the glory of God and to edify others and not ourselves (Romans 12:6-8).

1 Corinthians 4:2 - *"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful."* There is a requirement for all stewards, faithfulness or accountability to God one day and that is a grave duty.

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2. Soldiers of Christ

2 Timothy 2:2-4 - *"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."* I have an announcement to make. We are all conscripted in the Lord's army. We are all in a spiritual warfare zone and there is an enemy waiting to devour us if possible (1 Peter 5:8). We need to be alert, disciplined soldiers and be readily equipped and vigilant to potential dangers in a foreign land and not be entangled with the affairs of the world but please only our Commander, our Lord Jesus Christ.

3. Athletes in the Race of Life

Hebrews 12:1, 2 says, *"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 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."* The Beijing Olympics 2008 is approaching soon and we are all involved in a long race of life and we are to keep spiritually fit and healthy and run carefully, keeping to the rules that is set for us with perseverance and endurance, looking up to Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:1, 2). Christians athletes are not to disqualify ourselves by going against the regulations set for us by God (1 Corinthians 9:24-27). There is to be no cheating in the race and no spiritual or moral compromise or cutting corners as well. Let us run patiently and win the prize and bring glory to God (Philippians 3:13, 14).

4. Farmers in the Fields

1 Corinthians 3:7-10 - *"So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon."* We are to be hardworking and be patient in sowing and watering and also reaping with spiritual fruits in due time and our labour for the Lord is not in vain even (1 Corinthians 15:58) in a foreign harvest field while working there as well. Remember we reap what we sow (Galatians 6:7-10). Farmers are industrious and faithful workers and let us do our part for the Lord in the wide harvest fields in His vineyard as well wherever the Lord puts us.

5. Pilgrims and Strangers

1 Peter 2:11, 12 - *"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may..."*

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by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation." and Hebrews 11:13-16 - *"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city."*

This is John Bunyan's favourite analogy in his much celebrated allegorical work, Pilgrim's Progress, in the 17th century. Pilgrims have a religious objective to seek God. We are depicted not as long term citizens of a fallen world or permanent residents but temporal travellers on the earth amidst dangers and trials (ie slough of despond, apollyon, castle of fear, etc) yearning forward to the imminent coming of our Lord when we will be forever in the presence of the Lord in the celestial city one day. While a vagabond has no home, a fugitive is running away from home, a pilgrim is on his way home. Let us live with this mindset while we are overseas that we may set our affections on things above and not on the earth (Colossians 3:1).

6. Ambassadors of heaven

2 Corinthians 5:20 says, *"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."* It is a great honour to be an ambassador of a country (Ephesians 6:20). We represent our heavenly country, heaven, when our Lord Jesus is King and let us be worthy and honourable envoys of Christ while we are in a foreign land. Our conduct and speech is to be honourable and compatible with our high calling. We can bring fame or shame to the name of Christ by our words, conduct and actions and we are to be effective and exemplary diplomats for our Lord.

Conclusion

We are spiritual ambassadors, soldiers, athletes, farmers, pilgrims and strangers on the earth and we are to be good witnesses and stewards as well for Christ's sake. That means that our Christian testimony and duty is more than making money or earthly promotions or achievements in the work place. Godly demeanour, consistent prayer life and regular worship and service of the most High God is not to be neglected. There is much to be done while we are overseas than just excelling in the secular workplace (which is important). We are responsible stewards and ambassadors for Christ to honour and serve Him first on earth wherever he puts us and we represent the Almighty Jehovah, the King of kings and the Lord of lords and that is a grave duty and prerogative to be discharged fearfully.

*Rev Jack Sin, Maranatha B-P Church, S'pore
(adapted from a message delivered at the recent UK-bound students
gathering and at Shanghai, Beijing and Dalian Fellowship meetings)*

WELCOME TO NEW LIFE B-P CHURCH LONDON
CHURCH THEME: WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION WITH FEAR
AND TREMBLING. (Philippians 2:12)

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	<i>Today: 06/04/2008</i>	<i>Next Week: 13/04/2008</i>	We extend a warm welcome to all worshippers this Lord's Day. We like to welcome Nadia to our morning worship service last Lord's Day.
<i>Chairman:</i>	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	Pr Mark Chen	
<i>Preacher:</i>	Rev Jack Sin	Rev Jack Sin	
<i>Message:</i>	Divine Requirements for Every Believer	In the Way of the Lord	
<i>Text:</i>	Deuteronomy 10:1-21	Genesis 24:1-27	
<i>Organist:</i>	Anthony	Anthony	
Evening			NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS
<i>Chairman:</i>	Jonathan Kim	John Poh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sabbath School: Please note that class is held at the Library after the morning worship. You are encouraged to bring children of ages 6-12 for the lessons. • Book Table: Please feel free to browse the book table for materials that are of interest to you. Newly included items include those that are brought from Maranatha BP Church, Singapore. • Duties of Office Bearers: For those who are serving on Lord's Day, please refer to the insert regarding your duties for the service unto the Lord. Please also refer to the rota found on the notice board in the Fellowship Hall for the schedule of duties. For those who are unavailable on their scheduled day of service, please swap with another person or approach Jonathan as early as possible. For those who want to render your service to the Lord, do approach Jonathan. • Family Worship: For those who would like to open up their homes for family worship, please contact Pr Mok.
<i>Preacher:</i>	Rev Jack Sin	Rev Jack Sin	
<i>Message:</i>	Managing Depression – God's Way	Biblical Imperatives for the Local Church	
<i>Text:</i>	Psalms 42	Acts 6:1-7	
<i>Pianist:</i>	Hubert	Sophia	
Other Duties			
	<i>Today: 06/04/2008</i>	<i>Next Week: 13/04/2008</i>	
<i>Ushers</i>	Daniel / Chin Kiong	John / Evelyn	
<i>Sunday Sch:</i>	Esmeralda	Carol	
<i>Lunch:</i>	Constance	Maureen	
<i>Washing-up:</i>	Volunteers	Volunteers	
<i>Bible Study:</i>	No DHW Class	No DHW Class	
Appointments of the Week			
Fri 11 Apr	7:30pm	Young Adults Fellowship: Led by Pr Mark Chen	
Sat 12 Apr	3:30pm	Seminar: Lessons in Bible Interpretations and Application – Rev Jack Sin	
<u>Last Week's Worship Service Collections</u>			
Offering:	£314.97	Lunch: £36.49	
		Book Sale: £2.00	
<u>Memory Verse</u>			
<i>Last Week (Apr 08 Wk 1): Psalm 121:5</i>			
The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand.			
<i>This Week (Apr 08 Wk 2): Psalm 121:6</i>			
The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.			