



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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LIVING OUT OUR FAITH

Jesus says in Matt 5:14-16, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before man, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven".

No Christian should be a secret Christian. We are God's light to the world. God is a Spirit and the world cannot see Him. We are His image bearer. We are like the moon. The moon does not have light in itself. It simply reflects the light from the sun. The question is can man see God's light in us? In another word, can those around you, your loved ones, your friends and colleagues, see God's attributes such as His holiness, righteousness and love in your daily conduct?

Classic Example

The account in Daniel 3 is a classic example of living out our faith in a non-Christian world. The faith of Daniel's 3 friends; Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego was put to severe test – bow to the golden image and worship or be cast into the fiery burning furnace. If you are in their position, how would you fare? Can you withstand the test?

In case we think that these 3 Jewish young men were extraordinary people, they are NOT! They are as human as you and I.

Excuses

Before the king, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego could have saved their skin and compromise their faith by giving any of the following excuses:

1. *"It is perfectly useless to resist.* We cannot contend against this monarch. If we submit, we do it unwillingly; and surely, being coerced into it, we shall be but little blamed.
2. *"We are in a strange land,* and is it not written by one of our wise men, "When you are in Rome, do what the Roman do?"
3. *"We must not throw away our chances"* to get into the good book of your boss.
4. *"It's only symbolical".* The putting up of this image was not altogether a religious act.
5. *"Everybody else is doing it."* It's ok.
6. *"It is only for once, and not for long."* Surely God will understand.

The list can go on but God's Word tells us that Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego did not use any of them! Despite their extreme testing, they affirmed their faith in the Lord...

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openly before the king and all his officials in the palace. Will you compromise?

Their Confidence

Notice how they said to the king in v16, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not **careful** to answer thee in this matter." The word "careful" means that they did not have to hesitate or deliberate to answer the king. They were so calm, so self-collected, that they could talk to him, not as a king, but as Nebuchadnezzar. In another word, they had no difficulty in answering him. But this does not suggest that they were rude.

The lesson we learn here is that if you will do right, you can trust God to see you through. With the consequences you have nothing to do, except patiently to bear them. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, obey Him, keep His commands, and then whatever comes of it, it is no blame of yours. That must be left with God.

Then notice what they say. "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace." **They had complete confidence and trust in the Omnipotent God**, knowing that, if God chose, no mighty man of Babylon could ever throw them into that furnace. Dearly beloved, we too, must have such confidence in God whom we believe today for He is the same yesterday, today and forever.

The Lord who has helped us in the past, He is helping us in the present, and He will help us all the way through. He will help you, too if you just follow His word, and by simple faith do His will.

If any of you are in great difficulty or trouble, if you do what is right, God can deliver you. You may appear to be the losers and great sufferers; believe this: He can prevent you from losing and suffering. Even if He does not prevent that, He can help you to bear it, and, in a short time, He can turn all your losses into gains, all your sufferings into happiness. He can make the worst thing that can happen to you to be the very best thing that ever did happen to you. If you are serving God, you are serving an Omnipotent Being; and He will not leave you in time of difficulty, but He will come to your rescue.

This is the confidence of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and it can be yours too if you dare to trust God.

Their Determination

Besides being confident, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were also very determined in following the Lord. That three words in v18. "But if not" speaks great volume of their determination. Yes, if God does not deliver us at all, "be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

What this means is that their loyalty to God does not depend upon their deliverance. They did not say, as some do, "I will serve God if He blesses me. I will serve Him if He helps me to get what I want." No, they would serve Him unconditionally; theirs was not cupboard love. "If He does not deliver us, if it is His will that we should be burnt alive, we surrender ourselves to His will; but we will not break His divine command, or bow before an image which has no life in it, which could not even set itself up". Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were resolved to obey God at all costs.

Do not judge, by what you are today, what you would be if you were called into trouble.

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Dear readers, grace is promised and would be given you. There is no doubt that many of the most timid who truly love the Lord, would be the very bravest. On the other hand, some who think they would be brave, would be the very first to back out. You may never be called to such a trial as that; but still, if you cannot bear the small trials, how would you bear the great ones?

What make these young men so confident and determined to obey God?

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego expressed their confidence very emphatically and clearly. They had a very definite, solid, foursquare faith. So what is it that makes these 3 young men so confident and determined to trust and obey the God they love?

Firstly, they have a **clear sense of the divine presence**. If a man feels that God is seeing him, he will not bow his knee to an idol; neither will he do evil, for God's eye is upon him. He will endure, "as seeing him who is invisible;" and though the floods of ungodly men lift themselves up, he will remember the Lord who sitteth upon the waterflood, and is higher than they. The man who realizes God's presence is by that invisible companionship rendered invincible. "For greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 Jn 4:4).

Secondly, they have a **deep sense of the divine law**. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God." No Virgin Mary, no cross, no crucifix, no picture, no image, no visible object is to be regarded with reverence, or worshipped except God. All these must be put away. That is clear enough; and therefore Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, feeling that God was near, and knowing what God's law was, dared not violate that law, but would rather die.

Lastly, they have a **mighty sense of the divine love**. We shall never obey God till by His grace we have new hearts, and those hearts are full of love to Him through Jesus Christ. Then, if you love Him, you will say, "What! put an image of gold in His place? Never! Join the multitude in worshipping a statue instead of the invisible Jehovah? Never!" With holy love in you, you will rather choose the furnace of fire than to deny the God who saved you.

Conclusion

Dearly beloved, God did not promise to be a Christian is going to be easy. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were young Israelites who literally lived out their faith for God in a foreign land and they were prepared to suffer for Him regardless whether God will deliver them (Dan 3:16-18). One thing is certain, God was with them. Not only were they delivered, they were promoted and God's name was upheld. They were experiencing God's presence in their trial; they have high regard for the Word of God and their love for God was true and steadfast. Therefore, when God allows sufferings to come your way, stand fast and remember Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, how they honoured God and how the Lord delivered them and honoured them.

Amen.

*Eld Chia Ah Lak, S'pore
(adapted from Evangel BP Church bulletin dated 2 March 2008)*

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: 09/03/2008</i>	<i>Next Week: 16/03/2008</i>	We extend a warm welcome to all worshippers this Lord's Day. We like to welcome Josh & Hannah Flinn to the morning worship service last Lord's Day.
<i>Chairman:</i>	Pr Mark Chen	John Poh	
<i>Preacher:</i>	Rev Basil Howlett	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	
<i>Message:</i>	The Danger of Losing Your Soul	Wonderful Work in Your Life	
<i>Text:</i>	Mark 8:27-38	Phil 1:1-6; 2:12-13	
<i>Organist:</i>	Anthony	Pr Mark Chen	
Evening			NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS
<i>Chairman:</i>	Jonathan Kim	Jonathan Kim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome: We would like to welcome Rev Basil Howlett, our speaker for this Lord's Day. Rev Howlett is presently a pastor of Carey Baptist Church in Reading. • Church Easter Camp – 21 to 24 Mar: The speaker will be Ps Jeff O'Neil. The theme of the camp is "Godliness" (Theme verse is 1 Tim 4:7). For those who wish to assist with the logistics of the camp, please inform Anthony. Registration forms for the camp are now available. Please register by 16 Mar. • Last Sunday's Lunch (2 Mar): We would like to thank Maria for her generous contribution to the lunch last Lord's Day. As such, no collection was taken last week. • Family Worship: For those who would like to open up their homes for family worship, please contact Pr Mok. • Those serving on the Lord's Day: Please gather behind the pulpit area at 10.30am for prayer.
<i>Preacher:</i>	Rev Basil Howlett	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	
<i>Message:</i>	All Things Work Together for Good	A Father's Word to His Son	
<i>Text:</i>	Romans 8:18-39	Proverbs 1:8-19	
<i>Pianist:</i>	Hubert	Joy	
Other Duties			
	<i>Today: 09/03/2008</i>	<i>Next Week: 16/03/2008</i>	
<i>Ushers</i>	Daniel/Joyce	Anthony/Esmeralda	
<i>Sunday Sch:</i>	Joyce	Hui Min	
<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 14 Mar	7:30pm	Young Adults Fellowship: Led by Pr Mark Chen	
Sat 15 Mar	4:00pm	Prayer Meeting & Bible Study: Led by Pr Mark Chen	
<u>Last Week's Worship Service Collections</u>			
Offering: £306.55		Lunch: No Collection	
<u>Memory Verse</u>			
<i>Last Week (Mar 08 Wk 1): Psalm 121:1</i>			
I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.			
<i>This Week (Mar 08 Wk 2): Psalm 121:2</i>			
My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.			