



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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MISAPPREHENSIONS, BY REASON OF WHICH CHRISTIANS ARE OFTEN CAST DOWN

*By Rev Charles Spurgeon, A sermon delivered on Sunday Morning, February 17th, 1861
(Part 7 of "Faith: What it is, and what it leads to")*

What simpletons we are! Whatever our natural age, how childish we are in spiritual things! What great simpletons we are when we first believe in Christ! We think that our being pardoned involves a great many things which we afterwards find have nothing whatever to do with our pardon. For instance, we think we shall never sin again; we fancy that the battle is all fought; that we have got into a fair field, with no more war to wage; that in fact we have got the victory, and have only just to stand up and wave the palm branch; that all is over, that God has only got to call us up to himself and we shall enter into heaven without having to fight any enemies upon earth.

Now, all these are obvious mistakes. Though the text has a great meaning, it does not mean anything of this kind. Observe that although it does assert "He that believeth is not condemned"; yet it does not say that he that believeth shall not have his faith exercised. Your faith will be exercised. An untried faith will be no faith at all. God never gave men faith without intending to try it. Faith is received for the very purpose of endurance. Just as our Rifle Corps friends put up the target with the intention of shooting at it; so does God give faith with the intention of letting trials and troubles, and sin and Satan aim all their darts at it. When thou hast faith in Christ it is a great privilege; but recollect that it involves a great trial. You asked for great faith the other night; did you consider that you asked for great troubles too? You cannot have great faith to lay up and rust.

Mr. Greatheart in John Bunyan's Pilgrim was a very strong man, but then what strong work he had to do. He had to go with all those women and children many scores of times up to the celestial city and back again; he had to fight all the giants, and drive back all the lions; to slay the giant Slaygood, and knock down the Castle of Despair. If you have a great measure of faith, you will have need to use it all. You will never have a single scrap to spare, you will be like the virgins in our Lord's parable, even though you be a wise virgin, you will have to say to others who might borrow of you, "Not so, lest there be not enough for us and for you." But when your faith is exercised with trials, do not think you are brought into judgment for your sins. Oh no, believer, there is plenty of exercise, but that is not condemnation; there are many trials, but still we are justified; we may often be buffeted, but we are never accursed; we may oftentimes be cast down, but the sword of the Lord never can and never will smite us to the heart.

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Yea, more; not only may our faith be exercised, but our faith may come to a very low ebb, and still we may not be condemned. When thy faith gets so small that thou canst not see it, even then still thou art not condemned. If thou hast ever believed in Jesus, thy faith may be like the sea when it goes out a very long way from the shore, and leaves a vast track of mud, and some might say the sea was gone or dried up. But you are not condemned when your faith is most dried up. Ay! and I dare to say it,—when your faith is at the flood-tide, you are not more accepted then, than when your faith is at the lowest ebb; for your acceptance does not depend upon the quantity of your faith, it only depends upon its reality.

If you are really resting in Christ, though your faith may be but as a spark, and a thousand devils may try to quench that one spark, yet you are not condemned—you shall stand accepted in Christ. Though your comforts will necessarily decay as your faith declines, yet your acceptance does not decay. Though faith does rise and fall like the thermometer, though faith is like the mercury in the bulb, all weathers change it,—yet God's love is not affected by the weather of earth, or the changes of time. Until the perfect righteousness of Christ can be a mutable thing—a football to be kicked about by the feet of fiends—your acceptance with God can never change. You are, you must be, perfectly accepted in the Beloved.

There is another thing which often tries the child of God. He at times loses the light of his Father's countenance. Now, remember, the text does not say, "He that believeth shall not lose the light of God's countenance"; he may do so, but he shall not be condemned for all that. You may walk, not only for days but for months in such a state that you have little fellowship with Christ, very little communion with God of a joyous sort. The promises may seem broken to you, the Bible may afford you but little comfort; and when you turn your eye to heaven you may only have to feel the more the smarting that is caused by your Father's rod; you may have vexed and grieved his Spirit, and he may have turned away his face from you. But you are not condemned for all that. Mark the testimony, "He that believeth is not condemned." Even when your Father smites you and leaves a wale at every stroke, and brings the blood at every blow, there is not a particle of condemnation in any one stroke. Not in his anger, but in his dear covenant love he smites you. There is as unmixed and unalloyed affection in every love-stroke of chastisement from your Father's hand as there is in the kisses of Jesus Christ's lips. Oh! believe this; it will tend to lift up thy heart, it will cheer thee when neither sun nor moon appear. It will honour thy God, it will show thee where thy acceptance really lies. When his face is turned away, believe him still, and say, "He abideth faithful though he hide his face from me."

I will go a little further still. The child of God may be so assaulted by Satan, that he may be well nigh given up to despair, and yet he is not condemned. The devils may beat the great hell-drum in his ear, till he thinks himself to be on the very brink of perdition. He may read the Bible, and think that every threatening is against him, and that every promise shuts its mouth and will not cheer him; and he may at last despond, and despond, and despond, till he is ready to break the harp that has so long been hanging on the willow. He may say, "The Lord hath forsaken me quite, my God will be gracious no more"; but it is not true. Yea, he may be ready to swear a thousand times that God's mercy is clean gone for ever, and that his faithfulness will fail for evermore; but it is not true, it is not true. A thousand liars swearing to a falsehood could not make it true, and our doubts and fears are all of them liars. And if there were ten thousand of them, and they all professed the same, it is a...

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falsehood that God ever did forsake his people, or that he ever cast from him an innocent man; and you are innocent, remember, when you believe in Jesus.

"But," say you, "I am full of sin." "Ay," say I, "but that sin has been laid on Christ." "Oh," say you, "but I sin daily." "Ay," say I, "but that sin was laid on him before you committed it, years ago. It is not yours; Christ has taken it away once for all. You are a righteous man by faith, and God will not forsake the righteous, nor will he cast away the innocent." I say, then, the child of God may have his faith at a low ebb; he may lose the light of his Father's countenance, and he may even get into thorough despair; but yet all these cannot disprove my text—"He that believeth is not condemned."

"But what," say you, "if the child of God should sin?" It is a deep and tender subject, yet must we touch it and be bold here. I would not mince God's truth lest any should make a bad use of it. I know there are some, not the people of God, who will say, "Let us sin, that grace may abound." Their condemnation is just. I cannot help the perversion of truth. There be always men who will take the best of food as though it were poison, and make the best of truth into a lie, and so be damning their own souls.

You ask, "What if a child of God should fall into sin?" I answer, the child of God does fall into sin; every day he mourns and groans because when he would do good, evil is present with him. But though he falls into sins, he is not condemned for all that—not by one of them, or by all of them put together, because his acceptance does not depend upon himself, but upon the perfect righteousness of Christ; and that perfect righteousness is not invalidated by any sins of his. He is perfect in Christ; and until Christ is imperfect, the imperfections of the creature do not mar the justification of the believer in the sight of God.

But oh! if he fall into some glaring sin,—O God, keep us from it!—if he fall into some glaring sin, he shall go with broken bones, but he shall reach heaven for all that. Though, in order to try him and let him see his vileness, he be suffered to go far astray, yet he that bought him will not lose him; he that chose him will not cast him away; he will say unto him, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." David may go never so far away, but David is not lost. He comes back and he cries, "Have mercy upon me, O God!" And so shall it be with every believing soul—Christ shall bring him back. Though he slip, he shall be kept, and all the chosen seed shall meet around the throne.

If it were not for this last truth—though some may stick at it—what would become of some of God's people? They would be given up to despair. If I have been speaking to a backslider, I pray he will not make a bad use of what I have said. Let me say to him, "Poor backslider! thy Father's bowels yearn over thee; he has not erased thy name out of the registry. Come back, come back now to him and say, 'Receive me graciously, and love me freely'; and he will say, 'I will put you among the children.' He will pass by your backsliding and will heal your iniquities; and you shall yet stand once more in his favour, and know yourself to be still accepted in the Redeemer's righteousness and saved by his blood." This text does not mean that the child of God shall not be tried, or that he shall not even sometimes fall under the trial; but it does mean this, once for all: He that believeth on Christ is not condemned. At no time, by no means, is he under the sentence of condemnation, but is evermore justified in the sight of God.

WELCOME TO NEW LIFE B-P CHURCH LONDON

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: 03/05/2009</i>	<i>Next Week: 10/05/2009</i>	We extend a warm welcome to all worshippers this Lord's Day.
<i>Chairman:</i>	John Poh	Joey Seow	
<i>Preacher:</i>	Eld George Chew	Eld George Chew	
<i>Message:</i>	Who Am I?	Who Am I?	NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS
<i>Text:</i>	John 10:7, 9, 11, 14	John 6:35, 48; 8:12; 9:5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calling of Resident Minister: Continue to pray for the Lord's calling for Rev Timothy Ki to serve as our resident minister. Pray for his visa application. • DHW Bible Study today: This will take place after the morning worship service. Today, we will cover Lesson 2 (Genesis 3). Please spend the upcoming week preparing for Lesson 3 (Genesis 4). • No Prayer Meeting: Please note that there will be no Prayer Meeting & Bible Study next Saturday, 9 May. • Examinations: Please pray for the students who are preparing for their examinations. • Pray for those who are sick: Douglas (knee pain), Maria (ankle and joint pain), Constance (left heel pain) • Pray for those applying for visa: Josh & Hannah • Pray for on travel: Peter & Hazel Chong (to S'pore), Joshua & Hannah (New Zealand), George & Susan (M'sia). • Pilgrim Tabernacle 4th Ladies Conference, 9 May: This will be held at Eldon Road Baptist Church, Wood Green, starting at 10am, this coming Saturday. If you would like to attend, please contact sis Kim Eng (Tel: 020 8368 8080) as soon as possible.
<i>Organist:</i>	Grace	Anthony	
Evening			
<i>Chairman:</i>	Jonathan Kim	John Poh	
<i>Preacher:</i>	Eld George Chew	Eld George Chew	
<i>Message:</i>	The Good Shepherd	The Vine	
<i>Text:</i>	Psalms 23	John 15:1, 5	
<i>Pianist:</i>	Sophia	Sophia	
Other Duties			
	<i>Today: 03/05/2009</i>	<i>Next Week: 10/05/2009</i>	
<i>Ushers</i>	Jonathan / Evelyn	Daniel / Sharon	
<i>Sunday Sch:</i>	No Sunday School	No Sunday School	
<i>Lunch:</i>	Melissa	Constance	
<i>Washing-up:</i>	Volunteers	Volunteers	
<i>PA Crew:</i>	Joshua	Jonathan	
Appointments of the Week			
Fri 08 May	7:30pm	Young Adults Fellowship: Bible Study – Survey of the Old Testament	
Sat 09 May		Prayer Meeting & Bible Study: No Prayer Meeting	
Last Week's Worship Service Collections			
Offering: £397.00	Love Gift: £200.00	Lunch: £51.50	
Christian Love			
<i>Adapted from "In Green Pastures" by J.R. Miller, D.D.</i>			
<p>The spirit of Christian love, if allowed to work deeply and thoroughly in all hearts and lives, will prevent variance and alienation among Christians. It will lead us to forget ourselves and think of others, not pushing our own interests unduly nor demanding the first place, but in honour preferring one another. It will make us willing to serve, to minister, even to stoop down to unloose a brother's shoes. It will make us thoughtful, too, in all our acts, in our manners, in our words. It will make us gentle, kindly, patient, teaching us to be all what Christ would be if he were in our place.</p>			



The "I AM" sayings of Jesus Christ

Has anybody ever asked you what you believe about Jesus? Often, people will claim that Jesus was just a good man, or maybe a great teacher... but not the son of God. It is important to know exactly what Jesus taught about Himself. The answers from this crossword puzzle are from the gospel of John, in the Bible. Do the puzzle and find out *who* Jesus claimed to be!

Across

2. Ruler of a country. (_ _ _ _ , John 18:37) (4)
4. Not false, "I am the _ _ _ _ vine." (John 15:1) (4)
6. Jesus said, "I am the _ _ _ _ _ of Life." (John 6:35,41,48) (5)
7. Greek word for Messiah. (_ _ _ _ _ , John 4:25-26) (6)
9. "The _ _ _ _ _ - _ _ _ _ _ lays down His life for the sheep." (two words, John 10:11) (12)
10. "I am _ _ _ _ - _ _ _ _ the truth and the life." (two words, John 14:6) (6)
11. Opposite of death. (_ _ _ _ , John 11:25) (4)

Down

1. Not a lie. (_ _ _ _ _ , John 14:6) (5)
3. God is Christ's Father. Therefore, Jesus is _ _ _ _ _ - _ _ _ _ (two words, John 10:36) (7)
5. Given physical life after death. (_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ , John 11:25) (12)
8. It shines bright in darkness. (_ _ _ _ _ , John 8:12) (5)
9. A place to enter, like a door. (_ _ _ _) (4)