



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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Complacent Repentance

*By Burk Parsons, Introduction of “The Seven Letters of Revelation”
Adapted from TABLETALK from Ligonier Ministries – May 2009*

I love to hear stories about our faithful forefathers in ages past, and while it may be mere legend, I have heard that the great nineteenth-century British pastor Charles Spurgeon posted a sign on the door of his study. Each time he passed through the door of his study he could not avoid seeing the sign, which read: “Perhaps today.” It was his way of reminding himself that Jesus could return any day. So Spurgeon lived, prayed, and preached — eagerly and expectantly.

Whether or not Spurgeon had a favourite passage of Scripture I do not know, and although I haven’t yet felt the overwhelming inclination to have a “life verse,” I will admit that I do have a favourite prayer from the pages of sacred Scripture. The short prayer is found at the end of the book of Revelation. It is John’s prayer after he hears Jesus’ promise: “Surely I am coming quickly,” to which John responds, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus!” (Rev. 22:20). I echo this prayer constantly, for there is not a day that passes that I do not long to be present with the Lord and completely free from the world, the flesh, and the Devil.

Nevertheless, we must not think that John’s prayer is a petition of desperation. It is first and foremost a prayer of eager longing and future hope. Such a prayer does not emerge from sin-calloused hearts and self-consumed minds but from Spirit-enflamed hearts and Spirit-renewed minds that have been awakened by the voice of the same Spirit who summoned the seven churches of Revelation, calling Christians to repent, endure to the end, and return to their first love.

Two thousand years later, we still need to hear precisely this same message. The church at the beginning of the twenty-first century is not eager to repent because we are not eager for the return of Christ. What is more, the church is not eager for the return of Christ because we are not eager to repent. Pastors barely mention the return of Christ. Those who speak about the second coming are labelled fanatics, and those who would dare pray for Christ’s return are considered theologically unrefined or eschatologically unenlightened. From the full revelation of God, we can be comforted that one day we will no longer see through a glass darkly but will dwell with Him finally and fully, coram Deo, before His face, and at His throne, having finally conquered the world, the flesh, and the Devil (Rev. 3:21).

The Perils Facing The Evangelical Church

*By Dr R C Sproul, Part 1 of 8 of "The Seven Letters of Revelation"
Adapted from TABLETALK from Ligonier Ministries – May 2009*

When we consider the predicament that the evangelical church of the twenty-first century faces in America, the first thing we need to understand is the very designation "evangelical church" is itself a redundancy. If a church is not evangelical, it is not an authentic church. The redundancy is similar to the language that we hear by which people are described as "born-again Christians." If a person is born again of the Spirit of God, that person is, to be sure, a Christian. If a person is not regenerated by the Holy Spirit, he may profess to be a Christian, but he is not an authentic Christian. There are many groups that claim to be churches that long ago repudiated the evangel, that is, the gospel. Without the gospel, a gathering of people, though they claim otherwise, cannot be an authentic church.

In the sixteenth century, the term evangelical came into prominence as a description of the Protestant church. In many cases, the terms evangelical and Protestant were used interchangeably. Today, that synonymous use of the adjectives no longer functions with any accuracy. Historic Protestants have forgotten what they were protesting in the sixteenth century. The central protest of the Reformation church was the protest against the eclipse of the gospel that had taken place in the medieval church.

When we turn our attention to the first century, to the churches about which we learn from the biblical record, we know that all of the churches addressed in the New Testament, including the churches in Ephesus, Corinth, Thessalonica, and the seven churches of Revelation, were evangelical churches. They all embraced the biblical gospel. Yet at the same time, these churches were different in their strengths, in their weaknesses, and in their compositions. An evangelical church is not necessarily a monolithic community. There may be unity among evangelical churches but not necessarily uniformity. The distinctions of the seven churches of Revelation are set forth clearly in that book. They manifest different greatnesses and frailties, but they all faced perils. Each confronted the dangers that assaulted the church in the first century. They faced hazards of varying proportions, but there was a common threat to the health of the New Testament church from many sides. Those dangers manifested in the first century are repeated in every age of the church. They certainly loom large at our time in the early years of the twenty-first century.

Among what I see as the three most critical perils the church faces today are, first of all, the loss of biblical truth. When the truth of the gospel is compromised or negotiated, the church ceases to be evangelical. We live in a time of crisis with respect to truth, where many churches see doctrine merely as something that divides. Therefore, they stress relationships over truth. That is a false distinction,...

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as a commitment to truth is a commitment that should manifest itself in vital, living relationships. Relationships can never be a substitute for embracing the truth of God. So the either/or fallacy of doctrine or relationship cannot be maintained under careful biblical scrutiny.

A second widespread peril to the church today is the loss of any sense of discipline. When the church fails to discipline its members for gross and heinous sins, particularly sins of a public nature, that community becomes infected with the immorality of the secular culture. This occurs when the church so desperately wants to be accepted by the pagan culture that it adopts the very morality of the pagan community and imitates it, baptizing it with religious language.

The third crucial peril facing the church today is the loss of faithful worship. There are different styles of worship that can be pleasing to God. However, all worship that is pleasing to God is worship grounded in Spirit and in truth. We can have lively worship, manifesting great interest and excitement, with doctrine and truth eliminated. On the other hand, we can have what some call a dead orthodoxy, where the creedal truths of the historic Christian faith remain central to the worship of the church, but the worship itself does not flow from the heart and lacks spiritual vitality.

Another element that threatens the evangelical church is the ongoing erosion of evangelical faith by the impact of liberal theology. Liberal theology saw its heyday in the nineteenth century and raised its head again with the neo-liberalism that captured the mainline churches of the twentieth century. Yet it is by no means dead. Perhaps the place where liberalism is manifesting itself most dangerously is within the walls of churches that have historically been strongly evangelical. David F. Wells describes the crisis of the twenty-first century church as “vacuous worship.” A vacuous worship is one that is empty of content. It is satisfied with platitudes, pop psychology, and entertainment. Such worship is devoid of the Word of God and of the authentic sacrifice of praise.

Dr. James Montgomery Boice, before his death, lamented his concern that the church was being enticed “to do the Lord’s work in the world’s way.” We try to transfer principles of success drawn from Madison Avenue and from other secular institutions and imitate them in the life of the church. Such a process is deadly.

In every generation, including our own, the same perils to the spiritual strength that Jesus rebuked in the seven churches of Revelation threaten us anew. These include such things as a lack of love, a lack of truth, a compromising spirit with the world, a lukewarm devotion, and a double-minded conviction, to name but a few. There were rebukes and encouragements given to these churches by our Lord that every church in every age must take seriously, examining ourselves to make sure that we are not manifesting the same departures from biblical truths that these churches were. We must be vigilant and diligent if we are to maintain a godly witness in our day.

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: 06/09/2009</i>	<i>Next Week: 13/09/2009</i>	We extend a warm welcome to all worshippers this Lord's Day.
<i>Chairman:</i>	John Poh	Jonathan Kim	
<i>Preacher:</i>	Eld George Chew	Eld George Chew	
Worship Services			NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS
<i>Message:</i>	Travelogue to Pergamos	Travelogue to Thyatira	<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 progress with both his and Mrs Ki's visa application. • DHW Bible Study: Today, we will cover Lesson 16 (Genesis 22-23). Please spend the upcoming week preparing for Lesson 17 (Genesis 24) • Pray for those who are sick: - Yetta's mum (upcoming chemotherapy sessions), Constance (ankle), Douglas (knee pain), Barbara (Alzheimer's), Prema (thyroid and skin condition), Eld Jack Ford (old age and knees), Margaret (Asthma, Hay fever, lost her voice), Brian (awaiting appointment for wisdom tooth extraction) • Pray for those who are on travel: Sophia (S'pore), Lee-Wei (S'pore), Nicolas (Belgium), Rev & Mrs Ki (Australia) • Pray for those who are still progressing with their studies: Yetta, Hubert, Joshua • Pray for visa applications: Grace, Joshua (Student visa), Joy (Post studies visa) • Pray for the upcoming UK Students meeting in Singapore on the 12th September at New Life BP Church • Please note that there will be parking restrictions in zone KQ for the next few weeks.
<i>Text:</i>	Revelations 2:12-17	Revelations 2:18-29	
<i>Organist:</i>	Joy	Anthony	
Evening			
<i>Chairman:</i>	John Poh	Jonathan Kim	
<i>Preacher:</i>	Eld George Chew	Eld George Chew	
<i>Message:</i>	Without Compromise	Sale of the Vineyard	
<i>Text:</i>	Daniel 1:1-20	1 Kings 21:1-21	
<i>Pianist:</i>	Joy	Grace	
Other Duties			
	<i>Today: 06/09/2009</i>	<i>Next Week: 13/09/2009</i>	
<i>Ushers</i>	Joey / Constance	Daniel / Yetta	
<i>Sunday Sch:</i>	No Sunday School	No Sunday School	
<i>Lunch:</i>	Maureen	Sharon	
<i>Washing-up:</i>	Volunteers	Volunteers	
<i>PA Crew:</i>	Jonathan	John	
Appointments of the Week			
Fri 11 Sept	7:30pm	Young Adults Fellowship: No YAF	
Sat 12 Sept	4:00pm	Prayer Meeting & Bible Study: Led by Jonathan Kim	
Worship Service Collections			
Offering: -		Lunch: -	
<h2><u>What We Owe to Friendship</u></h2>			
<i>Adapted from "In Green Pastures" by J.R. Miller, D.D.</i>			
<p>We do not know how much we owe to our true and pure friends — how much they add to our joy, what they do toward the formation and the adornment and enrichment of our character. We know not what touches, delicate and beautiful, on the canvas of our soul there will be for ever which the fingers of a friend have left there. There will be a silver thread in every life-web when finished, woven into the fabric by the pure friendship of many days. How important that only the true, the worthy, those with clean hands and good lives, be taken as friends! For an evil companionship will put stained and soiled threads into the web.</p>			