



NEW LIFE BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

44 Salusbury Road, London NW6 6NN

Charity No. 1060655

Tel: 020 7328 0869 (Manse)

Email: newlifeplondon@yahoo.co.uk

Website: www.newlifebpc.org.uk

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

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The Sanctification and the Mortification of the Old Man

By Rev Jack Sin, pastor of Maranatha B-P Church, Singapore

Introduction

Holiness vs. worldliness is a contest that believers will have to face daily. The Apostle Peter states it in 1 Pet 1: 16 '*Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.*' We are described as a royal priesthood and as a holy nation of people (1 Pet 2:9) and we are set apart for God and away from the world. We are to be consecrated for a sacred purpose that means to be separated from sin and spiritual defilement.

The apostle Paul speaks of believers as vessels of honour that are sanctified (set apart) and purged from sin for the master's use in 2 Tim 2:20-21, '*But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.*' Paul exhorts in Rom 12:1-2, '*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*'

What does it mean to us today? **Negatively, it is keeping ourselves away from temptation or worldly lust** (2 Tim 2:22) and unedifying company or friends and positively, it is availing ourselves to the means of grace in corporate worship, prayer, fellowship and word, to grow in the fear, grace and knowledge of the Lord. Growing in holiness is a vigorous and strenuous exercise that we are to joyfully engage in as Timothy was exhorting in 1 Tim 4:7-8 '*But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is come.*' Holiness has great benefit for not only the temporal, the frail, but also eternal profit as well.

While salvation is also of the sovereign grace of God, **holiness is a cooperative effort and progressive sanctification, requires a consistent and constant endeavour to avoid sin and to draw near to God**, constant meditation on the word and obedience to the prompting of the Holy Spirit, daily prayer and regular Sabbath worship, of the thrice-holy God. Making a resolution to want to grow in holiness and Christian piety and live a life that is pleasing and acceptable to God are examples of godly living, walking worthy of the vocation, wherewith we are called (Eph 4:1). There is power in the life of a sanctified believer to witness for Christ. The Psalmist said in Psalm 1 of a man who does not walk in the ways of the wicked nor the scornful but delights in the way of the Lord and he is compared to a tree planted by the river of waters bearing fruit and not the wicked who is lost and fruitless with dire consequences.

The mortification of the Old Man denotes the act of God, whereby the pollution and corruption of human nature that results from it is gradually removed. It is often described as the crucifying of...

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the old man in Rom 6:6 and Gal 5:24. This refers to the deadening of sins within us and a renewal of the new man in Christ (see Shorter Catechism).

The quickening of the NEW MAN is a constructive action by God. It is an act of God where the holy disposition of the soul is strengthened, holy exercises are increased and there is a new course of life, engendered and promoted. It is often described as being raised together with Christ. It is this new life in Christ that is able to work in purity, righteousness, godliness and truth. Rom 6:12, 17 says, '*Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof ... But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine, which was delivered you.*'

The Practice of Sanctification

Sanctification affects the whole man in all aspects of body and soul - intellect, affections as well. It is a work that believers will have to be responsible, for we have our duty as well. We are to co-operate with God and yield to the prompting of the Holy Spirit and not to the temptation of the world and the flesh. It positively results in the developing of character of a redeemed soul in the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23). J.C. Ryle in his book, **Holiness**, 22-24, has these 10 points to add:

- 1) Sanctification is a thing which will be found absolutely necessary as a witness to our character in the great Day of Judgement.
- 2) Sanctification, in the last place, is absolutely necessary, in order to train and prepare us for heaven.
- 3) True sanctification does not consist in talk about religion.
- 4) True sanctification does not consist in temporary religious feelings.
- 5) True sanctification does not consist in outward formalism and external devoutness.
- 6) Sanctification does not consist in the occasional performance of right actions. It is the habitual working of a new heavenly principle within.
- 7) Genuine sanctification will show itself in habitual respect to God's law, and habitual effort to live in obedience to it as the rule of life.
- 8) Genuine sanctification will show itself in an habitual endeavour to do Christ's will, and to live by His practical precepts.
- 9) Genuine sanctification will show itself in habitual attention to the active graces which our Lord so beautifully exemplified, and especially to the grace of charity.
- 10) Genuine sanctification, in the last place, will show itself in habitual attention to the passive graces of Christianity.

Sancitication is the work of the Triune God especially through the ministry of the Holy Spirit to transform us to be like Christ and away from sin. 1 Pet 1:2 says, '*Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.*' Rom 8:11; 15:16 say, '*But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.... That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.*'

The Word of God is the principal instrument used and the Holy Spirit applies it to our heart (1 Pet 1:22; 2:2; 2 Pet 1:4) and we are to be responsive and receptive to it when we are admonished through the faithful preaching of it. The Sabbath worship and prayer together with the sacraments (ie Lord's Supper and Baptism) are the means of grace to encourage holiness and the drawing closer to the Lord in remembrance of Him and public confession of our faith.

In the providential guidance of God through our daily walk with Him, God directs and lead us daily, and we are to be sensitive to His leading and guidance through the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:16). The partaking of the Lord's Supper reminds us of Christ and His death for us and its spiritual benefits has a satisfying effect as well.

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The corporate fellowship of saints will encourage one another to walk in the Lord. It is perfected at death and not in this life or at the coming of Christ in our glorification.

Holiness in Action

The importance of post-salvific good works is underscored in Eph 2:8-10 which says, '*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*' Paul said in Titus 2:7, '*In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity*' and Titus 3:8, 14, '*This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men. And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.*'

The epistle of James emphasised (Jas 2:24-26) on good works as an authentication of our saving faith in Christ. It is not contradictory to the doctrine of justification but consequent to it. Faith in Christ will invariably results in a desire to want to serve and glorify God and in the process to be encouraged in edifying works to men as well. This is different from the Roman Catholic understanding of salvation by works. Is your life today characterized by good character, deeds, works and word and a combat against our depravity? This is a vital part of sanctification process of a redeemed child of God. Be activity engaged in edifying deeds and service to believers first and secondly, the joy of the sharing of the gospel to unbelievers to the saving of souls is another good spiritual exercise (Acts 1-8, Mk 5:19).

Twelve Searching Questions for Personal Reflection (edited)

- 1) Did I awake with thoughts of God, and did I in keep my mind from wandering this morning?
- 2) Have this day got nearer to God in times of prayer and His word, or have I given way to a lazy, idle spirit?
- 3) Has my faith and witness been strengthened by a spirit of watchfulness, quickened by diligence this day?
- 4) Have I this day walked by faith and remembered God in thanksgiving in all things?
- 5) Have I denied myself in all my selfish desires and in my thoughts; have I delighted in seeing others preferred before me?
- 6) Have I made the most of my precious time, as far as I had light, strength and opportunity?
- 7) Have I kept the issues of my heart by God's grace, so as to profit by them spiritually?
- 8) What have I done this day for the nourishment of souls of others in the Lord?
- 9) Have I sacrificed my time, talent and resources for the cause of God?
- 10) Have I governed well my tongue this day, remembering that in the multitude of words there wanteth not sin?
- 11) In how many instances have I denied myself of the world and selfish pleasures this day?
- 12) Do my life and conversation adorn the gospel of Jesus Christ to the edifying of others and the glory of God?

Conclusion

Finally, God honours them who put Him first and who is truly devoted and consecrated to Him. Holiness requires us to be separated from the world, sinful and satanic influences and unto God. Pray to the Lord to give us zeal and discipline to exercise unto godliness and be preserved and protected from all forms of spiritual contamination, defective doctrines and unholy alliances that we may be kept pure and undefiled for the Master's use till He comes.

(*For deeper studies, read **Holiness** by J.C. Ryle, Evangelical Press, 2007*)

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 | Today: 24/05/2009 | Next Week: 31/05/2009 | We extend a warm welcome to all worshippers this Lord's Day. |
| <i>Chairman:</i> | Joey Seow | Jonathan Kim | |
| <i>Preacher:</i> | Pr Gervase Charmley | Eld George Chew | |
| <i>Message:</i> | Risen and Coming | Who Am I? | NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS |
| <i>Text:</i> | Acts 1 | John 11:25; 14:6 | <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. |
| <i>Organist:</i> | Anthony | Grace | |
| Evening | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DHW Bible Study today: Today, we will cover Lesson 5 (Genesis 6). Please pickup the next DHW study pack (Lessons 6 to 10) and spend the upcoming week preparing for Lesson 6 (Genesis 7). |
| <i>Chairman:</i> | Jonathan Kim | John Poh | |
| <i>Preacher:</i> | Pr Gervase Charmley | Eld George Chew | |
| <i>Message:</i> | Where is Jesus Now? | The Way | |
| <i>Text:</i> | Hebrews 7:24–28 | John 14:6 | |
| <i>Pianist:</i> | Anthony | Sophia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Prayer Meeting: Please note that there will be no Prayer Meeting & Bible Study next Saturday, 30 May. |
| Other Duties | | | |
| | Today: 24/05/2009 | Next Week: 31/05/2009 | |
| <i>Ushers</i> | Daniel / Evelyn | Anthony / Joey | |
| <i>Sunday Sch:</i> | No Sunday School | No Sunday School | |
| <i>Lunch:</i> | Joshua / Sophia | Maureen | |
| <i>Washing-up:</i> | Volunteers | Volunteers | |
| <i>PA Crew:</i> | Nicholas | Lee Wei | |
| Appointments of the Week | | | |
| Fri 29 May | 7:30pm | Young Adults Fellowship: Bible Study – Survey of the Old Testament | |
| Sat 30 May | | Prayer Meeting & Bible Study: No Prayer Meeting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examinations: Please pray for the students who are preparing for their examinations. |
| <u>Worship Service Collections</u> | | | |
| Offering: | £279.23 | Lunch: | £39.80 |
| <u>How to Know Christ</u> | | | |
| Adapted from "In Green Pastures" by J.R. Miller, D.D. | | | |
| <p>To some Christ is a creed and a pattern of life, but not a personal friend. There are many who know well the "historic Christ," but to whom he is only a person who lived nearly two thousand years ago. They read his biography as they read that of St. Paul or St John, admiring and wondering. They think of his sweet life as but a vanished dream; or, if they realize his resurrection, he is to them an absent friend, like a dear one journeying in another land — real, loving, true, trusted, but far away. But all such miss the sweetest blessedness of knowing Christ. He does not belong to the past nor to the far away, but is a friend who would come into the actual daily life of each of his believing ones. No mother was ever so much to her child as Jesus would be to us if we would let him into our life. How can we get this blessing of personal knowledge of Christ and conscious personal friendship with him I Trust him and obey him, and you will learn to know him and love him.</p> | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pray for those who are sick: Douglas (knee pain), Maria (ankle and joint pain), Constance (left heel pain), those suffering from hay-fever | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pray for on travel: Melissa, Joshua and Zacky (S'pore/M'sia) | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School of Theology at Metropolitan Tabernacle – 7th to 9th July: The theme for this year programme is "Reviving the Lost Art of Evangelistic Proclamation". Copies of the programme are available at the Book Table. | | | |