



# NEW LIFE BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

Vol. 17 No. 6

LORD’S DAY 10 FEBRUARY 2013

## ORDER OF WORSHIP

	<i>Morning Service – 11am</i>	<i>Evening Service – 4pm</i>
<i>Prelude</i>	<i>The Lord Is in His Holy Temple</i>	
<i>Call to Worship</i>	Malachi 3:1	1 John 2:1-6
<i>Opening Hymn *</i>	RHC 4 – “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”	RHC 247 – “Search Me, O God”
<i>Opening Prayer *</i>	Alan Blaney	Alan Blaney
<i>Gloria Patri *</i>	<i>Glory Be to the Father</i>	
<i>Responsive Reading</i>	Psalm 4	Jeremiah 12
<i>Second Hymn *</i>	<i>Psalm 4</i> (to the tune of St. Agnes, RHC 57)	RHC 323 – “Trust and Obey”
<i>Announcements &amp; Memory Verse</i>	Alan Blaney	Alan Blaney
<i>Tithes &amp; Offerings &amp; Doxology *</i>	RHC 104 – “All That Thrills My Soul”	---
<i>Scriptural Text</i>	1 Corinthians 13	Psalm 139
<i>Pastoral Prayer</i>	Rev Timothy Ki	Rev Timothy Ki
<i>Sermon Message</i>	<i>A Most Excellent Way</i> Eld George Chew	<i>Search Me, O God</i> Eld George Chew
<i>Lord’s Supper</i>	Rev Timothy Ki	---
<i>Closing Hymn *</i>	RHC 313 – “O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go”	RHC 292 – “Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness”
<i>Benediction/3-Fold Amen *</i>	Rev Timothy Ki	Rev Timothy Ki
<i>Postlude</i>	<i>The Lord Bless You</i>	<i>May the Grace of Christ Our Saviour</i>
* Congregation Stands		

### THE LORD IS IN HIS HOLY TEMPLE

The Lord is in His holy temple,  
The Lord is in His holy temple:  
Let all the earth keep silence,  
Let all the earth keep silence before Him -  
Keep silence, keep silence before Him. Amen.

### DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye heav’nly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

### GLORIA PATRI

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost,  
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, Amen.

### THE LORD BLESS YOU

The Lord bless you and keep you;  
The Lord lift His countenance upon you,  
and give you peace, and give you peace;  
The Lord make His face to shine upon you,  
And be gracious unto you, be gracious,  
The Lord be gracious, gracious unto you. Amen.

**Church Theme 2013 – “Understand and know God” – Jeremiah 9:24**

# THE CASUAL CHRISTIAN

By Pastor Mostyn Roberts, pastor of Welwyn Evangelical Church  
Taken with permission from the Evangelical Magazine of Wales, Jan/Feb 2013 issue

To be casual today is usually regarded as a good thing; it is cool. To be 'non-casual' (stiff? formal? intense?) is not good. You need to chill.

One of the first books I read as a Christian was *The Best That I Can Be* by J. Oswald Sanders. On the front cover is a photo of Lillian Board, the 'Jessica Ennis' of the late 1960s, the 'golden girl' of British athletics at that time who died of cancer in 1970 at the age of twenty-two. Eyes closed, head back, she is straining to win the race. The book is aimed at helping Christians to persevere and grow in grace. On the back cover the first sentence reads: 'The casual Christian should read this book with caution'. The book's title, the photo of the athlete (anything but casual as she strives to win) and the assumption in the introduction that every Christian will 'yearn to know Christ better and serve Him more worthily', all convey a message that is a far cry from what is implied in the word 'casual'. Spiritual life and growth, it is assumed, do not sit happily with 'casualness'.

Our culture is casual; we are children of our age; it is inevitable that we reflect it to some extent. Is casualness, however, always a good thing? Should not the fact that our culture is casual put us on the alert to casualness within the church? May it, indeed, be simply a form of worldliness?

## **Definitions**

'Casual' has a range of meanings. In the *New Oxford Dictionary of English* (2001) the primary definition of 'casual' is 'relaxed or unconcerned . . . made or done without much thought or premeditation . . . done or acting without sufficient care or thoroughness'. Another meaning is: 'without formality of style, manner, or procedure, in particular . . . of a social event - not characterised by social conventions . . . relaxed and friendly'. Note the word 'relaxed' in both definitions. Now it may well be a good thing to be relaxed and friendly, but not so good to do things without sufficient care or thoroughness.

What does it mean though if church worship is commended as 'casual'? Probably it means informal, not 'stiff' or 'buttoned-up'. It is perilously easy however for other things to slip in under cover of being 'casual'.

So when we use 'casual' remember the range of meanings. I am suggesting that apart from obvious things like being friendly, which has little to do really with being casual, there is no virtue in a Christian or a church seeking to be 'casual'. It is the attitude of mind that is important. Things matter; the basic attitude of 'casualness' is that things that are considered to be of less importance (at least), do not matter.

Let's look at what evangelical casualness looks like, some possible causes, and some responses to it.

## **CASUAL CHRISTIANITY**

Sunday services:

- the style or manner of leading;
- indifference to traditional order and content of services. I am not necessarily advocating the traditional, merely wondering if enough thought is being given to why we are departing from it and to what will replace it;
- failure to distinguish in importance between elements of the service — for example the reading of the word, and a welcome to visitors;
- too little acknowledgement that we are meeting in God's presence and have come to worship Him;
- the way we dress (which is not the central issue though an obvious cultural trend).

General trends:

- indifference to protocol; dislike of anything 'formal'.
- Intellectual casualness: a resistance to precision in doctrine. Sometimes there are good intentions behind this, such as evangelical unity; but is there not the danger of a 'details don't matter' attitude?

## Possible causes

### Cultural:

- i. Postmodernism has left a legacy of suspicion about truth — it does not exist or it cannot be found. Why bother then, to make much effort to seek it or define it? To the extent that this (unconsciously) affects Christians, we will cease to make much effort to be precise in doctrine.
- ii. We like to be 'inclusive' and dislike boundaries. As, in the way we dress, we do not distinguish much between a football match and going to church, so (more importantly) we make no distinction in the attitudes of mind we should adopt. We come to be stimulated, to receive rather than to give. We like to be ourselves, and not fit in to someone else's programme. Yet biblical holiness consists in maintaining boundaries — between Creator and creature (the fundamental one — we bow in his presence), male and female, believer and unbeliever, clean and unclean (*Ezek. 44:23*). Believers are 'set apart' to God; we are to separate ourselves (in the right sense) from the world (*2 Cor. 6:15-7:1*).

### Theological:

- i. One suspects that if anything would lead to casualness in worship, doctrine and conduct, it is a diminished view of God. Is it possible that the concept of a gracious God may have slipped into that of a casual God? But nowhere in the Bible is God casual!
- ii. There is a popular strand of evangelicalism that tells us we are no more worshipping on Sunday than when we play cricket or enjoy a BBQ on the beach. If 24/7 worship is all there is to be said about worship, it makes everything the same. Services can be casual — why not?
- iii. It is becoming increasingly common for Sunday to be regarded as not special. The fourth commandment we are told is not binding on Christians. As this takes hold it is not surprising that we are casual about the Lord's Day.
- iv. There is a tendency to treat matters of form, order and convention, which may be secondary, as if they were unimportant, which is not at all the same thing. Forms of worship always have a theology behind them. Contempt for form usually betrays ignorance of this theology and of the way our own forms reflect a (usually worse) theology.

## RESPONSES TO 'CASUALNESS CREEP.'

### A recovery of the greatness of God

When Moses meets with God he is told to take off his shoes; he hides his face and is afraid to look at God (*Exod. 3:6*). Pure spiritual beings hide their faces and Isaiah is stripped bare as God reveals himself as the thrice holy (*Isa. 6:1-5*). Peter asks Jesus to depart from him, for he, like Isaiah, is exposed to himself as God's glory is revealed to him (*Luke 5:8*); John falls down as one dead (*Rev. 1:17*). To each of these men God is gracious, amazingly so, but the idea of 'casual' fits nowhere.

### A conviction that Christian worship is the hardest thing a sinful man or woman can attempt

Assuming we are meeting to worship God (and I suspect most Christians really believe that this is why they are in church) let us be clear that spiritual worship is not easy. It is not something that can be attempted without preparation, thought and concentration on God, his Word and spiritual things. If that is compatible with a casual attitude, so be it, but I doubt it. As for the forms of what we do, they may be secondary, but they are not unimportant. Subject to God's Word, they should be determined by what is appropriate to what we are doing.

### A conviction that living and growing as a Christian is a struggle

We read of words like 'toil' and 'struggle' (*Col. 1:29*; *1 Tim. 4:10*) and 'make every effort' (*Eph. 4:3*); of 'pressing on' (*Phil. 3:12-14*), 'pursuing' and 'fighting' (*1 Tim. 6:11, 12*; cf *Heb. 12:14*), 'running' and 'boxing' and 'pummelling the body' (*1 Cor. 9:26-7*). Striving, not casualness, should be the keynote of our lives and of our public worship. Our God is worthy of infinitely more, and certainly no less.

# 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.

APPOINTMENTS FOR THE WEEK			WELCOME
Wed 13 Feb		No Ladies Mid-Week Bible Study	We extend a warm welcome to all worshippers this Lord's Day. We do hope that you have a blessed time of worship on this day.
Fri 15 Feb	7:00pm	Young Adults Fellowship <i>"Quieting the Noisy Soul"</i>	
Sat 16 Feb	4:00pm	Bible Study & Prayer Meeting	

Next Lord's Day	Morning Service	Evening Service	LORD'S DAY DUTIES
<b>Preacher</b>	Eld George Chew	Eld George Chew	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>TODAY: 10/02/2013</u></b></p> <p><b>Chairman:</b> Alan</p> <p><b>Organist:</b> Joy</p> <p><b>Pianist:</b> Jasmine</p> <p><b>Ushers:</b> John / Constance</p> <p><b>Sunday School:</b> Hannah / Joy</p> <p><b>Lunch:</b> Hannah &amp; Joy</p> <p><b>Washing Up:</b> Volunteers</p> <p><b>PA Crew:</b> Scott</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>NEXT WEEK: 17/02/2013</u></b></p> <p><b>Chairman:</b> John</p> <p><b>Organist:</b> Anthony</p> <p><b>Pianist:</b> Jasmine</p> <p><b>Ushers:</b> Tom / Yetta</p> <p><b>Sunday School:</b> Hannah / Joy</p> <p><b>Lunch:</b> Constance</p> <p><b>Washing Up:</b> Volunteers</p> <p><b>PA Crew:</b> Yangfan</p>
<b>Message</b>	Resurrection Hope	Our Walk With God	
<b>Text</b>	1 Corinthians 15:1-28	Psalms 1	

NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Pre-Lunch Bible Study:</b> Eld Chew will be giving us a short study on the topic "Are you saved?".</li> <li>• <b>Pray for those who are sick:</b> Douglas, Barbara, Prema, Margaret, May Chew, Constance, Deborah, Mrs Ki, Susan, Dr Carl Martin, Dr Scott-Pearson, Nina, Helen, Pastor Ki, Eld Chew's mother.</li> <li>• <b>Pray for those on travel:</b> Sonia, Nana, Matthew, Daniel &amp; Maureen, Sharon, Tobias &amp; Elliora, Jonathan &amp; Magdalene, Alan, Naomi &amp; Abigail, Mrs Chew.</li> <li>• <b>Pray for those seeking employment:</b> Yetta.</li> <li>• <b>The Task Force would like to wish the congregation a Blessed and Prosperous Chinese New Year.</b></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Worship Service Collections</b> - Last Sunday: £1155.35, Lunch: £30</p> <p><b>Attendance</b> - Morning: 27 (A) 4 (C), Evening: 18 (A) 1 (C)</p>	

## SHORTER CATECHISM QUESTION 56

**Q: What is the reason annexed to the Third Commandment?**

*A: The reason annexed to the Third Commandment is, That however the breakers of this commandment may escape punishment from men, yet THE LORD OUR GOD will not suffer them to escape his righteous judgment.*

Comments:

The special warning here held out to us is, that although men may permit us to break this commandment with impunity, yet God will assuredly not do so. *He* will not fail to judge us.

Proofs:

Deuteronomy 28:58-59

## MEMORY VERSE

Last Week	This Week	Next Week
<p><i>"Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:"</i></p> <p><b>Isaiah 46:10</b></p>	<p><i>"Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord."</i></p> <p><b>Jeremiah 23:24</b></p>	<p><i>"And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands:"</i></p> <p><b>Hebrews 1:10</b></p>