



# NEW LIFE BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

44 Salusbury Road, London NW6 6NN

Charity No. 1060655

Tel: 020 7328 0869 (Manse)

Email: [newlifeplondon@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:newlifeplondon@yahoo.co.uk)

Website: [www.newlifebpc.org.uk](http://www.newlifebpc.org.uk)

Resident Minister: Rev Timothy Ki

Email: [pastor@newlifebpc.org.uk](mailto:pastor@newlifebpc.org.uk)

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

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LORD’S DAY 29 SEPTEMBER 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>                         | Psalm 25:4-5  | Psalm 138:1-2  |
| <i>Opening Hymn *</i>                          | RHC 348 – “Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah”                        | RHC 75 – “Come, Christian, Join to Sing”                             |
| <i>Opening Prayer *</i>                        | John Poh  | John Poh   |
| <i>Gloria Patri *</i>                          | <i>Glory Be to the Father</i>                                     |  |
| <i>Responsive Reading</i>                      | Psalm 37  | ---  |
| <i>Second Hymn *</i>                           | <i>Psalm 37 verses 1-7</i><br>(to the tune of Bethlehem, RHC 251) | ---  |
| <i>Announcements &amp; Memory Verse</i>        | John Poh  | John Poh   |
| <i>Tithes &amp; Offerings &amp; Doxology *</i> | RHC 314 – “Nearer, Still Nearer”<br>verses 1-4                    | ---  |
| <i>Scriptural Text</i>                         | Psalm 27:4  | Psalm 119:49-56  |
| <i>Pastoral Prayer</i>                         | Rev Colin Wong  | Rev Colin Wong   |
| <i>Sermon Message</i>                          | <i>Are You A ‘One Thing’ Christian?</i>                           | <i>Hope from God’s Word</i>  |
| <i>Closing Hymn *</i>                          | RHC 385 – “May the Mind of Christ, My Saviour”                    | <i>Psalm 119 verses 49-56</i><br>(to the tune of Coronation, RHC 73) |
| <i>Benediction/3-Fold Amen *</i>               | Rev Colin Wong  | Rev Colin Wong   |
| <i>Postlude</i>                                | <i>The Lord Bless You</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**

My Dear Reader,

## THE FRAGRANCE OF CHRISTIAN INFLUENCE

*"I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts"*  
(Psalm 119:63)

Have you been influenced by someone in your life? How has *that* influence affected you? Has it caused you to change course or challenged you to be a better Christian? In my life, I have met many godly men and women of God. They not only inspired me but also taught me numerous indelible lessons. Fellowshiping with them has greatly blessed me and changed my perspective of life tremendously. I thank God for their lives and godly examples.

What is influence? According to the Oxford Dictionary, influence has a number of related definitions: 1. The power or ability to affect someone's beliefs or actions. 2. A person or thing with such ability or power. 3 The power arising out of status, contacts, or wealth. 4. The power to produce a physical change.

People have long been aware of the power of influence. Can it be identified? Can it be measured? Can it be harnessed? Has nature determined any given person to be more influential than another? Or are there specific variables that ultimately determine influence, such as popularity, expertise, trust, willingness to speak, history or association? What is your answer?

People influence people. Some people, by virtue of their personalities, have greater influence than others. Plutarch (46-120 AD) was a Greek historian, biographer, essayist and Middle Platonist. He was known primarily for his *Parallel Lives* and *Moralia*. He aptly said, *"A word or nod from a good person has more weight than the eloquent speeches of others."* Just as flowers yield fragrances or unpleasant odours, so people exert influence – for good or ill. We all influence people around us whether we realize it or not. Some influence others for the better or for the worse.

We live in a sick world. We live in a world rampant with ungodly behaviour. The world tries its best to persuade us to follow its standard. Though the influence of the world is strong and sometimes irresistible, you and I must not give in to its system. We must not be conformed to this world's system but be transformed by the renewing of our mind (Romans 12:2a). We must make a good choice – a choice not only to be different but also to be a godly influence to others.

In this world, we have many friends. Friends are great! When we are in trouble, they come to our rescue. But friends do influence us whether we realize it or not. Proverbs aptly says, *"Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go: Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul"* (Proverbs 22:24, 25). However, an occasional outburst of anger does not make someone an angry man. You are not introverted because sometimes you don't feel like talking or fundamentally greedy because last Lunar New Year you took the last piece of chicken drumstick. The point is that you and I need to be very careful when it comes to choosing friends, even in church.

One thing about friends is that we learn each other's way consciously or unconsciously. We pick up habits and sayings, likes and dislikes knowingly and unknowingly. Ask yourselves the following questions: Why am I talking to my parents in this manner? Why am I behaving like this? Why am I wearing this kind of clothing or jewellery? Why am I buying branded shoes? Why am I putting on heavy makeup? Why am I staying late into the wee hours of the morning? Most of the time it has to do with the influence of friends or someone you admire secretly. Friends, sport stars or celebrities can and do influence us, especially teenagers and young adults. That's why it is so important to know the kind of friends we keep company with (Teenagers, please do not feel unhappy when your parents ask you who your friends are. They ask because they are deeply concerned for you).

The Psalmist warns us to be careful of the kind of company we keep even in the church of Jesus Christ. Though the church is supposed to be a place full of loving, caring and giving people, it also filled with unforgiving, cruel, spiteful gossipers and unkind people. Sad, isn't it! Christians are supposed to be a good influence on people around them but unfortunately, many of them have stumbled others because of their bad testimony (Matthew 5:13-16; Romans 2:24).

Who are your friends in church, school or workplace? You should look for godly friends – friends that fear God and keep His holy Word. You should spend time with them. You should learn godly habits from them. The opposite is also true. If you have friends who do not love God and His holy Word, then your spiritual life will decline gradually. You will lose your *first* love for God (Revelation 2:4) and progressively lose your interest in reading His holy Word. You will slowly keep yourself away from those who love God and His holy Word. Paul said, *“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners”* (1 Corinthians 15:33). Ungodly friends ruin good character. They lead you down the wrong path. They influence you to do wrong. They keep you from God and His people.

Dear New Lifer, are you already experiencing this? Do you want to continue to live in this way? Are you not going to do something about it to rescue yourselves from it? What action are you going to take now?

Here are a couple of suggestions for your consideration and action before you can be a godly influence to people around you.

First, set your house in order (Isaiah 38:1). King Hezekiah was seriously ill at the point of death. He was troubled and worried. Who would succeed him? He had no children. Consequently, he had reason to be apprehensive that his kingdom would be thrown into contention by conflicting strife for the crown.

While he was pondering on the future of his kingdom, the LORD sent Isaiah to summon him to *“set his house in order.”* There was a sense of urgency here. The king must make haste. He must act fast. It is like a dying man writing a wish list before he passes from the scene – fly on A380, go on a World Cruise, or see his children get married.

How are you spiritually? Let us be reminded that just because we have been attending church regularly or serving the Lord faithfully or making a mere profession of faith does not mean that our relationship is right with God. Someone says, *“I have been a Christian since 1970, but it is only recently that I have begun to think like one.”* This is tragic but at least this person woke up before he further tarnished the Name of Christ.

Some of us may be in this sad spiritual state. If this is the case, then we need to do something about it now before it gets worse or else Satan may get the upper hand over us. He is like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour (1 Peter 5:8). Writing to the church of Ephesus, Jesus said, *“Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent”* (Revelation 2:5a). We need to come before God in quiet reflection. We need to ask the Holy Spirit of God to search our hearts and see if there is any wicked way in us. Then we need to confess it before the Lord and repent from it (Psalm 139:23, 24).

Dear New Lifer, do not give Satan an opportunity or be ignorant of his schemes (Ephesians 4:27; 2 Corinthians 2:11). Let us set our house in order and discipline ourselves for the purposely of godly living (1 Timothy 4:7). It's time to wake up! Do not procrastinate!

Second, live a blameless life, not a faultless life. Paul said, *“Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe”* (1 Thessalonians 2:10). This is a very powerful statement – to call on God as a witness to his holiness. Samuel did the same in the Old Testament. He said to the people of God in 1 Samuel 12:2-5, *“And now, behold, the king walketh before you: and I am old and grayheaded; and, behold, my sons are with you: and I have walked before you from my childhood unto this day. Behold, here I am: witness against me before the LORD, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you.....”*

*And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any man's hand. And he said unto them, The LORD is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that ye have not found ought in my hand. And they answered, He is witness."*

Both Paul and Samuel boldly testified how they had lived blamelessly before God and His people. They always walked as if God's holy eyes were upon them (Proverbs 5:21; 15:3). God was their witness to their holy conduct and His people saw that they walked holy and blameless before God and men. That is the power of godly influence in drawing people to God!

What is a blameless life? With regard to this, Paul has a lot to say in his writings to the churches. Here are five of them:

1. To be blameless is to have no deceit of any kind (1 Thessalonians 2:3).
2. To be blameless is to live an open life, not a hypocritical life (2 Corinthians 4:2).
3. To be blameless is to do away with sexual innuendoes or unwholesome conversation (1 Thessalonians 2:3; Ephesians 4:29).
4. To be blameless is to be without guile (1 Thessalonians 2:3). A blameless Christian has no hidden agenda. He does not manipulate his way by the cleverness of his mind to get what he wants.
5. To be blameless is to do away with using psychology or clever words or try to play on people's feelings to win them to Christ (1 Corinthians 2:4).

Finally, determine to be a godly influence on people around you. We all influence people in various ways. And one of the ways is by relationships. Relationships play a vitally important role in influencing people. Therefore, having a good relationship with people with whom you interact is absolutely necessary. Relationships need to be managed properly especially when it is with someone you might not feel comfortable.

To be a godly influence on people around you requires at least three key ingredients, namely, personal sacrifice, trust and mutual edification.

1. A strong relationship involves personal sacrifice. Every good, healthy and lasting relationship of mutual respect and connectedness requires much time, energy and even money. For that reason, do not expect an overnight influencing relationship. There is no shortcut to it.
2. The core of a good, healthy and lasting relationship is trust. Do what you say. The more your actions match your words, the more trust others have in you. Trust develops when a person's words are congruent with his or her actions. When you say clearly what you are going to do and then do it, trust grows and strengthens.
3. A good, healthy and lasting relationship is built on nothing but each other's emotional, social, physical and spiritual likes and dislikes. We like to be together simply because it feels good. There is openness and no hidden agenda. We can share freely with each other without fear or being looked down, cry without feeling embarrassed or express disagreement without being told to shut up. At the end of it, we receive strength, comfort, encouragement and love (Proverbs 27:17).

The fragrance of Christian influence is truly lacking in the Church of Jesus Christ. The Christian community is supposed to be a light for Jesus but unfortunately, it has lost much of its influence. Its people must do something about it. Let us first do something about our own spirituality (i.e. get right with God and our fellow saints) before we can influence people around us to follow Christ. Will you? Amen.

Lovingly in Christ,

Pastor Colin