



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. 18 No. 23

LORD’S DAY 08 JUNE 2014

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>	Isaiah 26:1-4	2 Peter 1:16-17
<i>Opening Hymn *</i>	RHC 40 – “Got the Omnipotent”	RHC 62 – “All Glory to Jesus”
<i>Opening Prayer *</i>	Jonathan Kim	Jonathan Kim
<i>Gloria Patri *</i>	<i>Glory Be to the Father</i>	
<i>Responsive Reading</i>	Psalm 73	---
<i>Second Hymn *</i>	<i>Psalm 73</i> verses 23-25, 28 (to the tune of Evan, RHC 379)	---
<i>Announcements & Memory Verse</i>	Jonathan Kim	Jonathan Kim
<i>Tithes & Offerings & Doxology *</i>	RHC 104 – “All That Thrills My Soul” verses 1-3	---
<i>Scriptural Text</i>	Romans 5:1-11	Matthew 6:10
<i>Pastoral Prayer</i>	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	Pr Mok Chee Cheong
<i>Sermon Message</i>	<i>Peace with God through Faith</i>	<i>The Second Petition - "Thy Kingdom come"</i>
<i>Closing Hymn *</i>	RHC 334 – “Sweet Peace, the Gift of God’s Love”	RHC 229 – “Thy Kingdom Come, O God”
<i>Benediction/3-Fold Amen *</i>	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	Pr Mok Chee Cheong
<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 2014 – “Waiting for God” – Isaiah 30:18

THE CORRECT BIBLICAL BEREAN SPIRIT

“These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11).

Some Christians hold to the view that being a “Berean Christian” is to hear all preaching with suspicion, and then compare what was heard with the Scripture for accuracy of interpretation, and finally apply it to one’s life only if one is convinced that what was preached was indeed in accordance with Scripture.

Is the above mentioned the correct biblical Berean spirit? I answer, most certainly not. Before we attempt to understand what is the correct biblical Berean spirit, let us take a brief look at some of the problems that attend to the kind of ‘Berean spirit’ outlined above.

1. Dangers of an Incorrect Berean Spirit

Firstly, hearing sermons with such a spirit gives rise to a very critical attitude. It would often become an academic exercise rather than being a means of grace. Such an attitude can easily descend into spiritual pride manifested by a *I-know-the-bible-better-than-the-preacher* mentality.

Secondly, we may receive all things with suspicion, with the sincere intention to check the biblical validity later. But more often than not, we do not have the time or energy to study whether what was preached was correct, - even if we had the inclination and ability to do so. Thus, we would likely end up not receiving anything preached except what are obvious re-statements of Scripture verses. The inevitable result would be that preaching would no longer serve as a means to transform our lives.

Thirdly, how many of us are actually equipped to assess any message to know which portions we are to check with Scriptures and those that need not. Having an incorrect Berean spirit would breed not only confusion but a contempt for preaching, especially when young believers are misguided in this aspect. To be sure, in some situations, it may be better to have a suspicious attitude towards preaching than a gullible “take in-all” attitude. This may be the case when one is invited to a fellowship meeting.

However, that does not change the fact that the ‘Berean spirit’ which we had imbibed was not biblical, and should not be the norm in our hearing of sermons. It might be the best alternative when confronted with having to listen to a great variety of theological persuasions, but it must not be the attitude to adopt when attending sermons which are in accordance with the agreed doctrinal statement of the church.

2. The Correct Berean Spirit

Why were the Bereans in Acts 17 regarded as being more noble than the Thessalonians? First, it must be noted that the Bereans were not said to be more noble primarily because they searched the Scriptures to determine what was taught was true. They did search the scriptures, and it is right that they should be ascribed as noble. But that is not the point of comparison.

The point of comparison is that the majority of the Thessalonians not only rejected Paul and Silas but essentially drove them out (Acts 17:5–10); whereas on the other hand, the Bereans *“received the word with all readiness of mind.”* In fact, reading Acts 17:11 in Greek would immediately show that the primary verb in the verse is “received” (Greek: *dechomai*), whereas the verb rendered “searched” (Greek: *anakrinō*) is a participle.

Notice also the order of the words, *“they received the word”* first, and then *“search the scriptures daily.”* This means, the correct biblical Berean spirit is one who receives the word with all readiness of mind (or with eagerness).

Therefore it is clear that receiving the word with suspicion is simply the opposite of the Berean spirit. The Bereans received the word with gladness and reverence, and a ready assent to what was taught. We may infer that their checking the Scriptures was not with a suspicious attitude or a preconception that it was probably wrong. Rather, it was with a desire to see a confirmation in the Scriptures.

This, however, does not mean that the Bereans accepted all that Paul taught by trust or implicit faith, and not by testing it against the Scripture. They did prove all things (1 Thess 5:21). The difference is in their initial reception of the word and the attitude with which they examined the Scriptures.

The incorrect Berean attitude is receives the word as “False until proven True,” the true Berean under normal circumstances receives the word as “True unless proven False.”

3. The Correct Berean Spirit toward the Preached Word

We note that Paul’s preaching was known as “*the word.*” It is so called only as a short form of “the word of God” (see Acts 17:13). In other words, the preaching of Paul was regarded by the Bereans as the “word of God.” When Paul preached, he was received as the herald of Christ, and his sermon was received as the “word of God.” This is how the Scripture views preaching.

The Apostles “spake the *word of God* with boldness” (Acts 4:31). It was not reason that they should leave “the *word of God* [i.e., ministry of preaching and teaching], and serve tables” (Acts 6:2). Sergius Paulus, and later the whole city of Antioch in Pisidia, desired to hear “the *word of God*” (Acts 13:7, 44).

Note, moreover, that Acts 17:11 demonstrates how that “the word of God” does not refer to the Scriptures, but to preaching, since the Berean examined what was said with the Scripture. While the written Word is infallibly and inerrantly inspired, the same cannot be said of preaching. Yet, preaching must be attended to as if we are hearing the very word of God.

It is for this reason that when Reformed theologians say that the Word is a means of grace, they are particularly referring to the ministry of the Word of God through preaching. The preaching of the Word is indispensable to faith in Christ (see Rom 10:14–17). This does not obviate the responsibility of personal Bible studies by the individuals.

Though we believe in the perspicuity of Holy Scripture, and that every believer has the unction of the Holy Spirit (1 Jn 2:27). Nevertheless, the work of Christ through the church as His body must not be diminished. It must be regarded as the main means of grace by which Christ reigns over His Church.

Spurgeon who affirms this same idea wrote:

... tonight Jesus speaks to us in the gospel. So far as his gospel shall be preached by us here, it shall not be the word of man, but the word of God; and although it comes to you through a feeble tongue, yet the truth itself is not feeble, nor is it any less divine than if Christ himself should speak it with his own lips. “See that ye refuse not him that speaketh” (*Sermon on Hebrews 12:25*, preached on Lord’s Day evening, November 27, 1870).

Conclusion

Therefore if we desire to be Berean Christians, we must attend to preaching as the “word of God.” How could we then attend to the “word of God” with a disposition of suspicion? Let us rather take heed of the advice of the *Westminster Larger Catechism*, Question 160,

Q: What is required of those that hear the Word preached?

A: It is required of those that hear the Word preached, that they attend upon it with diligence, as *the word of God*; meditate, and confer of it; hide it in their hearts, and bring forth the fruit of it in their lives.

There is no denial that there will be situations that calls for spiritual discernment of what we hear and receive with regards to the preaching of God’s Word. But God’s people are not left to themselves to determine truth from error, true teachings from false teachings. They have the best and primary help - guidance of the Holy Spirit (Jn 16:13).

Secondarily, the counsel of spiritually-gifted men who know the scriptures whom God has raised up, and the library of resources available for their personal research and study.

The crux of the matter is the heart-attitude toward the hearing of God’s Word preached. This spirit comes only when believers prayerfully disabuse their minds of the false Berean spirit, and start to cultivate the spirit of receiving the word preached “*with all readiness of mind,*” which is what the true biblical Berean spirit demands. If the members of this church will prayerfully cultivate this spirit, then we shall attain to the desired unity of faith.

Yours in Christ
Mok
June 8, 2014

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
Tues 10 June No Ladies Mid-Week Bible Study	We extend a warm welcome to all worshippers this Lord's Day.
Fri 13 June No Young Adults Fellowship	
Sat 14 June 4:00pm Bible Study & Prayer Meeting	

Next Lord's Day	Morning Service	Evening Service	LORD'S DAY DUTIES
Preacher	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	<u>TODAY: 08/06/2014</u>
Message	Death in Adam, New Life in Christ	The Third Petition - "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven"	Chairman: Jonathan
Text	Romans 5:12-21	Matthew 6:10	Organist: Jasmine

NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-lunch Bible Study: This week's study will be a video presentation. • Pray for those who are sick: Douglas, Barbara, Prema, Margaret, May Chew, Constance, Deborah, Pastor Ki, Mrs Ki, Susan, Dr Carl Martin, Dr Scott-Pearson, Nina, Helen, Eld Chew's mother, Rev Colin Wong, Scott, Patricia, Hannah, Sarah, Shirley. • Pray for those seeking employment: Yetta, Patricia. • Pray for those on travels: Anthony & Helen, George & Susan, Daniel & Maureen, John, Sharon, Tobias & Elliora. • Pray for the students for their upcoming exams. • Metropolitan Tabernacle School of Theology - 1st to 3rd July 2014: Theme for 2014 is "<i>Rightly Dividing the Word</i>". 	<p>Ushers: John / Constance</p> <p>Sunday School: Hannah / Rachael</p> <p>Lunch: Tom</p> <p>Washing Up: Volunteers</p> <p>PA Crew: Scott</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>NEXT WEEK: 15/06/2014</u></p> <p>Chairman: Jonathan</p> <p>Organist: Anthony</p> <p>Pianist: Jasmine</p> <p>Ushers: Tom / Yetta</p> <p>Sunday School: Hannah / Rachael</p> <p>Lunch: Volunteers</p> <p>Washing Up: Volunteers</p> <p>PA Crew: Scott</p>
<p>Worship Service Collections - Last Sunday: £1,155.67, Lunch: £37</p> <p>Attendance - Morning: 25 (A) 4 (C), Evening: 15 (A) 4 (C)</p>	

SHORTER CATECHISM QUESTION 19

Q: What is the misery of that estate whereinto man fell?

A: *All mankind by their fall lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse, and so made liable to all miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever.*

Comments:

We are here taught the extent of the misery which has come upon us through Adam's sin. We are told that we have, in consequence, no longer that intercourse with God which Adam enjoyed, but are living under his displeasure, and therefore exposed to all the sorrows of this life, the pangs of death, and the pains of hell for ever. This is the condition in which we all are by nature; and, unless God had taken pity on us, this is the condition in which we should all have remained.

Scriptural Reference:

Isaiah 59:2, Ezekiel 18:4, Genesis 3:17, Psalm 9:17

MEMORY VERSE

Last Week	This Week	Next Week
<p><i>"Do all things without murmurings and disputings:</i></p> <p><i>That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;"</i></p> <p>Philippians 2:14-15</p>	<p><i>"Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."</i></p> <p>Philippians 2:16</p>	<p><i>"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."</i></p> <p>James 1:17</p>