



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. 19 No. 44

LORD’S DAY 01 NOVEMBER 2015

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Morning Service – 11am

Evening Service – 4pm

Prelude

The Lord Is in His Holy Temple

Call to Worship

Psalm 31:19-24

1 John 4:9-10

*Opening Hymn **

RHC 21 – “O God, Our Help in Ages Past”

RHC 100 – “He Lifted Me”

*Opening Prayer **

Jonathan Kim

Jonathan Kim

*Gloria Patri **

Glory Be to the Father

Responsive Reading

Psalm 135

*Second Hymn **

Psalm 135 verses 1-5
(to the tune of Manoah, RHC 17)

Announcements & Memory Verse

Jonathan Kim

Jonathan Kim

*Tithes & Offerings & Doxology **

RHC 474 – “We Would See Jesus”

Scriptural Text

2 Kings 6:8-23

John 17:20-21

Pastoral Prayer

Dr Carl Martin

Dr Carl Martin

Sermon Message

Powerful Enough to Care

When Jesus Prayed for You

*Closing Hymn **

RHC 246 – “Open My Eyes, That I May See”

RHC 304 – “I Am Trusting Thee, Lord Jesus”

*Benediction/3-Fold Amen **

Dr Carl Martin

Dr Carl Martin

Postlude

The Lord Bless You

* 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 2015 – “Build a God-Honouring Family” – Joshua 24:15b

JOHN WYCLIFF—THE MORNING STAR OF REFORMATION

Adapted from Life BP Church Singapore Weekly - 25th October 2015

The last Sunday of October is known as Reformation Sunday. We commemorate our Protestant heritage by remembering the day when Martin Luther was raised up by God to nail his 95 theses on the door of the church of Wittenburg in Germany. However, before Martin Luther, John Wycliff was already blazing the trail for the 1517 Reformation. John Wycliff was called the “Morning Star” of the Reformation. Such was the commendation he received because he brought a ray of light to the oppressed people of England who were under the bondage of Rome, through his sermons, writings and most importantly, through his translation of the Latin Vulgate into English, which was the vernacular language of the people.

The Ecclesiastical and Political Setting

Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) brought the papacy to its pinnacle but his successor Boniface VIII (1294-1303), dragged it down in no time. Internal strife among leadership of the Roman Church led to their loss of their credibility among the people. The English people were infuriated that money from taxation imposed by the Roman Church was being siphoned off to France. Nationalistic fervour was stirred up and there was a rising clamor for reform within the Church.

The Religious and Social Setting

The papal clergy was racked by corruption and fraud. Corruption abounded as the clergy bought and sold church offices. There was evident mismanagement of funds in the frivolous expenditure to acquire thousands of relics for its many cathedrals. Moreover, church leaders who professed celibacy were committing sexual immorality. These gross immoralities shook the confidence of the people in the Roman Church. It was a period of moral decadence and theological declension. The Roman Church exalted traditions above the Word of God. It kept the Word of God from the people and placed its priesthood between the Bible and the people.

As a result, God’s judgment came in the form of an outbreak of the bubonic plague or “black death” that was transmitted by rodents. The plague first appeared in Dorchester in 1348 and swept over England and Europe. The epidemic claimed fifty million lives from 1348 to 1351. It resulted in social unrest and chaos as parish priests died, courts of justice were closed and labour was in great shortage.

John Wycliff

In God’s providential working in history, John Wycliff (1330-1384) was born at this period of papal decline, political and social unrest. Born in Yorkshire, Wycliff entered Oxford University at the age of 16. This university was then second to none in Europe. At the age of 28, he was made Master of Balliol College. He obtained his Doctor of Divinity degree at Oxford with distinctions. He was appointed as a divinity reader and was given pastoral charge over the Canterbury Hall. His training in the Realist Scholasticism of his day enabled him to grasp the Word of God and analyze the church more realistically.

Wycliff read the writings of the great church father, Augustine, and was awakened to the doctrine of the sovereign grace of God. His grasp of Biblical truth was reinforced by the teachings of the Waldensians, the followers of Peter Waldo, who taught the Sola Scriptura principle and the existence of only two sacraments—the Lord’s Supper and baptism.

The devastating “black death” aroused in Wycliff the need of deliverance from the Roman Church. He shared the sentiments of the general populace concerning the impending final judgment of God. He described the covetousness, sensuality and fraud of the clergy as infecting all humanity and incurring the wrath of God.

His Doctrinal Reforms

Wycliff saw that the Gospel was defiled by the traditions of the Roman Church and thus took great pains to publicly declare that his only intention was to relieve the church of its idolatry. In 1378, Wycliff launched his crusade against the Roman Church.

Against Mendicant Friars

Wycliff used greater plainness of speech to expose the scandalous conduct of the friars. In his treatises, *Against the Orders of Begging Friars* and *De Conversatione Ecclesiasticorum*, he rebuked the friars as wicked ministers who sold Christian men’s souls to Satan for money, procurators of Satan and traitors to Jesus Christ and His people.

Against the Roman Church

Wycliff’s concept of the church was according to the New Testament pattern. The head of the church is Jesus Christ and not the pope. He presides over the body of elect. Wycliffe, in 1379 took a courageous stand to contend against the pope’s supreme authority over the church. He published two treatises—*On Divine Dominion* and *On Civil Dominion*. Both works opposed the moral legitimacy and lordship possession of the church. He declared that papal authority is a blasphemy against God. The Head of the church is Christ alone. He was stinging in his attack, calling the pope an anti-Christ, a head vicar of the Fiend. He saw in the papacy the revelation of the man of sin (2 Thess 2:3). Wycliff contended that the pope had no exclusivity to the Scriptures and that his teachings are not infallible. He denounced the pope’s greed in taxing the poor and in receiving tribute money for spiritual favours, calling him the “head of all corruption in the ecclesiastical system.”

Against Transubstantiation

Transubstantiation is the doctrine that the elements of the Lord’s Supper - the bread and the wine - are changed into the literal flesh and blood of Christ. This doctrine was instituted at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 by Pope Innocent III at the height of papal power. This blasphemous doctrine went unchallenged until God raised Wycliff to denounce it. He referred to the statement of Berengarius of Tours in 1059 stating the “same bread and wine...placed before the Mass upon the altar remains after consecration both as sacrament and as the Lord’s Body.” Wycliff interpreted this to mean that the bread remained bread and the wine remained wine even after consecration. According to him, “the truth of reason prevails over all things.” Wycliff was warned not to speak against this doctrine but he was so constrained by the truth of God’s Word that he refused to bow down to pressure, even at the expense of losing his freedom. Eventually, he was expelled from Oxford University and was banished to Lutterworth. Wycliff’s persevering challenge against the doctrine of transubstantiation was a step towards Reformation, delivering the populace from superstitious bondage by the Roman Church.

Against Baptismal Regeneration

The Roman Church taught that baptism saves a person from condemnation to hell. Wycliff rejected this error since it is contrary to the Word of God. He rightly pointed out that “baptism doth not confer, but only signify grace, which was given before.”

Translation of the Latin Vulgate

Wycliff's love for the Word of God was unabashedly expressed in the Trialogus, a treatise on the supreme authority of God's Word over and against the Roman Church. Banished to Lutterworth by Rome, he spent his time there translating the Latin Vulgate into English for the common laity.

Wycliff was given the gift of translation. He had no knowledge of the original languages and therefore translated the Latin Vulgate into the vernacular language of the common laity. With the help of his friends, John Purvey and Nicholas de Hereford, the Bible was painstakingly translated into English.

God's foreknowledge of this translation is seen in the way He had prepared His people in England to be able to read His Word. In 1362, English replaced French as the language of the courts. By 1385, English schoolboys were translating their Latin into English instead of French. Of the many dialects in England, Midland English prevailed since it was spoken in London and Oxford. Hence Wycliff translated the Latin Vulgate into Midland English. The Roman Church bitterly opposed the translation, declaring that by it the Scriptures have become vulgar, so the pearl of the Gospel is scattered and trodden underfoot by swine.

To promote Bible reading, Wycliff established a group of itinerant preachers who were called "poor priests" or "Bible men" who went through the land of England distributing the Scriptures and at the same time evangelizing and preaching the Gospel of salvation.

Divine Protection

The Issuance of Bulls (Decrees)

In May 1377, Pope Gregory XI took offence at Wycliff's writings. He viewed them to be dangerously undermining the state and the Roman church. He immediately issued five Bulls or decrees, condemning him on nineteen charges. But God was with Wycliff.

The first Bull was sent to Oxford University. The Oxford faculty members were not keen to take up the condemnation against their eminent professor. However, they complied in issuing a house arrest which was considered a light discipline.

The second Bull, sent to King Edward III to obtain his support of the Pope's condemnation, failed because the king died before he could receive the decree.

The last three Bulls were sent to Simon Sudbury who held the most ecclesiastical power in England. But these were held back because King Edward's wife, Queen Joan of Kent, protected Wycliff.

One year after Pope Gregory XI issued the Bulls, he died and therefore all the Bulls that were against Wycliff were nullified. Moreover, the five Bulls were issued at an unsuitable time when England's government was anti-papal and the national climate was unfavourable to the intent of the Bulls.

The Lambeth Trial

Wycliff took a strong stand before Parliament against the Roman Church's materialism and worldly privileges in 1378. The papal authorities brought him to trial at Lambeth and he was again divinely protected with the intervention of the Duke of Lancaster and Queen Joan of Kent. Moreover, it was the year of the Great Schism when there was a power struggle between pope Urban VI in Rome and pope Clement VII in Avignon. Both claimed to be the legitimate successor of the apostle Peter. Hence, focus was diverted away from the trial with this great conflict within the papacy.

The Earthquake Council

When Wycliff opposed the doctrine of transubstantiation, he was left to stand alone without any royal protection against 47 bishops, monks and religious doctors at a religious council in 1382. But there was a sudden earthquake and the city and the building structure in which the assembly gathered collapsed. Wycliff was unharmed.

Death of Wycliff

After the Earthquake Council, Wycliff was banished to Lutterworth. The last two years of his exilic life totally cut him off from the public scene. He seized the opportunity to write more tracts and treatises in quick succession. These were circulated to his faithful itinerant preachers.

In 1382, he suffered the first of two strokes that left him half paralysed. The Roman Church did not spare him in the last year of his life. Pope Urban summoned him to Rome, but because of his incapacity, Wycliff was excused from attending. On 31 December 1384, as he was conducting the Lord's Supper, he suffered another stroke and was promoted to glory.

The Lollards

The propagation of God's Word did not stagnate with the death of Wycliff. His followers, called Lollards, went all over England to preach the gospel to the common people. In the eyes of the Roman Church they were the most troublesome people of the Middle Ages. In 1401, the Lollards were suppressed and forced to go underground. But this persecution did not deter them from preaching the Gospel continually.

Conclusion

Wycliff's powerful life and testimony remained such a rebuke to the worldly Roman Church that in 1413, 29 years after his death, it ordered his books to be burned. In 1415, at the Council of Constance, the bishops ordered Wycliff's bones to be exhumed and burned and they condemned him as an obstinate heretic. His ashes were scattered into the waters of the River Swift which runs through Lutterworth. It has been well said that "as the ashes were carried by the Swift to the Avon, by the Avon to the Severn, by the Severn to the narrow seas, and by the narrow seas to the ocean, so the reformer's teachings and messages reached out into all England. And from England into far distant lands."

Today, may our hearts beat with joy that we have the glorious faith and the glorious Word made possible by God through Wycliff and other Reformers who have given their lives for the cause of Christ.

— *Rev Quek Keng Khwang*

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
Thurs 5th Nov	7pm	Mid-Week Out-reach 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.
Sat 7th Nov	4pm	Bible Study & Prayer Meeting Galatians - A Study of Freedom and Liberty	
Next Lord's Day	Morning Service	Evening Service	LORD'S DAY DUTIES
Preacher	Dr Carl Martin	Dr Carl Martin	<u>TODAY: 01/11/2015</u>
Message	Men Dare Not Limit God	Unity, Diversity, & Testimony	Chairman: Jonathan
Text	2 Kings 6:24-7:20	John 17:21-23	Organist: Anthony
NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS			Pianist: Keene
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-lunch Bible Study: This week, Dr Martin will continue with the study on "Building Firm Foundations". • Pray for those who are sick: Douglas, Barbara, Prema, Margaret, May Chew, Constance, Deborah, Pastor & Mrs Ki, Dr Carl Martin, Dr Scott-Pearson, Dr David Allen, Nina, Helen, Eld Chew's mother, Hannah, Shirley, Daniel, Dr Tow, Matthew, Jonathan's father, Magdalene, Meredith, Elliora. • Pray for those seeking employment: Yetta, Nana, Keene, Joel • Pulpit Ministry: Pray for Dr Martin as he serves as the interim minister. Thank God that his visa application has been approved. • Lord's Supper: We will be observing the Lord's Supper next week. Please come with hearts prepared. • The Church will be holding its Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, November 8th. 			Ushers: Daniel / Evelyn
			Sunday School: Keene / Rachael / Hannah
Worship Service Collections – Last Sunday: £1835, Lunch: £58.10 Attendance - Morning: 33 (A) 7 (C), Evening: 12 (A) 5 (C)			Lunch: Sunny & Emily
			Washing Up: Volunteers
			PA Crew: Joel
			<u>NEXT WEEK: 08/11/2015</u>
			Chairman: John
			Organist: Anthony
			Pianist: Matthew
			Ushers: Tom / Yetta
			Sunday School: Keene / Rachael / Hannah
			Lunch: Maureen
			Washing Up: Volunteers
			PA Crew: Scott

SHORTER CATECHISM QUESTION 93

Q: Which are the sacraments of the New Testament?

A: The sacraments of the New Testament are, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper.

Comments:

The two sacraments of the Old Testament were Circumcision and the Passover. The two sacraments of the New Testament are Baptism and the Lord's Supper. These sacraments answer the one to the other – Baptism coming in place of Circumcision, and the Lord's Supper in place of the Passover. They teach likewise the same truths – Circumcision and Baptism teaching the necessity of being *born again*, and the Passover and the Lord's Supper teaching the necessity of a *sacrifice for sin*.

Scriptural Reference:

Matthew 28:19, Matthew 26:26

MEMORY VERSE

Last Week

"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."

Ephesians 6:16

This Week

"And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:"

Ephesians 6:17

Next Week

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;"

Ephesians 6:18