



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. 20 No. 28

LORD'S DAY 10 JULY 2016

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 100	Psalm 138:1-2
<i>Opening Hymn *</i>	RHC 15 – <i>"How Shall I Sing That Majesty"</i>	RHC 16 – <i>"Holy God, We Praise Thy Name"</i>
<i>Opening Prayer *</i>	John Poh	John Poh
<i>Gloria Patri *</i>	<i>Glory Be to the Father</i>	---
<i>Apostle's Creed *</i>	<i>Apostle's Creed</i>	---
<i>Responsive Reading</i>	Psalm 20	---
<i>Second Hymn *</i>	<i>Psalm 20 verses 1-9</i> (to the tune of Azmon, RHC 61)	---
<i>Announcements & Memory Verse</i>	John Poh	John Poh
<i>Tithes & Offerings & Doxology *</i>	RHC 315 – <i>"Walk in the Light"</i>	---
<i>Scriptural Text</i>	Jeremiah 17:5-8	John 19:16-18
<i>Pastoral Prayer</i>	Dr Carl Martin	Dr Carl Martin
<i>Sermon Message</i>	<i>Two Paths for Life</i>	<i>The Weight and Witness of the Cross</i>
<i>The Lord's Supper</i>	Dr Carl Martin	---
<i>Closing Hymn *</i>	RHC 201 – <i>"According to Thy Gracious Word"</i>	RHC 187 – <i>"It Is A Thing Most Wonderful"</i>
<i>Benediction/3-Fold Amen *</i>	Dr Carl Martin	Dr Carl Martin
<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.

"Growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" - 2 Peter 3:18

THE HISTORY OF CATECHIZING (PART 1)

Adapted from Life BP Church Weekly, Sunday 3rd July 2016

When I hear the term “catechism,” I think back to the time a school friend said he had to go for catechism class at the Diocesan school to be instructed in his faith. He was Roman Catholic. And so immediately, as a Protestant, I had a negative impression of the practice of catechism. And growing up in various non-denominational churches, I thought the practice of catechism was a man-made guide to faith, and hence useless to true faith which was founded on the Bible alone. To me, it represented dead orthodoxy.

However, I have come to realize that catechism, as a practice, was something very biblical. The term catechizing, itself, is a Greek word, being derived from *katêcheô* which means “to sound against.” This word is used seven times in the New Testament and it refers to oral instruction. This is seen in Luke 1:3-4, where the Evangelist addresses the recipient of this Gospel – “It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.”

The root of this word “instructed” is the word *katêcheô*. It is taken from two Greek words – *kata* which means “against” and *echo* which means “sound.” It gives the idea of someone sounding out ideas against someone else – where one speaks and the other listens, who then is able to echo back what has been spoken. It is oral instruction, but more than simple oral instruction, it later came to refer to an instruction by means of question and answer.

Before the completion of the New Testament canon, the teachings of Christ and the Apostles would have been imparted orally. And in the early church when literacy was not widespread, those converted into Christianity would have been instructed in this manner. It was to ensure that the truths of the Bible were drummed into the minds of the new believers. It was not just preaching or teaching, but it was a systematic instruction. Believers were instructed until they could repeat what was taught.

It proved so useful that a catechetical school was founded in Alexandria in the late 2nd century AD. Church Fathers who advocated this kind of instruction were Clement and Origen, who began their celebrated careers first as catechists in the Alexandrian school. The first catechisms were constructed as brief creeds and manuals of doctrine, and there were even catechetical material for several books of the Bible, not unlike Bible study guides.

But the first person to use the word “catechism” in conjunction with this kind of question and answer instruction was St. Augustine. In his *Catechizing of the Uninstructed*, he teaches people how to go about doing catechism. Aside from Augustine, many of his contemporaries placed great importance on this kind of instruction – it was an effective way of fulfilling the Great Commission of Christ to His disciples, in teaching all that He had commanded.

It was through schools like these that summaries of doctrines were produced and handed down to succeeding generations. This was how the church grew and Christians were instructed. However, an important event in Church history led to the decline of catechetical instruction. That event was when Christianity was made the official religion of the Roman Empire. Now, one might ask why this would have sounded the death knell to catechism. There were several contributing factors.

In AD 312, when the Roman Emperor Constantine appeared to have converted to Christianity, his Edict of Milan in AD 313 made Christianity the official religion in the Roman Empire. And thus, during this time church schools sprung up all over the empire – a good thing. But when Constantine died, his nephew Julian succeeded him. This new emperor rejected Christianity (he was called Julian the Apostate) and in AD 362, Julian decreed that no teacher could continue to teach in those schools without government approval. But providence would have it that he died the next year at war. And his decree was revoked. However, this did not stop the decline of the practice.

One might ask how the legalizing of Christianity diminished catechetical instruction. It happened in this manner. When Christianity was legalized, hordes of barbarous nations to the north of Rome mass converted. Such conversions, of course, were often false. And along with the “conversion,” they brought with them their superstitions and own beliefs. These, intermingled with the true doctrines of Christianity, soon formed a syncretistic and mixed religion, which would pass as Christianity for the next millennium, but could be hardly called true Christianity.

And so, as the Church grew in its heresy and subsequent ungodliness, rituals and superstition replaced instruction – hence, there was little need and requirement in the Church’s eyes, to continue with this practice, and it died down among the general populace. It is no surprise why this age in history is called the Dark Ages. Fraught with intrigue and immorality, the Church declined in its moral influence over the people, and hence the people continued to nurse their depravity. However, it stands out clearly during this time, that wherever this instruction continued to be adhered, Christianity and holiness flourished. These pockets of true Christianity were few, but were the catalyst for Reformation; they were the Waldenses, the Albigenses, the Hussites, and the Lollards. These groups kept the practice of catechizing alive in the midst of apostasy and error. The Lollards, especially, are credited for establishing the form for all major modern Reformed catechisms; in them we trace the earliest of Protestant catechisms. Called *A Fruitful Mirror of Small Handbook for Christians*, it was written in 1470 and made available to many heads of homes to catechize their family members.

These pockets of Christianity jump started the Reformation. And with the Reformation, catechetical instruction came back with a vengeance. Martin Luther is often regarded as the father of Protestant catechisms. And it was he that not only wrote the very first Reformation catechism, but also explained the uses of such catechisms as well as explained the motivation for using them. Luther wrote two catechisms: the Large (1530) and the Small. He instructed that “it is the duty of every father of a family to question and examine his children and servants at least once a week and to ascertain what they know of it, or are learning and, if they do not know it, to keep them faithfully at it.”

As the Father of the Reformed tradition, John Calvin also produced his own catechism. The Genevan Catechism (1541) underwent two revisions, and was written in order to set a basic pattern of doctrine, which would affirm the major doctrines of the faith, and would set a pattern for what was expected to be taught by Christian fathers and other teachers of children in the Church.

In fact, in the latter half of the 16th and first half of the 17th centuries, many catechisms were written. The great leaders of the Reformation all attacked the colossal ignorance of the Christian faith in their own countries by way of catechisms. The Genevan Catechism was framed for the French speaking Reformed churches, the Heidelberg Catechism was framed for the German Reformed churches (which was then translated into Flemish and other languages), the Basel Catechism for the Helvetic Reformed Church, the Westminster Catechism for the English and Scottish Reformed churches, etc.

But the region which produced the greatest number of Reformed catechisms was Great Britain. As one historian quotes, "It may be said, without exaggeration, of the catechisms framed on the system of the doctrinal Puritans, and published in England between the years 1600 and 1645, that their name is Legion." Richard Baxter, the great Puritan pastor, wrote in 1656, "How many scores, if not hundreds, of catechisms are written in England."

But it was not so much the number of catechisms that the Reformers in Scotland and England were concerned about; it was the actual practice of catechizing. This can be seen in some of the admonitions by ministers and by councils. The Westminster Directory of Family Worship states that families should spend time "reading of the scriptures, with catechizing in a plain way, that the understandings of the simpler may be the better enabled to profit under the public ordinances..." And not only would catechism be done at home, but also at church. The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland instructed that each church should have two services – the first service consisting of worship and preaching, and the second would consist of worship and catechizing (of the young and ignorant).

This practice of both public and private catechism bolstered the spirituality of the Reformed churches in Scotland and England, yea, even the populace. Both countries could rightly be called Christian nations. And with the emigration to the Americas, confessing Reformed churches were founded in the New World. These brought with them Puritan ethics and the vital practice of catechism, making America a Christian nation.

(To be continued)

Rev Mark Chen

Apostle's Creed

*I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth;
And in Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, our Lord;
Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary;
Suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell;
The third day He rose again from the dead;
He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.*

*I believe in the Holy Ghost.
the holy catholic* church;
the communion of saints;
The forgiveness of sins;
The resurrection of the body;
And the life everlasting.
Amen.*

**meaning the universal Christian church--all believers in Jesus Christ*

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
Weds 13th July	7pm	Mid-Week Outreach 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 16th July	4pm	Bible Study & Prayer Meeting Study of Calvin's Institutes	

Next Lord's Day	Morning Service	Evening Service	LORD'S DAY DUTIES
<i>Preacher</i>	Dr Carl Martin	Dr Carl Martin	<u>TODAY: 10/07/2016</u> <i>Chairman:</i> John <i>Organist:</i> Anthony <i>Pianist:</i> Anthony <i>Ushers:</i> Joel / Keene <i>Sunday School:</i> Rachael / Hannah / Keene <i>Lunch:</i> Hannah <i>Washing Up:</i> Volunteers <i>PA Crew:</i> Scott
<i>Message</i>	Heart Reflections	A High Stakes Gamble	
<i>Text</i>	Jeremiah 17:9-10	John 19:23-24	

NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS		<u>NEXT WEEK: 17/07/2016</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-lunch Bible Study: This week, Dr Martin will continue with the study on "Building Firm Foundations". • Basic Bible Knowledge Class, 2.30pm today: Dr Martin will be leading a series of studies for those wishing to become members of the Church. • Pulpit Ministry: Pray for Dr Martin as he serves as the minister and as he seeks guidance for his PhD studies. • Registry of Members & Gift Aid Forms: Please can all members of the congregation complete and return the forms to John ASAP. • Baptism Service, Sunday 7th August 2016: Those interested in preparing for baptism, please speak to Dr Martin. • Baptism Class, 5:30pm today: Dr Martin is leading a series of classes to prepare those who wish to be baptised. • Church Maintenance Day: Saturday 16th July, 10:30am. • Church 20th Anniversary: Sunday 14th August. Please invite friends and family to join us in our celebrations. 		<u>NEXT WEEK: 17/07/2016</u> <i>Chairman:</i> Jonathan <i>Organist:</i> Keene <i>Pianist:</i> Joel <i>Ushers:</i> Tom / Yetta <i>Sunday School:</i> Rachael / Hannah / Keene <i>Lunch:</i> Nina <i>Washing Up:</i> Volunteers <i>PA Crew:</i> Scott
Worship Service Collections – Last Sunday: £1283.50, Lunch: £59.00 Attendance - Morning: 46 (A) 15 (C), Evening: 19 (A) 7 (C)		

SHORTER CATECHISM QUESTION 22

Q: How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man?

A: Christ, the Son of God, became man, by taking to himself a true body, and a reasonable soul, being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and born of her, yet without sin.

Comments:

The last answer told us the fact that the Son of God became man; this answer tells us how he did so. He did so by assuming a human body and soul. And this was assumed in a miraculous manner, through the power of the Holy Spirit. The purpose for which Christ became man was that he might stand in our place and work out our redemption.

Scriptural Reference:

Luke 1:35, Galatians 4:4. Hebrew 7:26

MEMORY VERSE

Last Week	This Week	Next Week
<i>"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."</i> Philippians 4:6	<i>"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."</i> Philippians 4:7	<i>"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."</i> Philippians 4:8