



# 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. 51

**LORD'S DAY 18 DECEMBER 2016**

### ORDER OF WORSHIP

#### *Morning Service – 11am*

#### *Evening Service – 4pm*

*Prelude*

*The Lord Is in His Holy Temple*

*Call to Worship*

Psalm 95:1-3

Psalm 9:1-2

*Opening Hymn \**

RHC 163 – *"Angels, from the Realms of Glory"*

RHC 161 – *"There's A Song in the Air"*

*Opening Prayer \**

John Poh

John Poh

*Gloria Patri \**

*Glory Be to the Father*

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*Christology Creed*

*Christology Creed*

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*Responsive Reading*

Psalm 43

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*Second Hymn \**

*Psalm 43 verses 1-5*  
(to the tune of Vox Dilecti, RHC 298)

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*Announcements &*

John Poh

John Poh

*Memory Verse*

*Tithes & Offerings & Doxology \**

RHC 160 – *"As with Gladness Men of Old"*

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*Scriptural Text*

Matthew 1:1-17

Matthew 1:1-17, Joshua 2

*Pastoral Prayer*

Dr Carl Martin

Dr Carl Martin

*Sermon Message*

*Unlikely Women in the Line of Christ – Part 1*

*Unlikely Women in the Line of Christ – Part 2*

*Closing Hymn \**

RHC 273 – *"Jesus I Come"*

RHC 272 – *"Let Jesus Come into Your Heart"*

*Benediction/3-Fold*

Dr Carl Martin

Dr Carl Martin

*Amen \**

*Postlude*

*The Lord Bless You*

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\* 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***

# **BORN OF A VIRGIN**

**Adapted from Life BP Church Singapore Weekly, Sunday 20th December 2015**

The virgin birth was a miraculous event that has taken place only once in all human history, at the time when Jesus Christ was born. This event has become so important that it is still celebrated every year at Christmas. According to Luke's Gospel, a devout young Jewess named Mary was engaged to a man named Joseph, but they were not married yet. An angel broke the news to her that she was specially chosen by God to conceive and bear a son whom she should name Jesus. Mary was very perplexed how she could ever conceive as a virgin. The angel replied that the Holy Spirit of God would perform this great miracle in her.

Matthew's Gospel provides more evidence that Jesus was born of a virgin. Joseph discovered that Mary was pregnant, before they could come together (Matthew 1:18). He naturally thought that Mary had violated the terms of their engagement. As he thought about what he should do to Mary, an angel appeared to him and revealed to him the same news Mary had received. He said, "for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost" (verse 20). Joseph obeyed God and made Mary his wife, in order to protect her reputation, as well as to be a foster father to Jesus. Both of them were privileged to be part of God's great work of bringing the divine Son of God into the world!

This may have seemed very new to Mary and Joseph at that time, but it was actually not new at all. God had already planned the miracle of the virgin birth from the very beginning. This can be seen in prophecies that were given many centuries before it took place.

## **It Was Planned by God from the Beginning**

The earliest prophecy of the virgin birth is found in Genesis 3:15. Just after Adam and Eve sinned, God made a very intriguing announcement to the serpent that had tempted Eve – "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel." The term 'her seed' (i.e. the seed of the woman) in this verse implies the virgin birth. In ordinary births the Bible refers to children 41 times as being the seed of the man, not of the woman (Genesis 17:19).

About 740 years before Christ was born, more details of the virgin birth were revealed through the prophet Isaiah, "Hear ye now, O house of David; Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel." (Isaiah 7:13,14)

Some people claim that this prophecy was about a virgin birth which was to take place as a sign from God to King Ahaz who heard these words. Ahaz had chosen unwisely to put his trust in a foreign power to deliver his nation from danger, rather than in God. But Matthew states that this prophecy was fulfilled in the birth of Jesus Christ – "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." (Matthew 1:22,23)

This led some to speculate that there were actually two virgin births, one that took place in the time of King Ahaz as a sign to him, and another when Christ was born 740 years later. There are several problems with this view. Firstly, Bible prophecies cannot be fulfilled more than once. Secondly, the name "Immanuel" given to the child that is born means 'God with us.' This implies that he would be the very incarnation of God Himself. No one but Jesus Christ can appropriately bear such a name. Thirdly, the sign need not be fulfilled in Ahaz's lifetime, since it was given to the house of David (Isaiah 7:13). The word "you" in verse 14 ("Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign") is in the plural form, and therefore it cannot refer to Ahaz alone. The house of David continued to exist up till the time of Jesus Christ, and Mary and Joseph were both part of it. This proves that Isaiah's prophecy must refer solely to the virgin birth of the Lord Jesus Christ.

## **It Transcends the Laws of Science**

The reason why this is the only virgin birth in human history is that it is a biological impossibility. Human reproduction requires the union of the reproductive cells of a man and a woman. The normal human cell has 46 chromosomes. If any of these is missing or deformed, there can be no human life. But the reproductive cell of a man or woman has only 23 chromosomes. It has to fuse with its counterpart reproductive cell which has the other 23 chromosomes into order to be complete. This makes it biologically impossible for a virgin to conceive.

Scientists today try to circumvent the natural laws of science by means of cloning. This is done by transforming a normal cell which has 46 chromosomes in a reproductive cell. But the result of cloning is an offspring that is an exact copy of its parent, since it has exactly the same chromosomes as its parent. Christ's virgin birth was not like this at all. If it was, Mary would have given birth to a girl like herself, and not to a boy. This means that the only way to explain how Mary could have conceived a male child on her own, is that God worked a wondrous miracle, transcending the laws of science.

Those who do not believe in miracles attempt to find a natural explanation. For instance, Liberal scholars claim that the Hebrew Word for "virgin" in Isaiah's prophecy is *almah* and this should be translated as "young woman." They argue that the word *bethulah* would have been used if "virgin" was meant (cf. Genesis 24:16). There is nothing miraculous about a young woman giving birth to a child, since she may not be a virgin. But contrary to what these scholars say, the word *almah* is used consistently in the Old Testament to mean "a young woman of marriageable age who is still a virgin." (e.g. Genesis 24:43) This is confirmed in Matthew's quotation of Isaiah's prophecy in his Gospel, where he translated the word *almah* as *parthenos* in Greek. *Parthenos* means nothing else but virgin.

There is therefore no doubt that the virgin birth of Jesus is a powerful miracle wrought by God Himself. What we need to understand now is why this miracle was necessary. It was not done just to make Christ's birth different from all other births. It was actually the only way that God could become fully man without ceasing to be God.

## **It Was the Means by Which God Entered into the World**

This is stated in another prophecy of Isaiah concerning Christ's birth, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God..." (Isaiah 9:6). Since this child is the mighty God Himself, He must have existed before He was born into this world. In ordinary human conception, a new person begins to exist only at the moment of conception. But Jesus, who is God the Son, the second person of the Trinity, did not begin to exist when He was conceived in Mary's womb. The virgin birth explains how this happened. Since there was no union of two reproductive cells, no new person was created, but the existing person of God the Son took on a human nature at the moment He was conceived in a virgin's womb.

This is indeed a great mystery. How can the almighty God become a helpless little baby? How can God who knows everything become a little child who has to learn how to talk, walk and put on His own clothes? How can an infinite God become such a finite creature? The conception and birth of God the Son will remain a mystery that defies all human reasoning, because human minds are incapable of understanding it. We accept this mystery simply by faith in God's written Word.

The Word of God itself admits that it is a great mystery, according to 1 Timothy 3:16, "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." What remains to be answered now is why did God do this? Why was He born of a virgin to become a human being like us?

## **It Was an Act of Great Condescension**

In order to be born into this world God had to submit Himself to being limited by time and space. He had to put aside temporarily His unlimited powers and unlimited knowledge. As a man, He had to experience hunger, thirst, tiredness, pain and suffering. Jesus lived without many comforts of life. His birth took place in a stable where animals were kept. The manger where He was placed was their feeding trough. We can only imagine how filthy and unhygienic this must have been compared to the very clean environment in which babies are born today. After that, Jesus grew up in a poor family, for Mary and Joseph could not afford to offer an animal at the temple when they brought Him there to be dedicated to God, and they had to offer birds instead (Luke 2:24, Leviticus 12:6-8).

What He did involved untold sacrifice and humiliation because He had to endure living in a world that is full of sin and wickedness. This truly involved great condescension, because God is absolutely holy and pure and cannot tolerate sin at all. And He not only endured man's sins throughout His earthly life, He also became its victim at the end of it. Philippians 2:7,8 tells us that He "... made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

No one has ever condescended as much as the Lord Jesus when He was born into this world. What was it that made the almighty God willing to undertake the task of living as a man?

## **It Was an Act of Great Love**

Above all things the virgin birth brings out the truth that God the Son loved us so much that He came down to save us from our sins. Then He removed our sins by dying on the cross for us. "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8). Has any love ever been as great as this? Has anyone ever loved us so selflessly, so wonderfully and so completely the way that God loved us in Christ?

If you have not received Christ as your Saviour yet and you are still trying hard to save yourself by your own good works, listen to what He said, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30)

- *Rev Charles Seet*

## **The Word Made Flesh**

*The Ligonier Statement on Christology*

We confess the mystery and wonder  
of God made flesh  
and rejoice in our great salvation  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

With the Father and the Holy Spirit,  
the Son created all things,  
sustains all things,  
and makes all things new.  
Truly God,  
He became truly man,  
two natures in one person.

He was born of the Virgin Mary  
and lived among us.  
Crucified, dead, and buried,  
He rose on the third day,  
ascended to heaven,  
and will come again  
in glory and judgment.

For us,  
He kept the Law,  
atoned for sin,  
and satisfied God's wrath.  
He took our filthy rags  
and gave us  
His righteous robe.

He is our Prophet, Priest, and King,  
building His church,  
interceding for us,  
and reigning over all things.

Jesus Christ is Lord;  
we praise His holy Name forever.

Amen.

# 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 21st Dec 7pm <b>Mid-Week Outreach Bible Study</b>	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 24th Dec 4pm <b>Bible Study &amp; Prayer Meeting</b>	

Next Lord's Day	Morning Service	Evening Service	LORD'S DAY DUTIES
	Dr Stephen Scott-Pearson God was Manifest in the Flesh 1 Timothy 3:16	Dr Stephen Scott-Pearson The Word Made Flesh John 1:14	<b><u>TODAY: 18/12/2016</u></b>

NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Pre-lunch Bible Study:</b> This week, Dr Martin will continue with the study on "Building Firm Foundations".</li> <li>• <b>Pulpit Ministry:</b> Pray for Dr Martin as he serves as the minister and for the continuation of his PhD studies.</li> <li>• <b>Church Maintenance Fund:</b> The Church needs to undergo some significant repairs in the coming months; a Maintenance Fund has been set up for anyone wishing to offer a love gift to assist with the costs.</li> <li>• <b>Christmas Day Carry-in Lunch:</b> Please see Jonathan if you wish to bring a dish. A Love Gift of £70 has been received to pay for the turkey.</li> <li>• <b>New Years Eve &amp; Watchnight Service:</b> All are welcome to attend Prayer Meeting and Bible Study at 4pm. This will be followed by a time of fellowship and a potluck supper in the manse. At 11pm there will be a Watchnight Service in the Sanctuary.</li> <li>• <b>Study of the Book of Psalms:</b> Beginning 8<sup>th</sup> January 2017, at 3pm each Sunday, Dr Martin will lead a Bible Study on the book of Psalms, using the book "<i>The Flow of the Psalms</i>" by Palmer Robertson.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Chairman:</b> John  <b>Organist:</b> Anthony  <b>Pianist:</b> Keene  <b>Ushers:</b> Daniel / Yetta  <b>Sunday School:</b> No Sunday School  <b>Lunch:</b> Keene / Hannah  <b>Washing Up:</b> Volunteers  <b>PA Crew:</b> Jonathan</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>NEXT WEEK: 25/12/2016</u></b></p> <p><b>Chairman:</b> Jonathan  <b>Organist:</b> Anthony  <b>Pianist:</b> Keene  <b>Ushers:</b> John / Margaret  <b>Sunday School:</b> No Sunday School  <b>Lunch:</b> Carry-In  <b>Washing Up:</b> Volunteers  <b>PA Crew:</b> John</p>
<p><b>Worship Service Collections</b> – Last Sunday: £640.58, Lunch: £33.60  <b>Church Maintenance Fund: £400</b>  <b>Attendance</b> - Morning: 34 (A) 9 (C), Evening: 11 (A) 1 (C)</p>	<p><b>Church Maintenance Fund</b>  <b>Total: £1,280</b></p>

## SHORTER CATECHISM QUESTION 45

**Q: Which is the First Commandment?**

*A: The First Commandment is, THOU SHALT HAVE NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME.*

Comments:

God wrote the Ten Commandments on two tables of stone. On the first table he wrote the first four commandments, which contain our duty to God; and on the second he wrote the remaining six commandments, which contain our duty to man. This First Commandment teaches us the only proper *object* of worship. It is GOD – and beside him there is no other. This is the simple meaning of the commandment, but in the Shorter Catechism each commandment is explained and expanded, by showing first what it *bids* us do, than what it *forbids* us to do, and lastly, what *special reasons* or motives there may be for its observance.

## MEMORY VERSE

Last Week	This Week	Next Week
<p><i>"As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God."</i>  <b>Psalm 42:1</b></p>	<p><i>"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."</i>  <b>Proverbs 4:23</b></p>	<p><i>"Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him."</i>  <b>Proverbs 30:5</b></p>