



# 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. 21 No. 44

**LORD'S DAY 29 OCTOBER 2017**

### ORDER OF WORSHIP

#### *Morning Service – 11am*

#### *Evening Service – 4pm*

*Prelude*

*The Lord Is in His Holy Temple*

*Call to Worship*

Psalm 46:1-3

Psalm 9:1-2

*Opening Hymn \**

RHC 46 – "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"

RHC 74 – "For the Beauty of the Earth"

*Opening Prayer \**

John Poh

John Poh

*Gloria Patri \**

*Glory Be to the Father*

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*Responsive Reading*

Psalm 87

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*Second Hymn \**

RHC 263 – "Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken"

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*Announcements & Memory Verse*

John Poh

John Poh

*Tithes & Offerings & Doxology \**

RHC 27 – "Now Thank We All Our God"

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*Scriptural Text*

Romans 1:1-17

Exodus 23:14-17

*Pastoral Prayer*

Rev Lim Chee Boon

Rev Lim Chee Boon

*Sermon Message*

*The Reformation*

*The 3 Major Jewish Feasts*

*Closing Hymn \**

RHC 456 – "In Christ There Is No East or West"

RHC 136 – "Come, Ye Thankful People"

*Benediction/3-Fold Amen \**

Rev Lim Chee Boon

Rev Lim Chee Boon

*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.

**"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." - Proverbs 4:23**

# **AFTER DARKNESS, LIGHT -** **THE DAWNING OF THE REFORMATION**

Inaugural message delivered at the Combined BP 500th Anniversary Reformation Conference  
on 9 August 2017

## **Introduction**

The date 31 October 1517 and Martin Luther have a special place in the history of the Christian church. It is a lamentable fact that many Protestants today are either indifferent to or ignorant of its doctrinal significance. Almost a thousand years of spiritual darkness in the medieval age came to an end finally. Yet not many churches commemorate this 500th year of this historic event in their annual calendar. We do well to commemorate and recollect the spiritual lessons of this life-changing event of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. These last perilous days with all the ploys of religious compromise in the ecclesiastical arena warrant a vigilant and knowledgeable Christendom.

## **Prevailing Historical Circumstances**

There were many favourable reasons that accounted for the final outbreak of the 16th century Protestant Reformation. There are as follows:

1. The Pre-Reformers: John Huss, John Wycliffe, John of Wessel, Savonarola, Jerome of Prague, Brethren of the Common life, the Waldenses etc. They blazed the trail for the main Reformers to come.
2. The Medieval Church, its decline in spiritual bankruptcy, corruption and moral ills.
3. The Renaissance, the humanistic intellectual awakening of Europe from 13th century in a rebirth of culture and the arts, the thalassic travels, architecture, the languages and the opening of the minds of the people to the truth of God.
4. The rise of nation states and the decline of feudalism in Europe (i.e. Germany).
5. The invention of printing in 1455 by Johann Gutenberg and the rapid dissemination and spread of religious literature.
6. The edition of the Greek New Testament by Erasmus of Rotterdam in 1516 that led to the translation of the Bible later into other languages.

## **The Matter of Indulgence**

The chief precipitating factor for the Reformation was the gale of indulgence or forgiveness tickets sanctioned by the Roman Church and led by a Dominican friar named Johann Tetzel. It is a strange teaching that you can buy forgiveness with money to alone for all your sins. This was the very reason that prompted Martin Luther, a former Augustinian monk and lecturer in Wittenberg University to write and nail the 95 theses on the castle door of Wittenberg church in Saxony, Germany in Latin when it was later translated into German and was distributed widely in Europe and used of the Lord to transform hearts all over the world.

## **The 4 Rights of the Reformation**

### **1. Right Period**

There had been efforts to reform the Roman Church before the 16<sup>th</sup> century, but they had no complete or lasting success. There were also reform movements or groups outside the Roman Church, such as the Albigenses, the Waldenses, brethren of the common life but they were met with little success.

There is a time for everything. King Solomon in Ecclesiastes 3:1 says that there is a ripe season for things to happen. God appointed the 16th century to be the ripe time (or right period) for the protestant reformation (just after the Renaissance), and had pre-pared the Church in many ways for this Reformation. Religious, economic and political factors that had been brewing for centuries and had set the stage for the full impact of the Reformation.

### **2. Right Place**

The fact that the reformation started from Germany and Switzerland and not in Spain or Italy or Portugal, revealed to us that the place or country is also important. The countries that were revived were ready and prepared by God, with the rise of nation states and protestant nobles (i.e. Germany) who were able to stand up to the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire as they held on to Protestant convictions with strong social and political influence. God has His ordained time and place to raise up the right people too in His sovereign will.

### **3. Right Persons**

The Reformers, Martin Luther, Calvin, Knox, Zwingli, Tyndale, Cranmer, while not perfect, were chosen men of God with the right transformed hearts and motives and right giftedness. They were unique in the history of the church as men of intellectual ability and passion for Jesus Christ. The Reformers were moved of the Spirit (and their successors) and though they were unique and different in their backgrounds but they ably and solidly set forth their belief in the Bible as their sole authority.

The reason for the 16th century reformation is based on one concern, how can a guilty sinner seek peace with a thrice holy God. The heart of the reformation is the reformation of the heart. It was not political nor social but it started from the heart and mind of an Augustinian monk, Martin Luther (and others) who was sincerely seeking to be justified before God in their personal walk of faith. They asked how can a guilty sinner stand before a holy and just God? He was a man of great intellectual ability and oratorical skills and he wrote many gospel and doctrinal pamphlets to defend the faith.

## **4. Right Precepts**

They all stood for sound and fundamental Doctrines in the Bible and preached and defended them with evangelical zeal. Consider these important doctrinal implications besides the famous 5 solas (i.e. Gracia, Fide, Scriptura, Christos and Deo Gloria).

### **I. Justification by Faith**

Luther rediscovered that the biblical doctrine of Justification by faith alone. That it is the truth Christ Jesus accomplished, through His suffering and death on the cross, all that is necessary for salvation. He is the propitiation for our sins and he satisfied fully all the righteous demands of God. Man has no part in his redemption for Christ had paid it all (Romans 3:24-26). He found that when he was asked to teach Romans at Wittenberg University.

### **II. Authority and Sufficiency of Scripture**

The second important doctrine of the church was the sole and absolute authority, inspiration and sufficiency of the canonical Scriptures. The Reformers asserted that the Bible alone, not the church, has authority over believers and the Word of God alone and nothing else should govern the life of believers and the church (2 Timothy 3:16, 17). They should for the Word of God as the rule of faith and practice without compromise.

The Reformation advanced when Luther translated the New Testament into German in 1522. Later, William Tyndale translated the New Testament into English in 1525 for England. The foundation and basis for our Christian faith that was hidden from God's people was now given freely to sinners and saints who could read and understand the Scriptures in their own languages. Today, we have the Bible translated in more than 2,000 languages worldwide and more needs to be done to reach out to the wide harvest fields.

### **III. Universal Priesthood of Believers**

The third important doctrine was the universal priesthood of believers. This is the biblical doctrine that Christ being our mediator has reconciled us to God and we do not need any human mediator (or mediatrix) to intercede for us or to present us before God on our behalf. Christ alone is our Mediator and we are all priests who can come directly to Him (1 Timothy 2:2–5). All believers are priests themselves who come seek God personally in prayer according to 1 Peter 2:9.

There are other relevant doctrines and practices too. The understanding that there should be the 2 sacraments (instead of 7), correct church polity, (Presbyterianism) marriage (not celibacy) and covenant family life, the proper manner of with congregational reading and singing, Sabbath worship and expository preaching of the Word, etc.) and they differed from the medieval church and taught sound theology that changed the lives of the people and their families.

#### **IV. The Effects and Repercussions of the Reformation**

- A. The Scriptures were made available in the vernacular languages of the common people.
- B. Justification by faith alone led to a de-emphasis of external rituals and focused on the inner spiritual life of believers in Christ.
- C. Authority of Scripture replaced the authority of the Pope and men-centered and medieval traditions.
- D. The Scripture alone is sufficient as the authoritative rule of faith and practice for all believers.
- E. Expository Preaching of the Word of God became important and central in a worship service with congregational participation.
- F. Monasticism as the ideal of holiness was replaced by the priesthood of all believers. Each person's calling was considered an area of divine service.
- G. The seven sacraments of the Roman church were re-evaluated, and the sacraments were reduced to two : baptism and the Lord's Supper.
- H. The liturgy for worship was re-designed to accord with the Scriptures with no ostentatious rituals and ceremonies.
- I. The family began to be seen as a household of faith. Celibacy as a means of piety and good works were questioned. Martin and Katherine Luther got married, had children and became an example of the Protestant home. The other reformers followed suit.

#### **Conclusion**

We thank God for the 16th century Protestant Reformation which ushered in a new Era in the spiritual awakening and revival of the life of the church. It would later spread to the rest of Europe and beyond by the sovereign will of God and we need to continue in the same fervent spirit today propagating the pure gospel and defending the faith in these perilous and compromising times.

- *Rev Jack Sin*

# 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 1st November	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 4th November	4pm	Bible Study & Prayer Meeting	
Next Lord's Day	Morning Service	Evening Service	LORD'S DAY DUTIES
<i>Preacher</i>	Rev Lim Chee Boon	Rev Lim Chee Boon	<b><u>TODAY: 29/10/2017</u></b>
<i>Message</i>	TBC	TBC	<i>Chairman:</i> John
<i>Text</i>	TBC	TBC	<i>Organist:</i> Anthony
NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS			<i>Pianist:</i> Anthony
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Pre-lunch Bible Study:</b> This week, Rev Lim will continue with the study on "<i>Building Firm Foundations</i>".</li> <li>• <b>No Sunday School today.</b></li> <li>• <b>Church Pulpit Ministry:</b> Pray for the Pulpit Ministry and for Rev Lim Chee Boon who will be ministering to us until the 26th November.</li> <li>• <b>Ladies Fellowship:</b> This will be held after lunch today.</li> </ul>			<i>Ushers:</i> Daniel / Jonathan
			<i>Lunch:</i> Rev Lim
			<i>Washing Up:</i> Volunteers
			<i>PA Crew:</i> Scott / Jonathan
			<b><u>NEXT WEEK: 05/11/2017</u></b>
			<i>Chairman:</i> Jonathan
			<i>Organist:</i> Anthony
			<i>Pianist:</i> Matthew
			<i>Ushers:</i> John / Tom
			<i>Lunch:</i> Maureen
			<i>Washing Up:</i> Volunteers
			<i>PA Crew:</i> Scott / John
<b>Worship Service Collections</b> - Last Sunday: £707.50; Lunch: £37.00; <b>Attendance</b> - Morning: 28 (A) 10 (C), Evening: 14 (A) 6 (C)			<b>Church Maintenance Fund</b> <b>Total: £3,880.50</b>
SHORTER CATECHISM QUESTION 90			
<b>Q: How is the Word to be read and heard, that it may become effectual to salvation?</b> <i>A: That the Word may become effectual to salvation, we must attend thereunto with <u>diligence, preparation, and prayer</u>, receive it with <u>faith and love</u>, lay it up in our <u>hearts</u>, and practise it in our <u>lives</u>.</i>			
<u>Comments:</u> We are here taught the proper way to use the Bible. We must use it carefully, reverently, and prayerfully. We must believe what it tells us, and do what it bids us. And we must receive the truth in the love of it, else the Word read will not profit our souls.			
<u>Scriptural Reference:</u> Psalm 119:18, Hebrews 4:2, Psalm 119:11, John 7:17			
MEMORY VERSE			
<b>Last Week</b> <i>"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."</i> <b>Romans 10:17</b>	<b>This Week</b> <i>"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:"</i> <b>1 Peter 2:2</b>	<b>Next Week</b> <i>"See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil."</i> <b>Ephesians 5:15-16</b>	