



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. 24 No. 24

LORD’S DAY 14 JUNE 2020

ORDER OF WORSHIP

| | <i>Morning Service – 11am</i> | <i>Afternoon Service – 2pm</i> |
|---------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| <i>Call to Worship</i> | Psalm 51:10-15 | Psalm 104:31-34 |
| <i>Opening Prayer</i> | Jonathan Kim | Jonathan Kim |
| <i>Responsive Reading</i> | Psalm 64 | --- |
| <i>Scriptural Text</i> | James 3:1-12 | Malachi 3:7-12 |
| <i>Pastoral Prayer</i> | Pr Mok Chee Cheong | Pr Mok Chee Cheong |
| <i>Sermon Message</i> | <i>Controlling the Tongue for Christ</i> | <i>Our Debt to God</i> |
| <i>Benediction</i> | Pr Mok Chee Cheong | Pr Mok Chee Cheong |

NEWS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please note that due to instructions from the government with regards to the ongoing Corona Virus epidemic, we will be suspending our Activities and Sunday Worship Services in the Church premises with immediate effect.

Instead we will be streaming the sermons via a video conferencing facility each Sunday.

Please email *admin* 'at' newlifebpc.org.uk for more information.

Tithes & Offerings – these can be by cheque made payable to: New Life Bible-Presbyterian Church.

For direct bank transfer to the church account, please contact the treasurer, Mr Tom Tan.

Bi-Weekly Bible Study will next be held online on Wednesday 24th June, 3:30pm. Please speak with Pr Mok for more information.

SHORTER CATECHISM QUESTION 15

Q: What was the sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created?

A: The sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created, was their eating the forbidden fruit.

Comments:

The particular sin which Adam and Eve committed, and which constituted their fall, consisted in their eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, of which God had said they should not eat.

Scriptural Reference:

Genesis 3:6

MEMORY VERSE

Last Week

“My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name.”

Malachi 2:5

This Week

“Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?”

James 2:5

Next Week

“And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth.”

Malachi 2:15

FIGHTING AGAINST BACKSLIDING

Introduction

Backsliding is a season of increasing sin and decreasing obedience in those who profess to be Christians. Not every sin is backsliding. Christians must sadly expect their lives to consist of a continual cycle of sinning and repenting of sin by faith in Christ crucified (1 John 1:9-2:2). In backsliding, however, this cycle of repentance is largely broken and spiritual ground is lost. The longer we persist in backsliding, the less right we have to claim to be true Christians (1 John 2:3-4), for repentance is of the essence of true Christianity (Acts 2:38; 20:21).

Backsliding from Christ is thus a serious matter. It dishonours God, disregards Christ as Saviour, grieves the Holy Spirit, tramples God's law underfoot, and abuses the gospel. And it is a sin as common as it is terrible. God laments in Hosea 11:7 that His people are "bent" - that is, prone - to backslide from Him. The propensity to sin resides in all of our hearts, as does a deep desire to avoid repentance. Little wonder, then, that God warns us so often in Hosea, Jeremiah, and other prophets to abhor and fight against backsliding.

The cause of backsliding

Backsliding usually begins when believers let themselves drift from God, His Word, and His ways. We then slip away gradually, sometimes imperceptibly. One weakness leads to another. Most commonly, backsliding begins with coldness in prayer and then moves to indifference under the Word. Inner corruptions then multiply. The world is loved more and fellow believers are loved less. Man-centred hope soon replace God-centred desires.

Backsliding reaps bitter results. It injures God's holy and worthy name. It makes us spiritually numb so that our consciences become desensitised, and it result in the church's overall decay.

How to fight against backsliding?

To fight this abominable sin - a sin that is so unworthy of our Lord:

First, we must return to the Lord and stop running from Him. We must heed Hosea 14:1, "*Return unto the LORD thy God, for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity.*" We must repent by recognising our sinful condition, remembering our past obedience, searching out our sin, grieving over it, confess it, and fleeing from it.

Second, we must pursue righteousness by returning to Christ Jesus. To that end, we must return to a diligent use of the means of grace. That means returning seriously to the Bible. Attend diligently to sound preaching of it. Read it privately every day. Share regular devotions in your family. Memorise and meditate on key verses. Engage in a serious Bible study with one or more friends.

Thirdly, it also means returning diligently to prayer, even when you do not feel like it. Hosea 14:2 says: "*Take with you words and turn to the LORD: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously.*" Pray the Scriptures back to God. Attend and pray at prayer meetings. Pray with close friends. Pray daily in and with your family. Pray for the Holy Spirit to restore the weeks, months, or perhaps even years, that the locusts have eaten (Joel 2:25).

Fourthly, read solid, sound Christian literature that will do your soul good. As you read, pray much for grace - justifying grace, sanctifying grace, adopting grace, reviving grace, strengthening grace, and sovereign grace. Buttress your reading by journaling and/or finding an accountability partner. Two good spiritually minded friends will do you more good than ten or twenty friends who may be Christians but with whom you cannot communicate from heart to heart.

Fifthly, above all, take refuge to Christ every day - yes, ten times a day. Flee to Him as your Saviour and Lord, your righteousness and strength, your justification and sanctification, your praying and thanking High Priest, and your able and wise Physician. Let Him be your all-in-all.

Don't rest until you are in your old way of communion with Christ again. And be assured, He will receive you back. He is a Saviour of second chances; He delights to forgive even seventy times seven.

Conclusion

Come back home to your approachable Saviour who loves to receive penitent sinners. Welcome home penitent, backsliding prodigal - welcome home in Christ to the Father's arms, lips, words, and tears of mercy (Luke 15:20-24). Your God and Saviour delights in mercy (Micah 7:18). By the Spirit's grace, believe this amazing truth, embrace it, and live it out.

— *PM (adapted)*