



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. 47

LORD’S DAY 22 NOVEMBER 2020

ORDER OF WORSHIP

	<i>Morning Service – 11am</i>	<i>Afternoon Service – 3pm</i>
<i>Call to Worship</i>	Psalm 111:1-3, 10	Psalm 69:13-16
<i>Opening Prayer</i>	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	Jonathan Kim
<i>Responsive Reading</i>	Psalm 87	---
<i>Scriptural Text</i>	Jeremiah 7:24	Hebrews 4:1
<i>Pastoral Prayer</i>	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	Pr Mok Chee Cheong
<i>Sermon Message</i>	<i>The Marks of Wrong Religion</i>	<i>Are You Sure of Salvation?</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 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.

Weekly Prayer Meeting will be held online every Friday, 7pm. Please contact Pr Mok for more information.

SHORTER CATECHISM QUESTION 38

Q: What benefits do believers receive from Christ at the resurrection?

A: At the resurrection, believers being raised up in glory, shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgment, and made perfectly blessed in the full ENJOYING OF GOD to all eternity.

Comments:

We are here taught that there will be a resurrection, and after the resurrection a judgment. At that judgment those who have believed in Jesus will be blessed in the following ways: 1. They will be raised up with glorified bodies; 2. They will be acknowledged by Christ, the Judge, as his own people, and declared free from all guilt before an assembled world; 3. They will be taken to heaven, where they shall be happy with God for ever.

Scriptural Reference:

1 Corinthians 15:43, Matthew 25:34, Revelations 21:4, 1 Thessalonians 4:17

MEMORY VERSE

Last Week

“Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.”

Hebrews 2:17

This Week

“Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls...”

Jeremiah 6:16

Next Week

“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart”

Hebrews 4:12

EXAMINE YOUR FAITH

Introduction

Faith is the soul of Christianity. Whoever is in error here, errs unto his eternal damnation. Many, having a false notion concerning this, perish with a false peace. Others spend their days in sorrow, being fearful that they do not possess true faith, whereas, being true believers, they have reason to go on their rejoicing. It is therefore necessary to distinguish in the clearest possible manner between true and temporal faith.

One should not imagine that true faith and temporal faith resemble each other so closely that they can scarcely be distinguished from each other, merely differing in degree and duration. They differ from each other in their essential nature. The difference between them is comparable to the difference between death and life, darkness and light. The difficulty in distinguishing between them is to be found in man, however, and in the manner in which he discriminates in applying this to himself. A true believer, having received light to distinguish between various matters can be more readily convinced that he possesses true faith than a temporal believer of the contrary. For the temporal believer is ignorant of the true essence and unique nature of saving faith, even though he is able to discourse about it on the basis of God's Word, as well as by means of what he has read and heard from God's children who have spoken or written about it.

We wish to pursue this further and demonstrate the necessity of self-examination: whoever you are, I ask you - give your answer to an omniscient God - what do you say about yourself? Are you a true believer or not? Come, search yourself closely and examine yourself, for:

First, you are at this present moment either a child of God or child of Satan. You cannot be both at once, neither can you be neutral, as there is no third option. Impress this upon your heart, regardless of how prominent or despised you are, or how blessed or wretched you are. Is it not worth the effort to examine yourself as to who you are? Should one be careless in such a weighty matter? For such is the practice of foolish virgins, upon whose end we should reflect.

Second, not those who are baptised, and not all who attend church and partake of the Lord's Supper are true believers. Yes, only a few, and by far the smallest number of them are true believers on the way to eternal felicity. Think of a multitude as you would find in the marketplace where people can be seen mingling together as ants - or as you would find gathered in a filled church. While doing so, consider the following: Simon the sorcerer was baptised (Acts 8:13); the guest without the wedding garment sat at the table (Matt 22:11); half of the virgins were foolish (Matt 25:2). Only few are chosen (Matt 20:16). Only few find the narrow way and enter through the narrow gate, while there are many who are on the broad way who, through the wide gate, run to their damnation (Matt 7:13-14). And thus, our focus is upon you - and should you not ask yourself what hope you are entertaining about yourself? "*Lord, is it I?*" (Matt 26:22); "*Master, is it I?*" (v.25).

Thirdly, it is most detrimental to neglect self-examination and the searching of one's heart. Such neglect holds man captive in the sleep of carelessness. It causes him to waste time. It renders the means of grace useless and impotent. It hardens his heart against all the threatenings and judgments of God. It holds him captive to the world and to sin; yes, it is the key whereby he closes heaven and opens hell for himself.

Fourthly, self-examination is very beneficial. It causes one to become conscious of the evils that dwell in the heart. It causes one to become acquainted with the avenging justice of God. It causes one to become concerned, frightened, and perplexed. It causes one to flee to the Lord Jesus for justification and sanctification. It causes one to become serious in heart. And if one may perceive grace, light, life, and faith, it cannot be expressed what joy this generates in the heart and what a strengthening effect this has! It repeatedly provides a person with new courage;

he receives more liberty in prayer, and he becomes acquainted with the ways in which God deals with souls. It gladdens his heart, and it has a sanctifying influence upon all his actions. *“And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure”* (1 John 3:3).

Fifthly, to neglect this self-examination due to laziness, discouragement, or despair robs a person of all comfort and joy, obstructs his growth, and denies God His honour. Therefore, examine yourself frequently, and often give answer to the question, *“Simon...loves thou me?”* (John 21:17).

It is also God’s express command; whoever neglects this, not surrendering to His will, is obedient toward God. How can such a person prosper? *“Let us search and try our ways”* (Lam3:40); *“Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired”* (Zep 2:1); *“Let a man examine himself”* (1 Cor 11:28); *“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobate?”* (2 Cor 13:5). Submit to the counsel and command of God, and you will prosper.

Sixthly, it is possible for one to come to the knowledge of his spiritual state - whether one is in the covenant of grace with God, and whether or not one is a believer. To imagine that such is impossible causes a decline in serious concern about spiritual matters, and therefore I wish to state that it is possible for one to know this. The bride knew that Jesus was hers: *“My beloved is mine, and I am his”* (Song 2:16). *“For I know that my redeemer liveth”* (Job 19:25); *“...and thou shalt know that I the LORD am thy Saviour and they Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob”* (Isa 60:16). *“For I am persuaded,”* etc. (Rom 8:38). *“Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God”* (1 Cor 2:12). *“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live”* (Gal 2:20).

Thus, it should be noted that it is possible for a person to be assured. Therefore, strive to attain to such assurance. It is also possible, however, for a natural man to be convinced that he is still in an unregenerate state.

Seventhly, even though it is possible to come to this realisation by the grace of the Holy Spirit, not everyone does. Many thousands will go to hell who imagine that they will enter heaven. There will also be many, however, who will enter heaven who feared that they would not arrive there. And even those who at times may stand strong can readily become weak and come into darkness. *“And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved. LORD, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled”* (Psa 30:6-7).

In some true partakers of the covenant of grace, there is still much darkness, so that they do not have a clear perception of what constitutes sufficient light and life. Although they know this when considering it divorced from themselves and would be capable of stating this clearly to others, they nevertheless lack sufficient light to observe these graces in themselves. Moreover, so much of the old man yet remains in them - a fact upon which they focus to such an extent that they question whether this can coexist with grace - that they live between hope and fear. Hence, they are poor even though they possess much that is good. Others have good opinions of themselves, but they deceive themselves miserably. *“There is a generation that is pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness”* (Pro 30:12). Consider, therefore, how necessary it is that we scrutinise our hearts and examine ourselves as to who and how we are.

— adapted and edited from Wihelmus à Brakel, *The Christian’s Reasonable Service, Vol. 2*