



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. 43

LORD’S DAY 25 OCTOBER 2020

ORDER OF WORSHIP

	<i>Morning Service – 11am</i>	<i>Afternoon Service – 3pm</i>
<i>Call to Worship</i>	Psalm 138	Psalm 34:1-3
<i>Opening Prayer</i>	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	John Poh
<i>Opening Hymn</i>	RHC 32 – “Immortal, Invisible, God only Wise”	---
<i>Responsive Reading</i>	Psalm 83	---
<i>Scriptural Text</i>	Daniel 11:32	Hebrews 1:1-4
<i>Pastoral Prayer</i>	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	Pr Mok Chee Cheong
<i>Sermon Message</i>	<i>The Reformers who knew their God</i>	<i>Christ: God’s Supreme Revelation</i>
<i>Closing Hymn</i>	RHC 46 – “A mighty fortress is our God”	---
<i>Benediction</i>	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	Pr Mok Chee Cheong

SHORTER CATECHISM QUESTION 34

Q: What is adoption?

A: *Adoption is an act of God’s free grace, whereby we are received into the number – and have a right to all the privileges – of the SONS OF GOD.*

Comments:

*Adoption denotes the taking of a child who is a stranger into a family, and treating him as a member of it. Such is the adoption meant here. It too, like justification, is an act of pure favour on God’s part, and confers blessings to which we had lost all claim. It confers upon us both the *rank* and *rights* of children, and makes us feel that we have both a *place* and a *portion as sons* in God’s family.*

Scriptural Reference:

1 John 3:1, Romans 8:17

MEMORY VERSE

Last Week	This Week	Next Week
<p>“Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doth good is of God: but he that doth evil hath not seen God.”</p> <p>3 John 11</p>	<p>“....Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the LORD; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the LORD, and I will not keep anger for ever.”</p> <p>Jeremiah 3:12</p>	<p>“But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.”</p> <p>Hebrews 1:8</p>

THE REFORMATION AND TWENTY FIRST CENTURY EVANGELICALISM

Introduction

October 31st, 2020, marks the 503 years of the 16th Reformation. On 31st of October in the year 1517, in Wittenberg, Germany, the monk and university professor Martin Luther nailed to the door of the great Church a list of 95 propositions, or theses. That act and those theses became the source of that mighty movement within the church which we know as the “Reformation of the church.” This 16th century event had the most tremendous significance for the true church of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was undeniably a gracious act of God through His Holy Spirit upon the church for good and from the death of the apostles to the present time. Therefore, we do well to commemorate this momentous event and to pass this rich spiritual heritage to all our posterities.

The Nature of the Reformation

When Luther posted his 95 theses on the door of the Schlosskirche (Castle Church), Wittenberg, he had no intention of starting a Protestant movement. There was no plan whatever of separation from the church whose headquarters was Rome and whose head was the Pope. His purpose with the theses and the discussions of them, which he hope would follow was the correction of certain unsound practices and teachings that produce those practices in the church of Rome. Therefore, Luther, was not the architect of the Reformation, nor was it his achievement. Rather, it was God who raised individuals in separate parts of Europe and the United Kingdom to rise to the occasion, and prepared the ground for such a momentous occasion when truth would triumph in the midst of much evil, sin, superstition and crime that had enveloped a greater part of Europe.

The Reformation of the church continued after Luther and advanced through other Reformers, especially John Calvin. It proceeded in the power of the Spirit and with blessing for the church in the great Synod of Dordt and the Westminster Assembly of the 17th century. It goes on today, over 500 years after its beginning. Perhaps unknown to Luther, his 95 theses contained the truth that must shake the world and radically reform the church of Christ.

However, it is tragic that the churches today, the evangelical churches, are so ignorant of the Reformation and have so little interest in it. It is still worse that they are unconcerned about the truth that the Reformation proclaimed. The grimmest reality of all is the extent to which the churches have forsaken and rejected that truth and, by this fact, turn back to the same evil condition that necessitated the Reformation.

The significance of the Reformation was that it sought the true church over against the false church, and Christ over against Anti-christ. The Reformation originated in the indulgence-question. It has to do with this fundamental question: “How am I, being a sinner, how can I be, righteous before a Holy God?” Because a righteous man is one that will be saved, it was the question: How shall I be saved?

According to the church of Rome, the answer is: “You must pay for that pardon; you must earn that righteousness; you must save yourself.” This doctrine out of which indulgences

sprouted was the doctrine that the salvation of man depended, at least in part, upon the works which man must perform. The sum of this false doctrine is that man's righteousness before God, the basis of salvation, is made up of Christ's work and man's own works. Man's salvation, therefore, depends upon his own good works.

The Reformers passed judgement on this false doctrine, the judgment that it was no mere abuse but the denial of the gospel itself. According the scriptures, the righteousness with which a man is righteous before God is the work of Jesus Christ and the work of Jesus Christ alone. The satisfaction for sins, the suffering of the full punishment, the obtaining of the perfect righteousness which a sinner need, were accomplished perfectly, once for all by the Lord Jesus in His suffering, humiliation and death on the cross.

This righteousness is now in Christ, and the way in which it becomes mine so that I can enjoy it is the way of faith in Christ Jesus as the crucified and risen Saviour. The way of faith is the way of trusting in Christ Jesus and His perfect righteousness, whom I know as my Saviour with unshakeable certainty because of God's promise in His Word (Rom. 1:17; 3:28).

What this truth means is that salvation is of grace. Salvation does not depend at all upon man as the basis, but is God's wholly free gift to man, who is totally unworthy of that salvation and totally unable to effect it. Justification by faith alone means that salvation is of grace alone. As Paul writes in Romans 4:16: "*Therefore it is of faith, that it might of grace...*" The result of this gospel of grace is peace in the hearts of the people of God.

Conclusion

There ought to be a personal response. The Reformation concerned the individual in a most direct and practical way. Its truth was personal; it had to do with the question each asks for himself and herself: How am I righteous before God, now and in the Great Judgement? As Luther put it, everyone stands on his own two feet here. And the Reformation arose in a personal way, as Luther himself struggled in utmost anxiety over that question. The Reformation intended to give peace, the peace that only the gospel of grace can give, to the individual child of God. Who can say, "The Reformation does not concern me"? Of all miserable man's questions, the question, "How can I be righteous?" is the most pressing, save one.

There ought to be a congregational response to the Reformation. The 16th century Reformation was the Reformation of the church. It intended to give the church the pure preaching of the gospel, the sacraments rightly administered, and the exercise of a spiritual discipline. This was its great goal. If we have this, we have all that the Reformation desired to give. "The true treasure of the Church is the holy Gospel of the glory and grace of God." Then, we ought to rejoice and give thanks to God. If one does not have this, he ought to set about getting it, at once and at all cost.

But there must also be the response, by the individual believer and by the congregation, of a staunch willingness to defend the truth of the gospel, which includes the resolution to battle against its foes. The Reformation stood for the truth, but in the way of a battle.

“We protest,” the Reformation-believers said. The Reformation stood for something, and therefore it also stood against something.

Evangelicals at large no longer protest - except against protesting. It is not against anything. The reason is that it is no longer for anything, namely the gospel. It is lukewarm (Rev. 3:16). We will have this willingness to defend the truth and do battle with its enemies only as it grips our hearts that the gospel is the revelation of the glory of our Saviour-God in Jesus Christ. How shall God be glorified? For the glory of God in the gospel we stand. For this we fight. For this we are willing to die.

And even this, this standing, is not our work, but God’s efficacious grace in us. This is the confession of the Reformation. All is grace, even the confession of grace. “Here I stand,” said Luther, “I can do no other.”

The true church, the church re-formed, is small and weak. Opposed to the gospel and to the Scriptures and, therefore, opposed to her are many, strong, energetic foes. Above all, today as in the 16th century, the foe is the Devil and the gates of hell.

How shall we stand?

We are not fearful; we do not doubt.

*Did we in our own strength confide,
Our striving would be losing;
Were not the right man on our side,
The man of God’s own choosing.
Dost ask Who that may be?
Christ Jesus it is He,
Lord Sabaoth His Name,
From age to age the same,
And He must win the battle.*

(The above article is adapted and edited)

NEWS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dear Worshippers, as the Church Premises reopens for Morning Worship Service please note that there will be strict social distancing measures put in place. Face coverings must be worn in the church at all times out of consideration for all worshippers.

Tithes & Offerings – There will be an offering box at the entrance to the Church Sanctuary for you to place your offerings in.

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

Worship Service Collections: 11/10/20 - £510.00

CHURCH NOTICE

Dear fellow worshippers and friends,

We are pleased to inform the worshippers and visitors of New Life Bible Presbyterian Church that the church will resume holding worship services in the Church premise on Sunday mornings.

The church activities will take place as follows:

- Sunday Morning Worship Service, 11am – Church Premises & Online
- Sunday Afternoon Worship Service, 3pm – Online only
- Friday Prayer Meeting, 7pm – Online only

Changes introduced to the Worship Services held at the church premises

In compliance with the current Government guidelines, the following changes have been introduced:

- Worship services will be limited to 60 minutes duration.
- No singing and offering collection during the worship service. Offerings can be made at the offering box when entering or exiting the church.
- All Bibles and hymn books will be kept and unavailable for use.
- Adopt a 2-metre social distancing seating arrangement (household members may sit with each other).
- Face coverings to be worn in the church **at all times** out of consideration for all worshippers. For young children under the age of 11, the use of face covering is optional. **Please ensure you bring your own face covering.**
- No socialising with anyone outside of your household or support bubble within the Church premises.
- No socialising in a group of more than SIX outside the Church premises.
- No food and drinks will be made available (Fellowship Lunch has been temporarily suspended).
- No access to non-essential areas of the church – this includes the Fellowship Hall and kitchen.
- New movement arrangements to be adopted (please follow directions).
- Temperature measurements will be taken for every worshipper and visitor.
- Worshippers and visitors are required to complete the contact details slip for the NHS Test & Trace service. These details will be kept securely in church for 21 days and then destroyed. They will only be submitted to Test & Trace if a Covid-19 case occurs.
- Alternatively, please download the NHS COVID-19 Mobile App and scan one of the QR codes in the Church entrance to check-in.

To join our online services or to obtain further updates, please visit the church website (www.newlifebpc.org.uk) or call the church manse (020 73280869).

With the Lord's blessing,

John Poh & Jonathan Kim
Task Force Members

RHC032 – Immortal, Invisible, God only Wise

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
Almighty, victorious, Thy great Name we praise.

Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
Nor wanting, nor wasting, Thou rulest in might;
Thy justice, like mountains, high soaring above,
Thy clouds, which are fountains of goodness and love.

To all life Thou givest, to both great and small;
In all life Thou livest, the true life of all;
We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,
And wither and perish, but naught changeth Thee.

Great Father of glory, pure Father of light,
Thine angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight;
All laud we would render, O help us to see
'Tis only the splendour of light hideth Thee.

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
Almighty, victorious, Thy great Name we praise.

Walter Chalmers Smith

RHC046 - A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing;
Our helper He amid the flood, Of mortal ills prevailing.
For still our ancient foe, Doth seek to work us woe -
His craft and powe'r are great, And, armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.

Did we in our own strength confide, Our striving would be losing,
Were not the right Man on our side, The Man of God's own choosing.
Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is He -
Lord Sabaoth His Name, From age to age the same -
And He must win the battle.

And tho this world, with devils filled,
Should threaten to undo us,
We will not fear, for God hath willed, His truth to triumph thru us.
The prince of darkness grim - We tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure, For lo! his doom is sure -
One little word shall fell him.

That word above all earthly pow'rs - No thanks to them - abideth;
The Spirit and the gifts are ours, Thru Him who with us sideth.
Let goods and kindred go, This mortal life also;
The body they may kill: God's truth abideth still -
His kingdom is forever.

Martin Luther, trans. by Frederick H. Hedge