



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. 22

LORD’S DAY 31 MAY 2020

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Morning Service – 11am

Afternoon Service – 2pm

Call to Worship

Psalm 116:1-2

Psalm 145:17-21

Opening Prayer

Jonathan Kim

Jonathan Kim

Responsive Reading

Psalm 62

Scriptural Text

James 2:1-13

Malachi 2:10-16

Pastoral Prayer

Pr Mok Chee Cheong

Pr Mok Chee Cheong

Sermon Message

The Sin of Favouritism

Instability in Families

Benediction

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 10th June. Please speak with Pr Mok for more information.

SHORTER CATECHISM QUESTION 13

Q: Did our first parents continue in the estate wherein they were created?

A: Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from the estate wherein they were created, by sinning against God.

Comments:

Adam and Eve did not keep God’s command. They sought to please themselves instead of seeking to please God, and so they fell from a state of innocence into a state of sin.

Scriptural Reference:

Deuteronomy 30:19, Genesis 3:6

MEMORY VERSE

Last Week

“For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts.”

Malachi 1:11

This Week

“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.”

James 1:12

Next 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

SPIRITUAL DESERTION

Introduction

The opening verse of Psalm 130, *“Out of the depths have I cried to Thee, O God,”* vividly portrays the gut-wrenching cry emanating from a soul deep-stricken with a loss of its sense of God’s presence. John Owen confessed to a young man who was seeking counsel from him that for twenty years he had preached of the one Mediator between God and man without possessing experiential knowledge of what he was proclaiming - until, as he says, “I was brought to the mouth of the grave, and under which my soul was oppressed with horror and darkness.”

The Nature of Spiritual Desertion

This is the soul malady known as spiritual desertion and is a cross known only to the child of God. It refers to the depths into which our sovereign God at times, and according to his good pleasure, allows his people to plunge headlong (Ps. 88). However profound these depths may be, they are not the depths of hell draped with the mist of darkness; there is in them no malice, condemnation, or wrath. Sink as the regenerate soul may into unfathomable depths of dread darkness, it ever finds the Rock of Ages beneath. The unregenerate indeed know of these depths but not in the manner of God’s children. It brings them no nearer to God and even serves to drive them further from God (Rev. 16:9).

The Cause of Spiritual Desertion

The question, however, that arises deep within the heart of every believer is, “Why Have I fallen into this God-forsaken pit? Has God finally rejected me and turned His face?” There is an acute loss of the sense of God’s love in which the soul had previously delighted (Rom. 8:15; 1 Peter 1:8). But rest assured it is God who, in His fatherly way, sends and governs these abandonments.

The most common cause for this soul distress arises from the existence, power, and ever deceiving remnants of indwelling sin in the regenerate. The believer may and must have the abiding assurance that one is the Holy Spirit renews the soul in the cleansing from sin, he is a new creature in Christ. But the same Holy Spirit never uproots the principle and root of sin from his heart; it will remain as plague to the end (Rom. 7:24). We stand painfully amazed as the plough of the Spirit tears through new areas of corruption within the heart, revealing once more the depths of corruption contained therein. You, who have fled to Christ for refuge, never imagine that your warfare is over.

Then there are also those outbreaks of sin appearing as the fruit of sin’s baneful presence within, bringing with them the grievous consequence of conscious loss of communion with God. This can be the experience of even the most mature believer (Ps. 51). Who can fully describe the depth of sorrow occasioned by the awareness of willful departure from the Lord, such as Peter when he went out and “wept bitterly”?

Times of perceived spiritual decision also come upon those who are plunged into mental affliction. Many gracious souls have been immersed in the dread night of depression where no light is visible on any side. Octavius Winslow wrote, "Through many a dark, starless night the spiritual voyager ploughs through the ocean to the desired haven where he would be." And then, because mind and body are so intimately connected, so too the onset of debilitating physical illness can bring an intense season of night upon the soul.

Yet if ever there is a place where the gentleness and sympathy of Christ is abundantly present, it is beside the one who is suffering mental torment and intense physical affliction (Isa. 42:3). With great patience and concern, He draws near to His own who have been plunged into the dark hole of melancholy. He remembers that we are but dust, and from no heart in the entire universe does such loving compassion, tenderness, and sympathy flow as that from the heart of Christ (Ps. 103:13-14).

Conclusion

Isaiah 50:10 gives this counsel, *"Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God."* In the darkness, walk by faith and not by sight.

- PM (adapted)