



# 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. 25 No. 42

**LORD’S DAY 17 OCTOBER 2021**

## ORDER OF WORSHIP

### *Morning Service – 11am*

### *Afternoon Service – 3pm*

*Prelude*

*The Lord Is in His Holy Temple*

*Call to Worship*

Psalm 111:1-3 & 10

Psalm 43:3-5

*Opening Prayer*

Pr Mok Chee Cheong

Jonathan Kim

*Opening Hymn \**

RHC 87 – “I Know Whom I Have Believed”

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*Responsive Reading*

Psalm 124

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*Second Hymn*

*Psalm 124 1<sup>st</sup> Version*  
(to the tune of Ballerma, RHC 130)

*Scriptural Text*

Ecclesiastes 6:10-12

John 5:6

*Pastoral Prayer*

Pr Mok Chee Cheong

Pr Mok Chee Cheong

*Sermon Message*

*The Certainties and Uncertainties of Life*

*A Pertinent and Necessary Question*

*Closing Hymn \**

RHC 352 – “All The Way My Saviour Leads Me”

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*Benediction/3-Fold*

Pr Mok Chee Cheong

Pr Mok Chee Cheong

*Amen \**

*Postlude*

*The Lord Bless You*

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\* Congregation Stands

## SHORTER CATECHISM QUESTION 85

**Q: What doth God require of us, that we may escape his wrath and curse due to us for sin?**

*A: To escape the wrath and curse of God due to us for sin, God requireth of us FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST – REPENTANCE UNTO LIFE – with the diligent use of all the OUTWARD MEANS whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of Redemption.*

Comments:

The Law of God says, ‘Do this and live’, or ‘Do it not and die’. And man cannot do it. He breaks the Law daily in spite of his utmost efforts. But God is merciful, and has provided a way by which we may be saved. That way is here told us. It consists in faith and repentance, which are *inward* means of salvation, with the diligent use of all the *outward* means hereafter to be told.

Scriptural Reference:

Mark 1:15, Acts 20:21

## MEMORY VERSE

### Last Week

*“I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him.”*

**Ecclesiastes 3:14**

### This Week

*“But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”*

**John 4:14**

### Next Week

*“For in the multitude of dreams and many words there are also divers vanities: but fear thou God.”*

**Ecclesiastes 5:7**

# CONSCIENCE IS FRAGILE: HANDLE WITH CARE

The human mind is fragile as well as powerful and complex. The human spirit can be resilient but may also be frail in the face of countless intricate emotions, memories, doubts and fears. Conscience is an especially delicate part of who we are. God has given it to us as a witness to His righteous requirements. Sin has disordered it but further damages it. Our moral compass is easily warped by sin's magnetic force. The Bible tells us that conscience can be defiled, wounded and seared. Through handling conscience carelessly we can do untold damage to ourselves. Grace, however, can heal and restore.

Samuel Rutherford adores the great wisdom of God in creating the world which is best seen in creating so rare a thing as the soul. He says that the most intricate part of the soul is the conscience which he describes as "that lump of divinity" because it is "like a beam of God". "Conscience is the gold of the man".

*Conscience is placed in the soul as God's own deputy and God's notary [official recorder]. There is nothing passes in our life, good or evil, which conscience notes not down with an indelible character—conscience writes all men's iniquities as the sin of Judah was written (Jeremiah 17:1) with a pen of iron and with the point of a diamond. Conscience...keeps a daily diary of everything that occurs in the whole course of our life, and then conscience is as a thousand witnesses: it's an eye-witness and a pen-witness, bringing testimony from the authentic registers and records of the court of conscience.*

Samuel Rutherford describes conscience in many memorable ways. It may be like a delicate glass object that is easily broken. Alternatively, it may be like a boat that has a leak below the water-line that is difficult to identify and mend. Perhaps they do not realise that the water on the bottom of their ship is from a leak rather than the spray. In one of his letters he gives the following caution:

*keep the conscience whole without a crack! If there be a hole in it, so that it take in water at a leak, it will with difficulty mend again. It is a dainty, delicate creature, and a rare piece of the workmanship of your Maker; and therefore deal gently with it, and keep it entire.*

He speaks of a pure conscience as one that is good having been purged and washed (Hebrews 10:2). The great spot of guiltiness has been taken away, and it is clear, pure, terse, like a crystal glass (1 Timothy 1:5). It is also good and honest, or beautiful and fair. A good conscience is a comely, resplendent, lovely thing (Hebrews 13:18). Conscience when it is working properly is sensitive and easily broken. If we ignore it we can become unbreakably hardened.

*some conscience...is made of glass and is easily broken, and some of iron and brass, lay hell on it, let Christ say to Judas in his face, he shall betray his master and he has a devil, yet his conscience does not crow before daylight to waken him.*

The conscience is a tender thing, says Rutherford and it can either be our best friend or our worst enemy. Who can bear a wounded spirit (Proverbs 18:4)?

*Blessed is the man who follows the injunctions, dictates, prohibitions and determinations of a good and right-informed conscience, and hearkens to all its incitements. Oh that every man would remember how dangerous a thing it is to resist the checks of conscience, for in so doing we fight not only against our own light, but against the light of the Holy Spirit!*

Rutherford wrote an extended account of one man whose conscience had been hardened but later became inflamed with guilt. Aged only 35, John Gordon must now come to terms with a terminal illness and a burden of guilt. This is the powerful account of a man with a troubled conscience being counselled in the face of death. In these conversations, Samuel Rutherford lovingly and faithfully administers the conviction and comfort the young nobleman needs. True peace and assurance are carefully distinguished from false hope. It is valuable for all of us but especially those nearing eternity and those who seek to give them spiritual help.

This book has now been reprinted as *Conversations with a Dying Man*. It is highly valuable and recommended. This was a man who wanted to have the best of this world but had to compromise in order to get worldly status. His backsliding became an unbearable burden on his conscience in the face of death, however.

John Gordon, Viscount of Kenmure speaks of “the fearful wrestlings of my conscience...when I seemed to be glad and joyful before men”. He had pretended to be ill in order to avoid standing out clearly in the interests of Christ’s cause. This would have involved opposing the king in Parliament. He later acknowledge with the most bitter sorrow, “I deserted the Parliament for fear of incurring the indignation of my prince, and the loss of further honour, which I certainly expected”. He confessed:

*I have found the weight of the Lord’s hand upon me for not giving testimony for the Lord my God, when I had occasion once in my life at the last parliament. For this foul fault, how fierce have I felt the wrath of the Lord my God! My soul hath raged and roared: I have been ripped up [grieved] to the heart...Would to God I had such an occasion again to testify my love to the Lord! For all the earth should I not do as I have done, tell them...Woe, woe be to honours or any thing else bought with the loss of peace of conscience and God’s favour!*

Rutherford must have many conversations with him in order to bring him to true repentance. Sometimes he must rebuke him as well as administer comfort. His faithful pastoral care brings the conscience of John Gordon from despair to joy unspeakable. He died “sweetly and holily, and his end was peace”. Rutherford concludes that the “way of impiety never had, nor shall have, good success...there is no delight [comparable to] the delight of a good conscience: let that bird in the breast be always kept singing”.

Rutherford believed it was necessary to record such “heavy pangs of conscience and torment of mind” to show what can happen when we go against conscience. We can learn much and in particular “be warned by his example” not to forsake God’s cause when we have opportunity. We are especially “never to wrong their conscience, which is a tender piece [thing], and must not be touched”.

*We take nothing to the grave with us, but a good or evil conscience.*

**Samuel Rutherford** (c. 1600 – 1661) was one of the foremost Scottish theologians and apologists for Presbyterianism in the seventeenth century, playing a major role in formulating the Westminster Standards at the Westminster Assembly. He is best known for his many devotional letters and *Lex, Rex*—his seminal work on political sovereignty. (*Reformation Scotland*).

## 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.**

**For the time being, the 3:00pm Afternoon Worship Service will still be conducted online.**

If you require the link to our online zoom services, or have any questions or require further clarity, please call the church manse, or email us at admin 'at' newlifebpc.org.uk.

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

**Worship Service Collections: 03/10/21 - £356.00**

**Church Maintenance Fund Total: £7,690.50**

## 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

Provided that there is no worsening of the pandemic in London, we hope to start holding the Afternoon Worship Service and Fortnightly Bible Study within the church premises in the coming months.

### Changes introduced to the Worship Services held at the church premises

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

- Singing will be allowed during the Morning Worship Service
- No offering collection during the worship service. Offerings can be made at the offering box when entering or exiting the church.
- 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 food and drinks will be made available (Fellowship Lunch has been temporarily suspended).
- After Morning Worship Service, you may gather for fellowship inside or outside of the Church premises, but please adhere to social distancing.
- 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](http://www.newlifebpc.org.uk)) or call the church manse (020 73280869).

With the Lord's blessing,

John Poh & Jonathan Kim  
Task Force Members