



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. 43

LORD'S DAY 24 OCTOBER 2021

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Morning Service – 11am

Prelude

Call to Worship

Opening Prayer

Opening Hymn *

Responsive Reading

Second Hymn

Scriptural Text

Pastoral Prayer

Sermon Message

Closing Hymn *

Benediction/3-Fold Amen *

Postlude

* Congregation Stands

Afternoon Service – 3pm

The Lord Is in His Holy Temple

1 John 1:7

John Poh

John 6:17

Pr Mok Chee Cheong

Darkness Without Christ

Pr Mok Chee Cheong

SHORTER CATECHISM QUESTION 85

Q: What is Faith in Jesus Christ?

A: *Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we RECEIVE and REST UPON HIM ALONE for salvation, as he is offered to us in the gospel.*

Comments:

Grace means undeserved favour or kindness. A saving grace means an act of God's favour ending in salvation. Faith is such a grace. And it is here said to consist in receiving Christ – that is, in believing what is said of him in the Bible, and resting upon him – that is, trusting our souls to him as our Saviour. We rest on him *alone*, and not in anything we may or can do. Our plea is, *Christ only*.

Scriptural Reference:

John 3:16, Acts 4:12

MEMORY VERSE

Last 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

This Week

"For in the multitude of dreams and many words there are also divers vanities: but fear thou God."
Ecclesiastes 5:7

Next Week

"And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."
John 6:35

5 REASONS WE NEED TO REMEMBER THE REFORMATION

In commemoration of the 16th century Reformation (Oct 31, 1517), I thought it necessary to adapt the below article to remind us of the most tremendous significance for the true church of Jesus Christ. It was the most important act of God upon the church for good from the death of the apostles to the present time.

As evangelical Christians, we are children of the Reformation. Its marks are all over us. In fact, we live today in Christ, even in the 21st century context, because the gospel was rediscovered some 504 years ago in Europe. The reason is simple:

At its heart, the Reformation was about the recovery of the gospel. And it is worth remembering. Here are some reasons why:

1. THE REFORMATION REMINDS US THAT THE CHURCH IS BUILT UPON THE GOSPEL, NOT VICE-VERSA

History will testify that Luther's original intention was to call the Roman Catholic Church back to gospel fidelity, not to start a counter-Catholic church revolution that resulted in the division of that church. But the result was the Protestant Reformation, a stark reminder that no single church or denomination is greater than the gospel. We would do well to remember this today. The Reformation teaches us from experience what Revelation 2-3 makes explicitly clear: The Lord does not promise perpetuity or "success" to any particular local church or denomination – particularly if it is not faithful.

2. THE REFORMATION REMINDS US THAT THE GOSPEL CAN BE LOST

I often read the story of Josiah's discovery of the Law of God (2 Kings 22:8-20) with some incredulity. How is it possible that God's chosen people could lose the Book of the Law? How is it possible for there to be so much neglect of God's word amongst his people that the very Law of God has to be rediscovered? I then often (smugly) dismiss them as being not like me, never actually praying the prayer of the self-justifying Pharisee, but sharing more in common with him than the humble tax collector (Luke 18:9-14). The Reformation warns us against such smugness and teaches us that the church, with all of its New Covenant advantages, must be vigilant because the very gospel of grace can be effectively lost to the church through distortion and neglect. This could happen in any number of ways (e.g., doctrinal distortion, lack of faith, giving priority to something other than the proclamation of the gospel in missions, etc.). The Reformation teaches us that unless we are vigilant, we will lose the very thing that matters most.

3. THE REFORMATION REMINDS US THAT CONFUSION OVER THE GOSPEL WILL ULTIMATELY MANIFEST ITSELF IN ABUSIVE PRACTICES

The gospel is always primary. The church is built upon the good news of Jesus Christ's life, death, and resurrection. The church's mission is to proclaim that good news to the nations. Because the gospel is vital to the Church's essence and mission, distortion of the gospel will inevitably result in distortion of the church and its practices – even those practices ordained by the Lord for the maintenance of his body. In the case of the

Reformation, the practices of church discipline, baptism, and Lord's Supper had lost their gospel moorings, resulting in their actually becoming instruments of abuse, rather than instruments of grace. This is evident in Luther's earliest protest of the Roman Catholic sale of indulgences. The practice of selling pardons for sin did not spring up in *ex nihilo* fashion, but was accepted within the Roman Catholic hierarchy because it had long since abandoned the gospel. False prophets of our day are questioning the reality of the wrath of God, the coherence of substitutionary atonement, and the need for conscious faith in Christ. The Reformation reminds us that maintaining the purity of the gospel matters. Compromising on these essential matters will not only lead to destruction, but will lead us down a path that will hurt every step of the way.

4. THE REFORMATION REMINDS US THAT THE GOSPEL IS WORTH DEFENDING, EVEN AT GREAT COST

The Reformers were convinced that if the properly-translated Word of God could be placed in the hands of the people, the power of the gospel would be unleashed in the land and reformation and revival would be the result. But as we all know their work did not come easy. I wake on Sunday mornings, enjoy my morning reading of the Word of God and then gather with my local Church to pray the Word, see the Word in the ordinances, sing the Word, and hear the preaching of God's Word. Assembling with my brothers and sisters in Christ every Sunday, where my largest concern is usually nothing more than arriving on time and finding a parking spot, is a tremendous blessing that has not been uniformly shared across Church history. For most of the sixteenth century, simply possessing an English Translation of the Bible was punishable by death. During Reformation week, I am caused to remember the convictions and sacrifices of such godly men as William Tyndale, Martin Luther, John Calvin, Huldrych Zwingli, and Martin Bucer. They testified through their faithful lives, hardships and even deaths that the gospel is worth defending, at any cost. I am encouraged by their example in a day and society that cares so little for the things of God and that seeks to vilify faithful proclamation of Jesus Christ as Lord. The gate of religious pluralism is wide and the way is easy for those who bow to the spirit of the age and preach a message that is governed more by tolerance and political correctness than biblical fidelity. The gate is narrow and the way is hard that preaches and lives the gospel. The Reformers faithfully walked that difficult path before us, and point us to the One who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

5. THE REFORMATION REMINDS US OF CHRIST'S FAITHFULNESS TO PRESERVE HIS CHURCH

The Reformers were raised up during one of the most spiritually bleak periods in the history of the church. Even many who claimed to shepherd the people of God could not perceive the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ. Yet in the midst of that dark time, Jesus Christ was faithful to his promise to build his church. Through the Protestant Reformation, the gospel spread across Europe. We live today in an equally dark world, one that shamefully glories in grotesque behaviours that ought to make even the hardest sinner blush. But God is able to make light shine in the darkest places. The Reformation reminds me of this, and encourages me to be faithful.

*adapted and edited from Dr Todd Miles
(<https://transformedbog.westernseminary.edu/author/tmiles/>)*

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.

Please note that clocks go back 1 hour next Sunday, 31st October at 2am.

Next Sunday (31st Oct) is Reformation Sunday, in commemoration of the 16th century Reformation.

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: 10/10/21 - £871.00

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:

- 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) or call the church manse (020 73280869).

With the Lord's blessing,

John Poh & Jonathan Kim, Task Force Members