



NEW LIFE

BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

44 Salusbury Road, London NW6 6NN

Charity No. 1060655

Tel: 020 7328 0869 (Manse)

Email: newlifebplondon@yahoo.co.uk

Website: www.newlifebpc.org.uk

Supervisory Pastor: Rev Lim Chee Boon

Resident Minister: Pr Mok Chee Cheong

Email: pastor@newlifebpc.org.uk

“For the Word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Rev 1:9)

Vol. 25 No. 09

LORD’S DAY 28 FEBRUARY 2021

ORDER OF WORSHIP

	<i>Morning Service – 11am</i>	<i>Afternoon Service – 3pm</i>
<i>Call to Worship</i>	Psalm 8	Psalm 48:1-2
<i>Opening Prayer</i>	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	John Poh
<i>Opening Hymn</i>	<i>Love Divine, All Loves Excelling</i>	---
<i>Responsive Reading</i>	Psalm 101	---
<i>Second Hymn</i>	<i>Psalm 101 verse 1-4 (to the tune of St. Theodulph)</i>	
<i>Scriptural Text</i>	Hebrews 13:12-16	Esther 9:1
<i>Pastoral Prayer</i>	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	Pr Mok Chee Cheong
<i>Sermon Message</i>	<i>We Have No Continuing City Here</i>	<i>Subjugation of God’s Enemy, Safety for God’s People</i>
<i>Closing Hymn</i>	<i>Jerusalem the Golden</i>	---
<i>Benediction</i>	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	Pr Mok Chee Cheong

SHORTER CATECHISM QUESTION 52

Q: What are the reasons annexed to the Second Commandment?

A: The reasons annexed to the Second Commandment are, God’s sovereignty over us, his propriety in us, and the zeal he hath to his own worship.

Comments:

The special reasons added why we should observe this commandment are: 1. God is our Sovereign (I, the Lord); 2. God is our owner (thy God); 3. God is zealous for his own worship (am a jealous God).

Scriptural Reference:

Psalm 95:3, Exodus 34:14

MEMORY VERSE

Last Week	This Week	Next Week
<i>“The king’s heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.”</i> Proverbs 21:1	<i>“By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.”</i> Hebrews 13:15	<i>“For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.”</i> 1 Timothy 6:7-8

THE CROSS BEARING DISCIPLE

Introduction

Christian Discipleship - Fulfilling the Great Commission

There is a neglected topic today and it is on total surrender and self-denial of the Christian in following Christ. Christian discipleship was first introduced in the Great Commission. After the resurrection and before He ascended into heaven, Jesus appeared to His disciples and delivered the famous calling to "make disciples" in the original Greek (i.e. translated as teach in the KJV) known as The Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20.

Christian discipleship continued to grow when the followers of Jesus gathered in Jerusalem and Peter outlined criteria for selecting a twelfth disciple to replace Judas Iscariot. (Acts 1:21-22). The Scripture says they drew lots and the lot fell on Matthias. These men, who had previously been disciples, or followers of Jesus, were now to become apostles, or messengers. Their intention was to spread the Word, and beginning with Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came and indwelt them as they did in the Old Testament (see Acts 1 and 2).

Who is a true disciple of Christ? According to one definition, a disciple is one who is a follower of a master, spiritual teacher, religious leader, or a guru and who lives by the teachings and lifestyle of his master. He wants to have the same principles and practices like his master. The Word used for 'Disciple' in Greek ('mathetes', see BAGD) refers generally to a committed student, pupil, or apprentice.

How then can one become the disciple of Jesus? The acceptance of salvation by Christ is the first step in following Jesus Christ and the beginning of a Christian discipleship journey. Jesus himself demonstrated clear conditions for being his disciples. Before we focus on the conditions of discipleship, we need to know what it is not! Discipleship is not an easy road nor is it the way to instant success and financial prosperity from God. It is not just going to worship in church on Sunday or doing some good works for God. It is not an easy-going spiritual compromise, and certainly not a free ticket from God to do whatever we like!

AW Pink, the noted 20th century reformed pastor and author had said well below concerning a disciple:

"Christ has left us an example that we should follow His steps. The obedience of Christ should be the obedience of the Christian - voluntary, not compulsory - voluntary, continuous, faithful, without any reserve, unto death. The cross then stands for obedience, consecration, surrender, a life placed at the disposal of God. "If any man will come after Me, let him take up his cross and follow Me" and "Whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after Me, cannot be My disciple." In other words, dear friends, the cross stands for the principle of discipleship, our life being actuated by the same principle that Christ's was. He came here and He pleased not Himself: no more must I. He made Himself of no reputation: so must I. He went about doing good: so should I. He came not to be ministered unto but to minister: so should we. He became obedient unto death, even the death on the cross. That is what the cross stands for: First, the reproach of the world because we have antagonised it, raised its ire by separating ourselves from it, and are walking on a different plane, and through being actuated by different principles from those by which it walks. Second, a life sacrificed unto God laid down in devotion to Him."

Forsake All and Follow Christ (Luke 14:33)

One important condition that Jesus gives of an example is that "whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all ... cannot be my disciple." It shares the same context as the condition discussed above (Lk 14:27) and is therefore addressed to believers. Following the illustrations of a builder and of a king who did not make the necessary provision to finish their commitments, this condition demands that a believer commit or surrender whatever possessions are necessary in order for him to follow God's will. The rich young ruler learnt this: Salvation needs a willingness to forsake all. We do have to be willing to forsake all (Lk 14:33), meaning we must not cling to anything that takes precedence or priority over Christ. A true disciple must be able to surrender himself totally to the Lord and follow Him. Salvation will lead to self-denial, service, devotion, and true surrender to the Lord. We are to abide in His Word and rely on Him fully and repent of our sins and obey His Word (Jn 8:30-31).

This passage is usually thought to be a condition of discipleship spoken to unbelievers. Speaking of Jesus' ministry, John writes, "As he spake these words, many believed on him. Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, if ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed." This section of discourse is addressed to those who believe, and yet do not believe. Clearly they are inclined to think that what Jesus said was true. But they were not prepared to yield Him the absolute allegiance that saving trust in Him implies. A good example of so-called disciples who failed is found in Luke 9:57-62 who came to seek the Lord with other motives.

Dr. Hudson Taylor, the Founder of China Inland Mission (OMF today) remarked here on the practice of self-denial:

"Self-denial surely means something far greater than some slight and insignificant lessening of our self-indulgences; When Peter denied CHRIST, he utterly disowned Him and disallowed His claims. In this way we are called to deny self, and to do it daily, if we would be CHRIST'S disciples indeed. "I don't like this," or "I do like that," must not be allowed; the only question must daily be, What would JESUS like? And His mind and will, once ascertained, must unhesitatingly be carried out. As believers, we claim to have been crucified together with CHRIST; and Paul understood this, not merely imputatively but practically. That cross put the world to death as regards Paul, and put Paul to death as regards the world. To the Apostle nothing could have been more practical. He does not say, "I take up my cross daily," in the light, modern sense of the expression; he puts it rather as dying daily; and therefore, as one "in deaths off", he was never surprised, or stumbled by any hardship or danger involved in his work."

There are those who did not pass the discipleship test including Judas (Lk 22:3), Ananias and Sapphira (Act 5:1-11) and Demas as well (2 Tim 4:10).

The Heart of Discipleship

The heart of discipleship is a total commitment of a child of God to Jesus Christ. That means that one is willing to publicly identify with Him no matter what that cost. That means one must be willing to face a hostile world boldly to acknowledge Jesus as Lord and master facing even persecution in the early days. Peter denied Christ but repented. We have our weaknesses, but a moment of failure does not invalidate the disciple's credentials. All of us may have experienced fear or failure, but it is our desire to be faithful and keep our relationship with Christ, to stand up for Christ and, to proclaim the gospel of life. And if we willingly affirm our faith in Christ before men, He will also affirm us as well. If we are willing to take up the cross and follow Him, He will save us to the uttermost.

Those who consistently deny the Lord by silence, by ungodly living, by blasphemous words will soon fall away and it can be seen that they are not God's genuine disciples at all (1 Jn 2:19)

That public Confession of Faith before God and men (it may mean the step of water baptism for some to do this publicly) is important. Roman 10:9-10 says, 'That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.' If someone denies Christ, in practice (though they may not say it in words), this will show that the characteristic of a true disciple is not evidenced in that life. Pray that God will give us the heart of a true disciple. A true disciple has a heart to love Him, a heart to want to worship and serve Him, a heart to want to share the gospel that others may be saved.

Secondly, a disciple not only confesses before men his Lord, but prefers Christ over all others Matthew 6:33-34 says, 'But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.' We are not to love anyone or anything (i.e. pets, work, money, education) including our human father or mother more than the Lord. Christ is to be preeminent in the life of a true disciple.

Cross Bearing

In the first century, a cross meant suffering shame and death. We are to forsake everything, even our own comfort and life. 'He that findeth his life shall lose it.' A transformed life is bound by God's gracious transforming power to love and serve Christ. You will lose your soul if you neglect God, if you are not a true disciple. But the one who is willing to lose his life for His sake gives evidence that he has a changed life that is supernatural, for God has transformed us and put His Spirit within us. Are we willing to serve with sacrifice and even to die for Christ one day?

Genuine disciples do not shrink back from the fear of death or other dangers. Hebrews 11:38-41 talks about men who were worthy disciples. They wandered in deserts, mountains, caves and holes in the ground. And all these have passed the test and gained divine approval through their faith, through the demonstration of a faithful discipleship. That is the mark of a genuine disciple of Christ.

Those faithful men went through much testings, trials and tribulations. They conquered and have obtained the precious promises. Many others were tortured and suffered faithfully without the fear of man but only God (Heb 11:32-40). This is true discipleship in action.

John Calvin, the 16th century reformer, commented here aptly on Matthew 10:37-42:

“He who doth not take up his cross. From particular cases he proceeds to general views and informs us that we cannot be reckoned his disciples unless we are prepared to endure many afflictions. If we are vexed and tormented by the thought, that the gospel should set us at variance with our father, or our wife, or our children, let us remember this condition, that Christ subjects all his disciples to the cross. Yet let us also bear in mind this consolation, that, in bearing the cross, we are the companions of Christ, which will speedily have the effect of allaying all its bitterness. The reprobates are not less firmly bound to their cross and cannot with their most violent struggles shake it off; but as to those who are out of Christ the cross is accursed, a mournful end awaits them. Let us therefore learn to connect these two things that believers must bear the cross in order to follow their Master; that is, in order to conform to his example, and to abide by his footsteps like faithful companions.”

The Relationship between Discipleship and Salvation

There is a clear relationship between committed discipleship and salvation. This relationship between salvation by the sovereign will of God and discipleship is as follows:

Salvation is a gracious free gift; true discipleship is costly and requires us to carry our own Cross while on earth.

Salvation involves the sovereign will of God in redemption and reconciliation; discipleship involves the surrender of the redeemed soul's will to God.

Salvation's condition is "believe in the Lord and repent of our sins"; discipleship includes to abide, obey, love, deny oneself, take up the cross, deny self and follow Christ.

Salvation is a new birth; discipleship is a life-long continuous growth of salvation.

Salvation is founded on Christ's finished atoning work on the Cross; discipleship is a believer carrying his or her cross for Christ after he or she is saved. Discipleship is an obedient response to Christ's life and a combat against sin and a walk in holiness.

Salvation leads to eternal destiny in heaven; and faithful discipleship can lead to eternal and temporal rewards.

Salvation is by faith; discipleship is living an obedient life of works to Christ after one is regenerate and justified.

The sequence for discipleship is important. It is justification before sanctification, salvation before discipleship, or faith before commitment is clearly taught in the Bible. Consider the following verse on commitment to Christ (e.g. Rom 12:1; Eph 4:1; Col 2:6). The Pauline teaching of Titus 2:11-15 is meaningful here as it shows how true grace will lead to the believer's holiness and sanctification. These passages show that true commitment self-denial and obedience will follow true saving grace.

We need a true self-appraisal and examination of ourselves to see if we are indeed true disciples of Christ.

Here is a meaningful poem for us to ponder as we close our study on this subject.

What shall I Render unto the Lord? (Psalm 116:12-14)

What shall I render, Lord, to Thee
For all Thy benefits toward me?
For life and every earthly good,
For raiment, shelter, daily food;
For light and Truth, for peace and love,
For heavenly wisdom from above?
How great Thy bounties unto me!
What have I that is not from Thee?
For all these benefits toward me,
What shall I render, Lord, to Thee?
The Cup Thy hand of Love hath poured,
I'll humbly take, most gracious Lord,
And call upon Thy holy name
To help me Thy great Plan proclaim;
I'll spend my days in ceaseless praise,

And tell abroad Thy wondrous ways!
"Salvation's Cup" of suffering, too
Of suffering with God's chosen few,
Dear Lord, I'll drink of this, Thy Cup,
And smiling through my tears, look up
A mingled Cup of grief and joy,
Of blessedness without alloy,
Of Love and fellowship Divine,
A foretaste of the Kingdom-wine!
That all, dear Lord, may know and see
Thy countless benefits toward me,
Before Thy congregation, now,
I'll pay my consecration Vow;
And in Thy strength, supplied each day,
I'll strive to walk the narrow way
That leads to rest and God and Thee,
And blissful immortality!

GERTRUDE W. SEIBERT.

Conclusion

Cross bearing Discipleship is taught in the Gospels and is directed at challenging believers to live lives of obedience, devotion, and self-denial. Discipleship is indeed costly, but the cost is needful in response to the grace received at salvation. As a believer understands the sacrifice of God for his redemption, he will want to respond to the grace given with a true commitment. He learns to also sacrifice, obey, deny himself, and seek to be more like the Saviour who saves him. Salvation is by grace; but true discipleship is costly. Remember that salvation is costly because Jesus Christ our Lord paid the price with His life, for the sinner's redemption. He would have us to follow Him in the same manner with self-denial, sacrifice, service, and selfless surrender. Let us do so and be true disciples of Christ today.

adapted from Ps. Jack Sin, *Sovereign Hope BP Church, Singapore*

NEWS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dear fellow worshippers and friends,

The government has announced that London has entered the Tier 4 category for Covid-19 restrictions. Whilst places of worship are able to stay open, the Church Committee has decided to close the Church to safeguard the wellbeing of the congregation.

Both Morning and Afternoon Worship Service will be conducted online.

God willing we will resume holding morning worship services on Sunday, 14th March 2021.

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.

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 – 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.