



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. 26 No. 15

LORD’S DAY 10 APRIL 2022

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Morning Service – 11am

Afternoon Service – 3pm

Prelude

The Lord Is in His Holy Temple

Call to Worship

Psalm 18:1-3

Psalm 29:1-2 & 11

Opening Prayer

Pr Mok Chee Cheong

Pr Mok Chee Cheong

*Opening Hymn **

Insert – “Jesus, Where’er Your People Meet”

RHC 4 – “Love Divine, All Love Excelling”

Responsive Reading

Psalm 149

*Second Hymn **

Psalm 149 verses 1-5
(to the tune of Azmon, RHC 61)

Scriptural Text

1 Peter 1:3-5

Proverbs 1:7

Pastoral Prayer

Pr Mok Chee Cheong

Pr Mok Chee Cheong

Sermon Message

Consolation for the Elect

True Wisdom Begins with Fearing God

*Closing Hymn **

RHC 330 – “How Firm a foundation, ye Saints”

RHC 32 – “Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise”

*Benediction/3-Fold Amen **

Pr Mok Chee Cheong

Pr Mok Chee Cheong

Postlude

The Lord Bless You

* Congregation Stands

THE LORD IS IN HIS HOLY TEMPLE

The Lord is in His holy temple,
The Lord is in His holy temple:
Let all the earth keep silence,
Let all the earth keep silence before Him -
Keep silence, keep silence before Him. Amen.

THE LORD BLESS YOU

The Lord bless you and keep you;
The Lord lift His countenance upon you,
and give you peace, and give you peace;
The Lord make His face to shine upon you,
And be gracious unto you, be gracious,
The Lord be gracious, gracious unto you. Amen.

SHORTER CATECHISM QUESTION 3

Q: What do the scriptures principally teach?

A: The scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man.

Comments:

In order to attain the chief end of our life, the two things most important for us to know are: *What we are to believe*, and *What we are to do*. These two things the Bible explains to us very fully. It tells us *what God is*, and *has done for us*, and also *what he requires us to do*, in order that it may be well with us now and hereafter.

Scriptural Reference:

John 5:39, Ecclesiastes 12:13

YOU ARE WHAT YOU DIGEST (SPIRITUALLY)

INTRODUCTION

You are not what you eat but rather what you digest. If we merely consume food without digesting it properly or at all it will fail to do us good. If this is true in physical terms it is even more so in spiritual things. We can consume a lot of bible reading by hurriedly squeezing it into our schedule. We hear sermons on a regular basis. We read and listen to lots of Christian content. But it doesn't seem to register a significant impact on our hearts and lives. Not equivalent to the time invested at any rate. Why is that? Simply because we don't digest what we consume. What do we mean by spiritual digestion?

It's something that few people speak about these days, yet it's vital for our spiritual growth. It's called meditation and the Bible speaks about it often. It's not emptying our minds as false methods of meditation suggest. Rather it is filling our mind with biblical truths and getting the benefit from them by taking the time to apply them to ourselves.

God's Word is life and health to us (Proverbs 4:22) and we must feed on it (Hebrews 5:12-14; 1 Peter 2:2; Jeremiah 3:15). Yet, too often before we get a chance to chew and digest our spiritual food we are distracted by something that takes our attention or diverted by something that seems important. We have chronic spiritual indigestion. As John Ball put it, "Without meditation, truths are devoured, not digested." Richard Baxter observed people who could go from sermon to sermon, "are never weary of hearing or reading, and yet have such languishing, starved souls, I know no truer or greater cause than their...neglect of meditation.: They have "appetite, but no digestion."

Baxter put it in quite a striking way: "I think that as a man is but half an hour in chewing and taking into his stomach that meat which he must have seven or eight hours at least to digest; so a man may take into his understanding and memory more truth in one hour than he is able well to digest in many. A man may eat too much, but he cannot digest too well." He doesn't mean mere intellectual engagement with Scripture.

The stomach must prepare the food for the liver and spleen, which prepare for the heart and brain, and so the understanding must take in truths, and prepare them for the will, and it must receive them, and commend them to the affections. While truth is but a speculation swimming in the brain, the soul has not received it, nor taken hold of it. This is the great task in hand, to get these truths from your head to your heart.

It is not just what we eat and how we eat it: our lifestyle and overall condition also affect our digestion. The same is true spiritually. Just as physical failure to digest can cause discomfort, lead to medical complications, disorders and serious disease — spiritual indigestion is particularly damaging.

Meditating on Scripture helps us apply ourselves to the Word with delight and also apply it to ourselves thoroughly. Just as food well digested gives the necessary nutrients and energy to the body, so meditating on the Word absorbs it into our hearts, life and experience so that we practice it. Nathaniel Ranew emphasised that meditation "is like the assimilating or digestion power, by helping to concoct spiritual food and turn it into spiritual nourishment...Meditation highly conduces to this spiritual digestion by its pondering...reasons and incentives as work the heart into compliance and obedience." Edmund Calamy explains this principle further in the following updated extract from his book *The Art of Divine Meditation*.

1. DIGESTING THE THINGS OF HEAVEN

This holy meditation is dwelling and abiding on things that are holy. It is not only knowing God and about Christ but dwelling on the things we know. As the bee dwells and abides on the flower to suck out all the sweetness that is in the flower; so we must suck out all the sweetness we can in the things we meditate on.

To meditate is to continue and fix ourselves and our hearts on the things we know. Scripture calls meditation holy musing (Psalm 39:3). It is to commune with our own hearts (Psalm 4:4). It is both communing and consulting with our own hearts or “bethinking” ourselves (as in 1 Kings 8:47). The Hebrew word in 1 Kings 8:47 is: if they will bring back to their hearts or reflect on themselves. Meditation is a reflecting act of the soul by which the soul is carried back to itself and considers all the things that it knows.

Meditation is an inward, spiritual act of the soul by which it looks back on itself and considers all the things that concern its everlasting happiness.

You read in Leviticus 11 of the clean beasts and the unclean beasts. The clean beasts that they were to eat were those that chewed the cud. The unclean beasts were those that did not chew the cud. A meditating Christian is one that chews the cud — chews on the truths of Jesus Christ. They do not only hear good things, but when they have heard them, they chew them over and ruminate on them. This is so that they may be better for digestion and spiritual benefit. An unclean Christian is one that does not chew the cud, does not ruminate and ponder the things of heaven.

2. DIGESTING SERMONS

The reason why all the sermons we hear do not do us more good is lack of divine meditation. It is the same with sermons as it is with food. It is not having food on your table which will feed you, you must eat it. You must not only eat it but digest it, or else your food will do you no good. So it is with sermons, it is not hearing sermons which will do you good but digesting them by meditation. Pondering what you hear in your hearts will do you good. One sermon well digested, well meditated on is better than twenty sermons without meditation. A little food well digested will nourish a man more than a great deal of food if it is not digested. You know that many hours are required to digest a little food eaten in a short while; so a Christian should be many hours digesting a sermon that they hear in one hour.

Some are sick with a disease, that whatever they eat comes up again immediately, the food never does them any good. This is the same with many of you, you hear a sermon, you go away and never think of it afterwards. This is just like food that you vomit up. Some have a disease that all the food they eat goes through them, it never stays with them. This food never nourishes. So it is surely, with the sermons you hear on weekdays and on the sabbath day. They go through you, you hear them and hear them and that is all you do. You never seek to root them in your hearts by meditation. This is the reason why you are so lean in grace, though you are so full fed with sermons. I am convinced that this is the great reason why we have so many lean, hunger-starved Christians, lean in knowledge and lean in grace. They may hear sermon upon sermon but they digest nothing. They never ponder and meditate on what they hear.

This is what our Saviour Christ speaks of as the seed that was sown by the highway-side. This is someone who hears the Word and never thinks of it after he has heard it. He allows the devil to steal it out of his heart. When the farmer sows the seed in the highway he never plows it, he does not expect that it will come to anything. There are many of you and the sermons you hear are like the seed sown in the highway. You never cover it by meditation, you never think of it when you have heard it. This is the reason you do not get more good by what you hear.

3. DIGESTING THE PROMISES

The reason why the promises of God do not affect your hearts more and you do not taste more sweetness in them is because you do not ponder and meditate on them. The promises of the gospel are like confectionery if you do not chew it but swallow it down whole you will never taste any great sweetness in it. The way to taste the sweetness is to chew it. The promises of God are full of heavenly comfort, but you will never enjoy this comfort unless you chew them by meditation. Unless spices are bruised they never smell sweet. The saints of God live with so little comfort all their lives long, because they do not chew these promises.

This will enable you to rely on the promises for the good of your souls. The reason that the promises are not sweet to you is because you read them but you do not chew them by meditating on them. If you meditated on them they would be sweeter than honey and the honey-comb, especially if join application with meditation. Abraham was the father of the faithful, and he was strong in faith. What made him strong in faith? He did not consider his own body which was now dead nor the deadness of Sarah's womb, but he considered the promise of God (Romans 4:19). The reason why the saints of God are so empty of comforts, hang down their heads and walk so disconsolately is because they consider the deadness of their own souls and their imperfections. But they do not meditate on the promises, the freeness and the riches of them.

4. DIGESTING GOD'S COMMANDS

We must so meditate of Christ as to live according to the life of Christ. We must so meditate of God as to obey the commands of God. Meditation must enter three doors: the understanding, the will and affections and practical living. Otherwise it is of no use. The understanding helps the heart and affections like a mother helps a child. She prepares food for the child. She cuts it so that the child may eat it. So, the understanding prepares divine truths for the heart and affections, that the heart may receive, eat and digest them. But if the mother eats the meat and gives nothing to the child, the child may starve. So although the understanding receives the most glorious truths, if it does not convey them to the heart and affections, it is of no benefit.

Many spend their time in meditation as a butterfly feeds on the flower, not to be fruitful and useful. They study and ponder divine things — God and Christ, sin and the promises — but because they do not convey them to the heart and affections, they become neither holier nor better. True meditation is this, when we so meditate on Christ as to be transformed into Him. When we so meditate on God as to love and desire God, rejoice in Him and live according to His commands. When we so meditate on sin as to hate, abhor it, and turn from it. It is to so meditate on the promises as to embrace and receive them.

5. HOW TO DIGEST

The understanding prepares divine truths for the affections to eat and digest them and to turn them into holy living. You never meditate aright, unless the affections are elevated as well as the understanding. Both heart and head are the parts that must be exercised in the practice of the duty of divine meditation. The work of the head or understanding is serious consideration of the truths we come to meditate on. The work of the heart is increasing in devotion and holiness by these meditations.

I will give you directions to help the understanding and affections in this. Choose a suitable subject or truth to meditate on. Fix your thoughts on it, consider its different aspects. Try to remember all you might have read or heard about it. Think about its causes and effects and the things that are opposed to it. Think about the way that Scripture describes it. Pray to God to get a delight in it.

*- adapted and edited from an article posted on Reformation Scotland
(www.reformationscotland.org), dated 22 Feb, 2019*

WELCOME TO NEW LIFE B-P CHURCH LONDON

Our Lord's Day activities begins with the **Pre-Worship Prayer Meeting** at **10:15 am** followed by the **Worship Services** at **11.00 am and 3.00 pm**. Do invite your friends to come to Church.

NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dear Worshippers, with the legal Covid restrictions lifted both Worship Services will be held in the Church Premises.

Please continue to use face coverings in the church out of consideration for all worshippers and as per government advice.

For those unable to attend Church in person, we will continue to stream our services online.

If you require the link to our online zoom services or have any queries, please call the church manse, or email us at [admin 'at' newlifebpc.org.uk](mailto:admin@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.

Good Friday Seminar – This will be held on Good Friday (15th April 2022) at 11:00am in the church Fellowship Hall, followed by a BBQ at 3:00pm. Mr Charles Scott-Pearson, General Secretary of the Protestant Alliance, will be speaking on the subject, "*How did we get our English Bible*".

Worship Service Collections – 27/03/22: £501.00, Last Sunday: £966.06, Maintenance Fund: £100.00

**Church Maintenance Fund
Total: £8,600.50**

MEMORY VERSE

Last Week

“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?”
2 Corinthians 13:5

This Week

“...Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you”
2 Corinthians 13:11

Next Week

“Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy”
1 Peter 1:16

Pre-cautions for Worship Services held at the church premises:

With the lifting of the legal Covid restrictions on 24th Feb 2022, we will be following the precautions listed below until further notice:

- No offering collection during the worship service. Offerings can still be made at the offering box when entering or exiting the church.
- Temperature measurements will still be taken for every worshipper and visitor. We must urge those who feel unwell with Covid symptoms not to come to services until tested.
- During worship services, please continue to sit with your own households.
- We strongly recommend face coverings to be worn in the church out of consideration for all worshippers and as per government advise. For young children under the age of 11, the use of face covering is optional. Please bring your own face covering.
- From 6th March onwards, access to non-essential areas of the church (e.g. the Fellowship Hall and kitchen) will be made available. Please bring your own lunch as Fellowship Lunch is still suspended. Drinks will be provided.

To join our online services or for more information, 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