



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. 27 No. 38

LORD’S DAY 17 SEPTEMBER 2023

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Morning Service – 11am

Prelude

The Lord Is in His Holy Temple

Call to Worship

Deuteronomy 26:16-19

Opening Prayer

Jonathan Kim

Opening Hymn *

RHC 17 – “Begin, My Tongue, Some Heavenly Theme”

Responsive Reading

Psalm 73

Second Hymn *

Psalm 73 verses 23-28

(to the tune of tune of Vox Dilecti, RHC 298)

Scriptural Text

2 Thessalonians 1:1-5

Pastoral Prayer

Rev Lim Chee Boon

Sermon Message

A Healthy Church

Closing Hymn *

RHC 379 – “O for a Faith That Will Not Shrink”

Benediction/3-Fold Amen *

Rev Lim Chee Boon

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 78

Q: What is forbidden in the Ninth Commandment?

A: The Ninth Commandment forbiddeth whatsoever is prejudicial to truth, or injurious to our own or our neighbour’s good name.

Comment:

This commandment refers to our *words*. It commands us to be careful to speak *the truth* at all times, to stand up for it when it is assailed, and to seek to advance it by all means in our power. And it forbids us to do anything which might make others believe what is not true – which is *lying*; and especially where anyone’s character is concerned – which is *slander*. In ordinary intercourse the rule is, Speak the truth in love. In witness-bearing the rule is, Speak the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

Scriptural Reference:

Ephesians 4:31, Psalm 15:3

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO HUNGER AND THIRST FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS

The fourth Beatitude is found in Matthew 5:6 *"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."* In the first three Beatitudes, we have seen that blessedness is being poor in spirit, mourning for our sins and being meek and humble in spirit. Here, in the fourth Beatitude, blessedness is defined as a desperate longing for God's righteousness. Everyone in the world today is hungering and thirsting for more money, power, pleasure, and happiness. The world may have an appetite for these, but Jesus wants His children and citizens of God's kingdom to have a hunger and thirst for righteousness.

What does to hunger and thirst after righteousness mean? Every day we get hungry and thirsty. These two must-have appetites we need to fuel our human body. What do you do when your stomach growls and you have a dry throat? We will surely take some prompt action, for we know that our physical body is hungering and thirsting after food and water. Like the physical body, we must hunger and thirst after righteousness. Jesus in Matthew 6:33 shared a similar thought, *"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."* We are reminded in that section not to worry about food, water, and shelter. God's righteousness must become our highest priority and earnest desire. The fourth Beatitude in Matthew 6:33 reminds us that we must hunger and thirst for God's righteousness.

Even as we consider what righteousness is, let us be reminded that there is none righteous, no not one. We all are wretched sinners, and all our good deeds are like filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6) in the sight of God. The self-righteousness in which people take pride is unclean and detestable in God's eyes. Hence the righteousness we should hunger and thirst after is not Pharisee-like righteousness but God's righteousness. In Luke 18, Jesus told of a Pharisee who went to the temple to pray. Since he gloried in his own righteousness, he went home unjustified. To obtain God's righteousness, one must deny one's self-centredness, arrogance and self-righteousness, based on deeds. The only standard that a Christian should be interested in, is God's righteousness. *"Be ye holy; for I am holy."* This command and the call in 1 Peter 1:16 is our goal. Every saved sinner should have this longing desire to know and fellowship with God and to pursue after God's holy decrees. Psalm 42:1 reminds us of the psalmist's hunger and thirst for God, *"As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?"* A sinner saved by God's grace must have a yearning for a closer walk with Him and long for conformity to the image of Christ our righteousness.

Let us also consider the example of the Apostle Paul, who once hungered and thirsted after self-righteousness but, after knowing Christ, he only desired to know more of God's righteousness. In Philippians 3:5, he writes, *"Circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless."* He did not hunger and thirst for God's righteousness; instead, he gloried in his own. But after his conversion, he forsook all self-righteousness and considered all these a loss for the sake of Christ. He pursued after God's righteousness. He explains this in Philippians 3:7-9 *"But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:"* From once taking pride in his own

righteousness to embracing Christ's righteousness, the apostle Paul found blessedness in pursuing after God's righteousness. He counted all other things dung while to know Christ more and more was his only desire.

These desires like that of the Apostle Paul are given by God and are the workings of the Holy Spirit when we read the scriptures. We see the psalmist desiring similarly for this righteousness in Psalm 19. David wrote, *"The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; ... More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover, by them, Your servant is warned, and in keeping them, there is great reward"* (Psalm 19:7-11). The psalmist desired more of God and His Word than gold. When tempted in the wilderness by the devil, Jesus responded, *"Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God"* (Matt 4:4). He was thirsty and hungry for bread, but obeying God and His Word was paramount. For every temptation by the devil in that passage, Christ's response came from the Scriptures. Are we still meditating or even delighting in God's Word? When we hunger and thirst for God's righteousness, we will love His Word and obey it.

We hunger and thirst for God's righteousness when we love, serve and obey Him. We are saved by Christ unto good works and hence will also love the deeds of righteousness. If our good works are dead, then according to James 2:17, our faith is dead. If we possess faith, then a demonstration of that faith will be in good works. We will serve God, His Church and others through righteous works. It's only when we obey and serve Him, we genuinely love God. We would hunger and thirst to do His will and share Christ with others. Brethren, let us not be conformed to the world but rather let us hunger and thirst after God's righteousness. This is the path of blessedness, and it comes with a promise.

"They shall be filled" is the promise in the fourth Beatitude. In Matthew 6:33, we are assured that when we seek God's kingdom and His righteousness, the need for food, clothing and shelter will be taken care of by the Lord. Our God is generous, and He will fill us beyond our expectations. He will fill us with more of His Holy Spirit and spiritual virtues. He will fill us with gladness and contentment. He will fill us with assurance and hope for the future. He will fill us with the peace of God that surpasses all understanding. He will fill us with more faith and love. What a wonderful life of blessedness it will be when one experiences all the above! Yet we know the experience of God filling us with spiritual goodies is just a foretaste of all our God has prepared for them that love Him (1 Corinthians 2:9). Yes, we shall be filled gloriously and completely soon. *"... but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."* (1 John 3:2).

Let us hunger and thirst after God's righteousness for, *"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness. for they shall be filled."* (Matthew 5:6)

Rev Mathews Abraham, Singapore

WELCOME TO NEW LIFE B-P CHURCH LONDON

Our Lord's Day activities begins with the **Worship Services** at **11.00 am**. Do invite your friends to come to Church.

NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dear Worshippers, we extend a warm welcome to you this Lord's Day. We hope that you have a blessed time of worship with us today.

For those unable to attend Church in person, we are streaming our worship services online. To join our online services or for more information, please call the church manse, or email us at [admin 'at' newlifebpc.org.uk](mailto:admin@newlifebpc.org.uk).

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

Children's Sunday School – held after Morning Service at 1:30pm.

Bible Study on the book of 'Proverbs' - held after Morning Service at 1:30pm.

After-Service Fellowship – Join us for lunch fellowship after the morning worship service. Please bring your own lunch as only drinks will be provided.

MEMORY VERSE

Last Week

“Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.”

Psalm 127:1

This Week

“For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”

1 Corinthians 3:11

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

Dear all,

While the legal Covid restrictions having been lifted, we will continue to observe the following precautions:

- We continue to urge those who feel unwell (especially with Covid symptoms) to stay home and join us at our online services.
- Please place your offerings in the offering box when entering or exiting the church.
- During worship services, please continue to sit with your own households.
- While not required, the use of face covering is voluntary. Please bring your own face covering.

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