



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. 27 No. 21

LORD’S DAY 21 MAY 2023

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Morning Service – 11am

Prelude

The Lord Is in His Holy Temple

Call to Worship

Psalm 33:1-5

Opening Prayer

John Poh

Opening Hymn *

RHC 24 – “Praise to the Lord, The Almighty”

Responsive Reading

Psalm 56

Second Hymn *

Psalm 56 verses 1-12

(to the tune of tune of Green Hill, RHC 192)

Scriptural Text

2 Peter 3:18

Pastoral Prayer

Rev Matthew Yong

Sermon Message

Strong Faith

Closing Hymn *

RHC 301 – “My Faith Has Found a Resting Place”

Benediction/3-Fold Amen *

Rev Matthew Yong

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 61

Q: What is forbidden in the Fourth Commandment?

A: *The Fourth Commandment forbiddeth the omission or careless performance of the duties required, and the profaning the day by idleness, or doing that which is in itself sinful, or by unnecessary thoughts, words, or works, about our worldly employments or recreations.*

Comments:

This commandment forbids: 1. The omission of Sabbath duties; 2. The careless discharge of them; 3. Being idle; 4. Committing sin; 5. Being engaged, without proper reason, in worldly matters.

Scriptural Reference:

Isaiah 58:13, 14; Malachi 1:13

THE WHAT, HOW AND WHEN OF A PACIFIED CONSCIENCE

The New Testament gives us a picture of believers as people who have the kind of relationship with the Lord where they can freely go to Him, still with an awareness of their sin, but with the freeness and confidence that comes from a clear awareness of the power of the blood of Christ to wash their sin away. How can we come to share that freedom and confidence? What can be done about our guiltiness, and our sense of guilt? It's all about the conscience. A clear, calm conscience comes from not simply registering our sins but also registering the effects of Christ's atoning, justifying blood for us. James Durham preached a sermon on Hebrews 10:22, *"Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."* In the following updated extract he explains the nature of this privilege of being able to draw near to God in full assurance of faith, as well as how and when we can (and should) do so.

The conscience of a person un-reconciled to God is mighty and fearsome, a terrible pursuer, ready to seize on him. It is a dreadful thing to be exposed to God's wrath, and to the challenges, accusations, throes and pangs of a conscience that has a quarrel against you, when you have nothing with which to answer its accusations.

Yet the efficacy of Christ's blood is such that it is able to purge the conscience of whoever flees to it, and to fence and guard him against the wrath of God, and the challenges and accusations of his own conscience, God's deputy. Once conscience has no just ground to pursue, so it cannot, and it will not, pursue him as God's enemy. There is an efficacy in the blood of Jesus Christ to purge and pacify the conscience of the person who in good earnest has believing recourse to it – that is, I say, when he actually makes recourse to that blood, and when it is actually applied and made use of, by faith.

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FOR OUR CONSCIENCE WHEN WE GO TO THE BLOOD OF CHRIST?

What can a conscience-troubled sinner expect, by fleeing to the blood of Christ? God's rich and liberal allowance to that person is, you can draw near to Him with full assurance of faith. You may come to Him with confidence and boldness, as a Father, in all your worship and appeals.

The meaning is not that the sinner fleeing to this blood has no reason for humility, or repentance for sin, and no accusations of conscience. Nor does drawing near with full assurance of faith remove the holy awe and filial reverence which is due to God, and which is not only fully consistent with this full assurance of faith, but inseparable from it.

It does, however, mean that as believers whose consciences have been sprinkled with the blood of Christ, we can expect these things.

- We may boldly go to God in prayer, as if our friendship with Him in Adam had never been broken (v19). The blood of the covenant makes our relationship to Him as our Father as near, intimate, kindly, firm, and sure as Adam's was pre-Fall, with considerable added advantages.
- We may make use of the promises (– pardon of sin, sanctification, support in affliction, quickening, peace, comfort, etc.) according to need, with confidence. The believer may draw near with full assurance of the faith of God's faithfulness to perform them, in His own measure, manner and time.
- Heaven, eternal life, and glory, and indeed all things contained in the promises.
- Full and thorough publication of pardon and justification before the tribunal of God at the day of judgement. 'Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies, who is he that condemneth?'

HOW CAN WE OBTAIN THIS PRIVILEGE?

How may we attain this unspeakably excellent privilege of ‘drawing near with full assurance of faith,’ with holy boldness and confidence to obtain all these great things? The answer is in the words a little before, ‘... by the blood of Jesus ...’ This assumes that we are fleeing to Christ for the satisfying of divine justice, and that we are applying to Him for purging, pacifying and satisfying the conscience.

Whatever is necessary and requisite in the application of Christ’s righteousness for making our peace with God, the same is needful to attain calmness, tranquillity and peace in the conscience. What is that? See Romans 4:5: ‘To him that worketh not, but believeth on him who justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.’

When you join this with the words in the text, it tells us that the way to peace and calmness of conscience is as follows. First, you are not to evade or refuse your debt, but to acknowledge it. Second, you are to renounce and disclaim all possibility of satisfying divine justice yourself. And thirdly, you are to flee to Jesus Christ, and through virtue of His satisfaction and blood, and the covenant of His grace, to rest on Him for pardon. You are ‘to believe on Him (although you are in some way ungodly) who justifieth the ungodly.’ This is the basis for peace with God, and should quiet the conscience.

But when the sinner has done this, if the conscience is still not quieted and calmed, three further things are necessary.

Actually renewing your application to Christ

This is not so much to get a new pardon, as a new extract of the same pardon which you received in your first fleeing to Christ. When someone has fled to Christ, and is at peace with God, if they do not have peace in their conscience, they are to take a renewed look at the promise, and to act faith anew on Christ’s blood – to display it to their conscience, acknowledging their sin, yet holding still by it the fact that they have fled to Christ, and on that ground making use of the promise for the renewed pardon of sin through His blood.

In this sense faith is called a ‘shield’ (Eph. 6:16). When the accusation is thrown in on the conscience, it burns like a fiery or poisoned dart. But faith goes to the fountain of Christ’s blood – to the covenant and promises – and out of these wells of salvation draws bucketfuls to quench the fiery dart. Faith makes the believer say, ‘I cannot make satisfaction for this sin, but here is a promise of pardon to those who have fled (as I have) to Christ and to the blood of sprinkling.’

Reasoning from solid gospel truths

Yet accusations are not soon or easily removed, nor the conscience calmed, and so there is need of continuing in the fight, and of drawing conclusions from solid and undeniable premises.

This is what Paul does. Someone might have said, “You’ve been complaining of a body of death, and saying that with your flesh you serve the law of sin. Is not that a grievous accusation against you?” “It is true,” he would reply. “But there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:1–2). That is making use of the shield of faith! To put the matter beyond doubt, he goes on and draws the conclusion, “I, by faith, have fled to Christ for refuge, and therefore there is no condemnation to me.”

Indeed, whenever challenges come in from sense and/or conscience, and are fanned by temptation, it is needful to reason from the grounds of faith, to ward off the blow and quiet the conscience. This is a reflex act of faith. It does not justify, yet it serves to reason the conscience into peace and calmness.

Bringing comfort to yourself by believing

Reasoning from solid gospel truths will ward off the force and bitterness of challenges, but that is not enough to thoroughly calm and settle the soul. It is also needful that the soul actively draws in peace and consolation to itself by believing. This, as Paul says, “is able to guard the heart and mind through Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4). In Psalm 51, David is not labouring only to get his conscience calmed, but for it to be actually filled with consolation. The promises themselves are often somewhat insipid and tasteless (if I may put it like that) when they are not seasoned and enlivened by God’s voice going along with them, and putting flavour and life in them. This is “the voice of joy and gladness” which David is so eager to hear.

WHEN SHOULD WE USE THIS FREEDOM?

What are the times or situations when the believer may and ought in a special manner to make use of his liberty and boldness to “draw near with full assurance of faith”? Undoubtedly, there is no situation where a believer may not aim at this. But more especially we should, in situations like the following.

When you have fallen into more gross guilt, as David had (Psalm 51).

When that gross guilt and grievous sinning is accompanied with great aggravations. In Psalm 51, David’s sin was aggravated mightily and yet he makes application to Christ over all that guilt and all these aggravations of his guilt.

When through folly you have relapsed in sin. I don’t say this to give a liberty to sin, God forbid, but to the commendation of God’s free grace, and of the worth and efficacy of Christ’s blood, and for the encouragement of lost sinners who would love to reach through to Christ for pardon and peace. As long as the blood of Christ has efficacy and worth, and as far as the promise extends itself, so long and so far the believer’s faith may reach to come with boldness and confidence.

When accusations are lively and very sharp – indeed, when they are sharpest and most piercing. Supposing these accusations were like so many troops of horsemen rushing in on him, and the conscience was like a lion rampant, standing with its claws ready to tear, the believer may and should (humbly acknowledging guilt) step forward confidently, and apply the blood of sprinkling. When did David make his most earnest and humbly-confident request to God for the joy of his salvation? When blood-guiltiness was staring him in the face, and when his very bones were broken, and when to his own sense, his grace was very much gone, and when he had (as is were) forfeited his right to consolation. That’s when he comes forward and draws near to God, on the grounds of grace.

When you find, to the great grief of your soul, you are exceedingly indisposed to duty – when your praying, repenting, hearing, etc., are not what you would like them to be. David prays not only for consolation but also for the lively exercise of grace, “*Create in me a clean heart, renew a right spirit within me, and uphold me with thy free Spirit.*” It is without doubt a very damaging mistake for troubled sinners to think that first they must have a good spiritual frame and lively grace before they venture to draw near to God with confidence. I grant these are very desirable, and the desire for them is very commendable, yet if David had stuck at that in Psalm 51, he might have remained unwashed all his days. But, knowing the way of God’s grace, David steps humbly yet confidently forward in the exercise of faith over the sense of guiltiness and all its aggravations, over relapsing in sin, over indisposition, and over many sharp accusations (all granted, and lamented over) and makes all these together just so many reasons to go to God.

— adapted and edited from Reformation Scotland — James Durham (1622-1658) was minister in Glasgow for only eleven years but left a considerable number of writings. One of the co-authors of 'The Sum of Saving Knowledge', he is best known for writing what is still regarded as the classic Reformed work on church unity, division and schism, 'A Treatise Concerning Scandal' as well as a highly sought after commentary on the Book of Revelation. 27 Apr, 2023

SERMON NOTES: STRONG FAITH – 2 PETER 3:18

Introduction

We as Christians live and walk by faith and not by sight – 2 Corinthians 5:7. It means “to trust” GOD and His promises even when God is not visible or understandable. This involves obeying Him, clinging to His word and making decisions through the Holy Spirit, not feelings or senses.

True faith is tested by trials (1 Peter 1:7) and every Christian will be tested. True faith will always pass the test if he relies on God and not on himself.

Faith in God means having confidence that God is always good (1 Chronicles 16:34, Psalm 145:9) and He is always working for your good (Romans 8:28).

How to have Strong Faith: Know the character of God

The Bible tells us that God is omnipresent (always present), omnipotent (all powerful) and omniscience (all knowing) and full of love. Our God is worthy of our trust, praise and adoration (Revelations 4:11).

- God can do whatever He wants, without any limits (except for things that are contrary to His character).
- God doesn't change (Malachi 3:6).

These are the characters of God.

God is Sovereign, He is all powerful (Omnipotent)

Revelation 19:6

- God uses people to carry out His purpose (Revelations 17:17)
- All things are possible for Him (Luke 1:37)
- The Lord promised Abraham a son (Genesis 18:14)

God's promises are true (2 Corinthians 1:20)

God's promises are always true and trustworthy, we can depend on Him to keep His word.

By saying “yes and amen” to God's promises, we acknowledge our faith in His character, and our willingness to trust Him. (Hebrews 10:23, Joshua 21:45, 1 Kings 8:56).

Not one word failed.

- a) Meet all your needs (Matthew 7:11, Philippians 4:19)
- b) Give you wisdom to guide you through life (James 1:5)
- c) Never leaves you alone or forsake you (Hebrews 13:5, Matthew 28:20)
- d) Do more than you can thing, imagine or ask (Ephesians 3:20)
- e) Answer your prayers (Matthew 7:7, James 5:16)

Spurgeon: “*There is no saint who can out-believe God for God never out-promised Himself yet.*”

God's past faithfulness will encourage us to believe God will continue to be faithful in the future.

Conclusion

There will be challenges, difficulties and hardships in this life, but through it all you will find that God is loving, faithful and always good. He will walk with you through every trial you face in this life.

Remember: every Christian will be tested, and true faith will always pass the test if you reply on God and not yourself.

Keep growing in faith.

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.

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.

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

“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

Hebrews 11:6

This Week

“But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.”

2 Peter 3:18

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.
- No offering will be collected during the worship service. Offerings can be made at 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