



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. 13

LORD’S DAY 26 MARCH 2023

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Morning Service – 11am

Prelude

The Lord Is in His Holy Temple

Call to Worship

Psalm 135:1-3

Opening Prayer

Pr Mok Chee Cheong

*Opening Hymn **

RHC 50 – “Jesus, My Lord, My God, My All”

Responsive Reading

Psalm 48

*Second Hymn **

Psalm 48 verses 1-2 & 7-10
(to the tune of St. Magnus)

Scriptural Text

Acts 5:17-42

Pastoral Prayer

Pr Mok Chee Cheong

Sermon Message

Biblical Truth and Ramifications

*Closing Hymn **

RHC 259 – “Lamp of Our Feet”

*Benediction/3-Fold Amen **

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 53

Q: Which is the Third Commandment?

A: The Third Commandment is, THOU SHALT NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD THY GOD IN VAIN: for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

Comments:

This commandment tells how to treat the Name of God, and by his *Name* is meant everything by which he is named to us, or specially made known. To take God’s name in vain is to use it for a vain or frivolous purpose; and we break this command by profane swearing, or by irreverently using God’s name. We recognise the command when we pray – *Hallowed be thy Name.*

THE NEW BIRTH DEFINED

William Plumer (1802-1880)

From first to last, salvation is all of grace. Paul says: “For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour” (Ti 3:3-6). So it is clearly by the grace and mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ that the Holy Spirit is sent down to renew our natures and to accomplish in us the new birth. *Pardon* saves a sinner from the curse of the Law and the lake of fire; *acceptance* through Christ gives him a title to heaven; but in *regeneration* the dominion of sin begins to be destroyed and the soul begins to be fitted for the Master’s use.

The new birth is a great mystery, yet it is much insisted on in Scripture. “The washing of regeneration” is as necessary as washing in the blood of Christ. “The renewing of the Holy Ghost” is as essential as the “justification of life.” Within the space of four verses, our Lord thrice declares how necessary it is to salvation. Hear Him: “Ver-ily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God...Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God...Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again” (Joh 3:3, 5, 7). The fallow [Unplowed] ground must be broken up or the good seed will not take root in our hearts. The wild olive must undergo the operation of engrafting with the good olive, or it will remain worthless. All the Scriptures teach as much. Christ regarded it as by no means marvelous [not surprising] that a vile sinner must undergo a great spiritual change before he could be fit for the service of God.

Perhaps there is not a more driveling [senseless; nonsensical] error than that which teaches that baptism with water is the regeneration that Jesus Christ and His Apostles insist upon. When men can confound the “washing of regeneration” with the washing with water, they are fully prepared to follow, in fact they are *already* following, in the footsteps of those who confounded “that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh” with that circumcision, which is “of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God” (Rom 2:29). Perhaps, too, no error is more mischievous than this. It is monstrous that such error and folly should be taught in lands where God’s Word is in general use.

To baptism, some add an outward reformation and insist that this should be admitted as sufficient. Supposing this to be the meaning of Christ and His Apostles, it is impossible to defend them from the charge of using very mysterious language to convey so simple an idea. But such a belief is never entertained by those who have a becoming [befitting; suitable] respect for God’s Word. It will therefore claim no more attention at this time.

Sound divines have very remarkably agreed in telling us what regeneration is. Dr. Witherspoon says, “A new birth implies an universal change. It must be of the whole man, not in some particular, but in all without exception.” [John Witherspoon] And he shows at length that it is not partial, external, imperfect, but that it is universal, inward, essential, complete, and supernatural.

Charnock says, “Regeneration is a mighty and powerful change, wrought in the soul by the efficacious working of the Holy Spirit, wherein a vital principle, a new habit, the Law of God, and a divine nature are put into and framed in the heart, enabling it to act holily and pleasingly to God, and to grow up therein to eternal glory” [Stephen Charnock].

Dr. Thomas Scott [Anglican author of *A Commentary on the Whole Bible*] quotes with approbation [approval] another definition, but does not give his author. He says, “Regeneration may be defined [as] a change wrought by the power of the Holy Spirit in the understanding, will, and affections of a sinner, which is the commencement of a new kind of life, and which gives another direction to his judgment, desires, pursuits, and conduct.”

Although this change is called by various names, yet the doctrine of Scripture respecting it is uniform. Sometimes it is called a holy calling, a creation, a new creation, a translation, a circumcision of the heart, a resurrection. But whatever be the name, the thing signified is everywhere spoken of in very solemn terms and as a rich fruit of God’s grace. Thus says Paul, “It pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me” (Gal 1:15-16). Again: “[God] hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began” (2Ti 1:9). Again, Peter says that “the God of all grace...hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus” (1Pe 5:10).

Nor have the purest churches ever doubted the necessity of this change. They also remarkably agree concerning its nature. The Westminster Assembly teaches that “[God] is pleased, in His appointed and accepted time, effectually to call, by His Word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ; enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God; taking away their heart of stone, and giving unto them a heart of flesh; renewing their wills, and, by His almighty power determining them to that which is good; and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ; yet so as they come most freely, being made willing by His grace” [Westminster Confession of Faith 10.1].

The Latter Confession of Helvetia [2nd Confession of Helvetica] says, “In regeneration the understanding is illuminated by the Holy Ghost, that it may understand both the mysteries and will of God. And the will itself is not only changed by the Spirit, but is also endued with faculties, that, of its own accord, it may will and do good,” [Latter Confession of Helvetia] and quotes in proof Romans 8:4; Jeremiah 31:33; Ezekiel 36:27; John 8:36; Philippians 1:6, 29; and 2:13.

The Synod of Dort [Dordt] says, “This regenerating grace of God worketh not upon men as if they were stocks and stones, nor doth it abolish the will and properties of their will, or violently constrain it, but doth spiritually revive it, heal it, rectify it, and powerfully yet gently bend it: so that where formerly the rebellion of the flesh, and stubbornness did domineer without control, now a willing and sincere obedience to the Spirit begins to reign; in which change the true and spiritual rescue and freedom of our will doth consist...” [The Articles of the Dort 3.16].

The truth is that if we give up regeneration, the last hope that a sinner may ever again be either holy or happy is gone forever. The Church of Ireland [The Irish Articles] holds that “All God’s elect are in their time inseparably united unto Christ, by the effectual and vital influence of the Holy Ghost, derived from him, as from the head, unto every true member of his mystical

body. And being thus made one with Christ they are truly regenerated, and made partakers of him and all his benefits” [Irish Articles of Religion, 33]. Indeed, nothing could more distress one, who rightly considered his lost estate, than to have the hope that springs from the doctrine of regeneration destroyed or seriously shaken...Every man, who has ever had his eyes opened to see his own wretchedness and vileness, will agree to the saying of Usher: “It is not a little reforming will save the man, no, nor all the morality of the world, nor all the common graces of God’s Spirit, nor the outward change of the life: they will not do, unless we are quickened and have a new life wrought in us.”

In his old age, when he could no longer see to read, John Newton heard someone repeat this text, “By the grace of God I am what I am” (1Co 15:10). He remained silent a short time and then, as if speaking to himself, he said, “I am not what I ought to be. Ah! How imperfect and deficient! I am not what I wish to be. I abhor that which is evil, and I would cleave to that which is good. I am not what I hope to be. Soon, soon I shall put off mortality and with mortality all sin and imperfection. Though I am not what I ought to be, what I wish to be, and what I hope to be, yet I can truly say, I am not what I once was, a slave to sin and Satan; I can heartily join with the apostle and acknowledge, ‘By the grace of God, I am what I am.’”

...Our second birth brings us into a state of grace. It is one of the richest of God’s covenanted mercies. When one is born anew, a fatal blow is given to Satan’s kingdom in the heart; for “that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” (Joh 3:6). *This is a work of amazing energy!* It was for good cause that the Synod of Dort taught, “God, in regenerating a man, doth employ that omnipotent strength, whereby he may powerfully and infallibly bow and bend his will unto faith and conversion” [Canons of the Synod of Dort]. Paul uses all the strong words he is master of to teach us that we are renewed by power, by amazing energy. He prayed that his Ephesians might know “what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead” (Eph 1:19-20). We know of no greater power than that which accomplished the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet the same power converts the soul...Dr. Nevins says, “Some think and represent it as easy to save a soul—to bend a will—to change a heart. Easy? It is God’s greatest work...God, in saving a soul, putteth forth a mightier energy than in making many worlds” [William Nevins]. In his *Views in Theology*, Dr. Beecher admits, “The power of God in regeneration is represented as among the greatest displays of his omnipotence ever made, or to be made in the history of the universe. When the fair creation rose fresh in beauty from the hand of God, the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy; but sweeter songs will celebrate and louder shouts will attend the consummation of redemption by the power of God’s Spirit...” [Lyman Beecher].

Article adapted and edited from *The Grace of Christ*, reprinted by Sprinkle Publications. By **William S. Plumer (1802-1880)**: American Presbyterian minister; author of *Vital Godliness*, *The Law of God*, and many others. Born in Greensburg, Pennsylvania.

WELCOME TO NEW LIFE B-P CHURCH LONDON

Our Lord's Day activities begins with the **Church Prayer Meeting at 10:15 am** followed by 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.

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

Afternoon Service will be postponed until further notice.

Worship Service Collections: Last Sunday – £485.00

Church Maintenance Fund Total: £16,190.50

MEMORY VERSE

Last Week

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

Acts 1:8

This Week

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

Acts 4:12

Next Week

“Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.”

Acts 5:31

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