



# NEW LIFE

## BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

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**LORD’S DAY 30 APRIL 2023**

### ORDER OF WORSHIP

#### *Morning Service – 11am*

*Prelude*

*The Lord Is in His Holy Temple*

*Call to Worship*

John 8:12

*Opening Prayer*

Ps Timothy Poh

*Opening Hymn \**

RHC 422 – “Follow On”

*Responsive Reading*

Psalm 53

*Second Hymn \**

*Psalm 53*

*(to the tune of tune of Kilmarnock, RHC 561)*

*Scriptural Text*

Matthew 4:12-25

*Pastoral Prayer*

Ps Timothy Poh

*Sermon Message*

*Jesus Said “Follow Me”*

*Closing Hymn \**

RHC 567 – “Follow Me”

*Benediction/3-Fold Amen \**

Ps Timothy Poh

*Postlude*

*The Lord Bless You*

\* Congregation Stands

#### **THE LORD IS IN HIS HOLY TEMPLE**

#### **THE LORD BLESS YOU**

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 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 58**

**Q: What is required in the Fourth Commandment?**

*A: The Fourth Commandment requireth the keeping holy to God such set times as he hath appointed in his Word; expressly one whole day in seven, to be a holy Sabbath to himself.*

Comments:

The Sabbath is an emblem of heaven, and a pattern and example for all days. Every day should be holy unto the Lord. Inasmuch, however, as in this world we must engage in worldly business, the Sabbath was instituted to prevent our thoughts from dwelling too much on worldly matters. It is intended for man’s good, and it is our own loss if we disregard it.

Scriptural Reference:

Leviticus 19:30

# THE FOLLY OF FAULT FINDING

One favourite Singaporean pastime is complaining. It is common to hear complaints about the rising cost of living, our public transport, expensive housing, the hot weather, the wet weather and food delivery service.

A study of over 30,000 e-commerce customer reviews has revealed that Singaporeans are the ‘Complain Kings’ of Southeast Asia. We produce the greatest number of complaints in this region – more than one-third. The study also revealed that we are 25% more likely than Malaysians to ‘yell’ by writing our complaints in CAPITAL letters, and that the highest number of refund requests are made by Singaporeans.

Is this a good thing to be proud of? No, it is actually a health hazard. In one episode of Pulse, an Emmy Award-winning health magazine show, Dr Robert Hales said, *“They found in long-term studies of both men and women that those who complain a lot and have a negativistic attitude toward life have a higher risk of cardiovascular disease and heart attacks actually before the age of 60.”*

Those who complain a lot may also be a hazard to others. People usually avoid them because they like to find fault. If we are honest with ourselves, we have to admit that this fault-finding attitude is quite prevalent even among Christians. It has been said that we are often quick to judge others, that we have a self-righteous spirit, and that we love to criticise others. These observations are not completely unfounded. Our response to them should be to examine ourselves to see if we have been too critical and judgemental of others.

Have we been too quick to criticise others for something they did or said without considering the cause of it or the context of it? Perhaps we notice that someone has stopped coming to church for some time, and we immediately conclude that he has backslid. But the actual reason is that he is physically unwell. How do we respond when a person tries to correct us in order to help us improve and grow spiritually? Do we misjudge his motives and think that he has turned against us?

Have we judged someone wrongly because of his outward appearance or place of origin? When Philip told Nathaniel in John 1:45 that they had found the Messiah and that He was from Nazareth, Nathaniel’s immediate response was, *“Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?”* This critical attitude is also expressed in the prejudice of the Pharisees against Jesus. They made a totally unfounded judgment about Him, just because He was from Galilee (John 7:52). Whenever we judge someone according to where he comes from or according to certain things he had done in his past without making an effort to know what he really is and what he is doing now, we fall into the fault-finding sin of the Pharisees.

Because it is so easy to fall into this sin, the Lord Jesus gave strong words of warning against it in His Sermon on the Mount.

## **The Danger of Our Own Condemnation**

Jesus said, *“Judge not, that ye be not judged.”* (Matthew 7:1) This does not mean that we should never judge someone. Sometimes we need to exercise good judgment and discernment (cf. John 7:24). Some kinds of judging are in fact necessary. In the courts of Law, judges are responsible to make sound judgments based on the evidence presented to them.

What then did Jesus mean when He said, *“Judge not”*? He was talking about the habit of finding fault in others. It is all right to judge, but not to be judgmental. Sometimes a person may be doing things out of ignorance, because he really does not know any better. One example of this is Apollos when he came to preach at Ephesus – Aquila and Priscilla took him aside privately after they had heard him preach, because something he said was not right. And Apollos was grateful for the correction he received from them (Acts 18:24-28). But what if Aquila and Priscilla had been judgemental, criticised him and written him off as a false teacher? Then Apollos would never have been corrected.

Reasons against being judgmental can be found in Romans 14:10-13 – *“But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother’s way.”*

The context of this passage is that some Christians had made certain specific practices like eating meat, and the celebration of certain days their criteria for judging others. Paul says that God alone is qualified to make such judgments. If we make such judgments, we put ourselves in the place of God.

Let us therefore be careful not to judge any brother in Christ on the basis of something he does or does not do, as long as it does not violate any commandment of God. In moral and doctrinal matters, we need to correct people carefully. Thus, if I see a brother bowing down to worship an idol, or telling a lie, I would have to admonish him humbly and lovingly. But if the issue is not a moral one (such as personal convictions regarding vaccination), we must be careful not to become judgmental, or else we would usurp God’s authority.

Another passage that shows this is James 4:11-12 – *“Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?”* This gives us another important reason why it is wrong to be judgmental: Because it is not done with the right spirit – the spirit of love. The law that is mentioned four times here is the one given in Leviticus 19:18 – *“Love thy neighbor as thyself.”* To judge your neighbour is to violate this law.

This does not mean that when we love someone, we would never tell him if he has done wrong. 1 Corinthians 13:6 tells us that love *“rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.”* It would be very unloving to let a brother continue to live in sin when we know of it. We should rather speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15) and encourage him to obey God’s Word and repent of his sins. If you ever need to correct a brother please do it with love, with his best interests at heart. Otherwise, you may become proud and self-righteous.

Another reason why it is so dangerous to judge someone is found in Matthew 7:2 – *“For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.”* Here, Jesus says that before we judge others, we must always remember that the very same standards which we use against them will be used against us. Therefore, we should never apply to others standards that we would not first apply to ourselves. God will judge us by the same standards that we use to judge others.

Unfortunately, some have double standards – one which they use for judging others, and another for judging themselves: They impose very high standards and heavy burdens on others, but do not even attempt to keep to those standards themselves.

So, whenever you want to judge someone who falls into sin, first ask if you would judge yourself by the same standards with which you are judging him. Put yourself in the dock and examine your own life: Do you have the same sins or worse sins in your own life that you have not repented of?

When you do this, you will probably realise that very often, what you need to do for others is to be merciful to them rather than to make judgments against them. Since God has been merciful to you in dealing with your sins, you must be merciful to others in dealing with their sins.

Jesus said that the measure that we mete to others is the measure we will receive. What is this measure all about? Some ancient rabbis used to say that God has two “measures” for judging the world – mercy and justice. Perhaps Jesus was using the same language here, but adapted to His own purposes. He who insists

on showing justice without mercy for others will not receive mercy when he is judged. This is also stated in James 2:13 – *“For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.”*

Therefore, when Jesus says, *“Judge not”* (Matthew 7:1) He is not telling us to shut our eyes to the faults of others and pretend that they are not there, but rather to be generous in showing mercy toward them, while dealing with their faults in an appropriate manner. We are to speak gently, tactfully and personally to them. We do this, because we realise that we are no better than them. We are all sinners saved by grace. What we are now is wholly by God’s grace alone and not ours through our own merit or strenuous efforts.

### **The Difficulty of Our Own Imperfection**

This is seen in Matthew 7:3 – *“And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?”* This does not mean that a person can literally have a huge beam or wooden plank stuck in his eye. It is clearly a hyperbole, an intended exaggeration which is used to express intensity of feeling. From this, we can see the intensity of our Lord’s dislike for this sin of fault-finding.

The point is that just as it is absurd for man with a huge beam in his eye to attempt to help the someone with a tiny speck in his eye, it is absurd for a man with glaring sins in his life to find fault with another who has lesser sins in his life. His own sins prevent him from being objective about the sins of others. It impairs his vision as to the guilt or innocence of others and disqualifies him from passing judgments on others. So, what should he do? He must first deal with the sin in his own life. Then he would be in a position to help others who have sinned, since his vision would no longer be impaired.

This teaches us the necessity of keeping our lives clean from sin if we want to be of help to others. How do we do this? By constant self-examination and confession of all known sins and by asking God to reveal all our unknown sins. 1 John 1:9 tells us that *“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”*

Is there some secret sin in your life that you are still committing? Some sin that no one knows about except you, and that you have not repented of, but still persist in doing? As long as you have not dealt with that sin, you cannot be effective as a Christian. You will feel God’s heavy hand upon you. How can you help others to grow in love and purity, if you have done nothing about this sin in your life?

### **The Demand for Our Own Reformation**

The world today is so full of sins which need to be cleared away. But the right place for us to begin acting upon this need is within ourselves – we must deal first with our own faults. This is the way to apply what Jesus said in Matthew 7:5 – *“...first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother’s eye.”*

From now onwards whenever you hear any message from God’s Word don’t think about how it applies to others until you have asked, *“Lord, is it I?”* It is only when you have dealt with your own faults, that you will be in a position to help others deal with their faults. This does not mean that you must become absolutely faultless – no one can ever attain that, since sinless perfection is impossible in this life (cf. 1 John 1:8). What it means is that you must keep short accounts with God and leave no outstanding debts of unconfessed sins.

Instead of being fault-finding, let us make every effort to deal with the sins in our own life, so that we can be used of God to help those who fall into sin with a humble attitude of love and mercy. For, if all of us turn out to be fallen casualties in urgent need of help in the spiritual battle field, who is there left to render first aid?

— Rev Charles Seet, taken from *Life Bible Presbyterian Church Weekly*, 5<sup>th</sup> March 2023

# 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.

**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

*And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."*

**Acts 20:32**

### This Week

*"But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."*

**Matthew 4:4**

## 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](http://www.newlifebpc.org.uk)) or call the church manse (020 73280869).

With the Lord's blessing,

John Poh & Jonathan Kim,

Task Force Members