



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. 28 No. 18

LORD’S DAY 05 MAY 2024

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Morning Service – 11am

Prelude

The Lord Is in His Holy Temple

Call to Worship

Psalm 145:1-3

Opening Hymn *

RHC 15 – “How Shall I Sing That Majesty”

Opening Prayer

John Poh

Responsive Reading

Psalm 105

Second Hymn *

Psalm 105 verses 1-7

(to the tune of Ellacombe, RHC 29)

Scriptural Text

Mark 2:1-12

Pastoral Prayer

Rev Mark Lehman

Sermon Message

Mark Authority

Closing Hymn *

RHC 72 – “Take the Name of Jesus with You”

Benediction/3-Fold Amen *

Rev Mark Lehman

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

HOW TO BE GODLY - PART 10

Last week, we studied that meditation is a help for our sanctification. We also thought of its benefits to our souls and learnt that meditation is hard because it is against our inclinations and propensities in the flesh. Today, I am going to begin with a few hindrances often challenging and stopping us from strengthening our practice of meditation.

A few examples of hindrances to meditation

When we say that meditation is hard, we acknowledge that meditation is not an automatic and natural product of our nature. We face troubles and difficulties, and also discouragements, if we develop and improve private practices of meditation. Rogers suggests that there are two kinds of hindrances: (1) one kind hinders God's people from meditating at all, and (2) the other kind abuses meditation. The following three hindrances belong to the first category.

The first hindrance is the believers' barren mind. He knows the duty required of him to meditate and is ready to do it at any given time. However, his mind is empty and does not know what to meditate on. He is at loss for knowing how to spend the time and bring proper thoughts into his mind. He does not know where to begin. He has heard messages that challenged him to meditate and often dwelt on thoughts of his sin problems and God's mercy, but still his mind is barren. He is blind and forgetful. If any thought comes into his mind, sooner or later, either he lost his train of thought or he is occupied with different thoughts. Thus, he cannot do what he has been taught to do. As a result, he is discouraged and soon wants to quit trying to meditate. He feels that his mind does not benefit at all. Instead of seeking for help, he recoils to himself again. Of course, the devil does not miss an opportunity to snatch him from holy desires to be godly. In such times, Rogers suggests four things to meditate upon: (1) his unworthiness, vileness, various corruptions, and sins, (2) the greatness of God's bounty in forgiving his many sins and daily subduing, more and more, the dominion of sin and Satan within him, (3) he should be guided through the present day after the rules of his daily direction (especially those which seem hardest to follow) as he seeks to both rightly order his heart and frame his life in agreement with God's Word, and (4) let him meditate on the several pieces of the Christian armor, considering how God has appointed this to strengthen him (Kindle loc., 937-942 of 2097).

The second hindrance is of the believer's mind's unfitness for meditation. He is simply unfit for spiritual and heavenly duties. It is because his mind is occupied with desires and thoughts that do not fit the heavenly things. His mind is worldly, slow, and unwilling to take spiritual and heavenly things. With such a condition of mind, he is utterly unable even to begin with any level of meditation he ought to have. He may know of his duty to meditate, and even want to do it, but his mind is so unfit that it cannot dwell on good and spiritual things. A reason behind this unfitness is probably his negligence in keeping his spiritual duties. He has left his mind to wander for too long, and his mind is taken away by the disorder of heart and will. He has failed to self-discipline in order to taste and appreciate heavenly things. He has allowed his mind to wander in the world and to lose its tracks on the Christian path. Such person must consider the following: (1) he has received a mind to please God (Colossians 1:10; Hebrews 13:18). (2) He must be teachable and ready for any duty. (3) He must be willing to set himself in opposition to his own will and fleshly desires, because he is not a debtor to the flesh (Romans 8:12). (4) He must ask the Lord for help to bring his wandering heart back to God and His righteousness (Psalm 51:12). (5) He must not be discouraged and easily give up when he sees his infirmities. Infirmities are his needs, and he must bring them to God for help. Thus, his needs should not be a cause for him to leave God but to come to Him. He needs the Lord and must bring them to Him in humble spirit.

The third hindrance is the lack of time and opportunity for meditation. Probably, it is one of the most frequent excuses we make for ourselves and hear from others. We say that there are other necessary things we must attend to. We also say that we are really busy both at home and work. We may say that there is no quiet place for us to go for solitude. There are always some people around, family, friends, colleagues, or even strangers, and there is no secret room to retreat to be alone. We do not and should not deny that there are necessary things we must do. We are living dutiful lives. There are things we must do. We do not deny them. However, there is something that the Lord taught Martha

in Luke 10:42, "But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." Mary was with the Lord, while Martha was busy with necessary work. The point is that there are many ordinary duties we must attend to. However, they should not displace the duty of meditation, to be with the Lord. Sometimes, we put off the duty of meditation in order to perform other duties first. We may show our lack of discretion by even forgetting about meditation. We, by all means, admit that there are times when we are not permitted to do our spiritual duty of meditation. At such times we must be saddened by lost opportunities, though we cannot but attend to urgent matters, though they are worldly affairs. I am talking about the attitude of mind. If our mind is set towards God's honor, even if we have to do some earthly things, we will be able to do them joyfully in the Lord. Isn't it true that we should do all things as unto the Lord? Isn't it true that we ought to bring glory to God through all things including eating and drinking? Therefore, being dutiful to all necessary things is neither sinful nor evil at all. However, as soon as all necessary works are done, we must go back to the duty of practicing meditation, not to omit it any more.

In the introduction, I said that Rogers suggested two kinds of hindrances to practicing meditation in Christian life: (1) one kind hinders God's people from meditating at all, and (2) the other kind abuses meditation. We have covered the first category hindrances. Now we move to the second category of hindrances.

The first of such is ceremonial meditation. Let us consider that we are persuaded to meditate upon various matters for godliness. We may begin to practice it and train ourselves to fervently and dutifully do it. We even benefit from it. However, alas, as usual, we may fall into the state of lukewarmness in heart. We spend time to meditate without skipping it, but there is no more of heart moving and throbbing motions in our hearts. We have not skipped meditation, but there is no more delight in it. We are just happy and satisfied with the fact that we did meditate! It becomes a routine. It becomes a custom. It becomes a daily ceremony. Thus, externally we are still spiritually healthy and sound, but there is no sincerity. We may begin to feel that we are close to God with lips but distant from Him in heart. Thus, as the Lord said to the children of Israel, so we do worship Him in vain (Isaiah 1:13; Matthew 15:9). Meditation could be an abuse of spiritual condition in such times.

The second in the category is wandering minds. We know and understand the necessity of meditation. We even desire to use it for our edification and godliness. However, our minds are full of floating things from fantasies to worldly concerns. There is no fixation of mind on heavenly things. In fact, heavenly things are quite contrary to the thoughts, concerns, and imaginations of our minds. When we experience it over and over again repeatedly, we get tired of it. We even feel guilty about it. What we want to do is to meditate on heavenly things but what we do is actually what we do not want to do, desiring and thinking of earthly things. Even the best of God's people have confessed the same thing. There may be many reasons why we do experience such weariness in spirit. One common cause we may consider is that we have not bound our minds and thoughts but have given them too much freedom. Therefore, we have allowed our minds to take pleasure from whatever comes into the mind. Without disciplining and controlling the things in our minds, we have allowed them to go in their own directions even in disordered ways. Once we allow such looseness in our minds, it is hard to bring them back to holiness and godliness. Though we want to reject their re-entry into our minds, they have already free passes and planted their seeds to multiply them. Our minds have become their fertile fields for multiplication. Hebrews 3:12 says, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." The author spoke to the believers (brethren), and he warns them that they might be taken over by evil heart of unbelief. Yes, our hearts could fall into such danger, if we keep allowing our minds to wander and do not nurture them with good things of the Lord.

Good meditation is a fruit of the good use of our mind, time, and opportunities. As we live reverently during the daytime, our evening meditation will be sweet and godly. If we live worldly during the daytime, it is hard for us to wean ourselves from worldly things. After all, how we conduct ourselves during the day and how we live will affect how we meditate when we have opportunities for meditation.

Rev Okman Ki

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 Worshipers, 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 live on YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/@NewLifeBPCLondon>

We thank God for providing Rev Mark Lehman to minister to the church till mid-May.

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 Bible Study – Rev Lehman will be leading a study from the book of Micah titled: *“Restoration Through Judgment”*

MEMORY VERSE

Last Week

“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Hebrews 12:2

This Week

“When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”

Mark 2:17

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

Dear all,

When attending the church Worship Service and Bible Study, 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 online.
- 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.

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