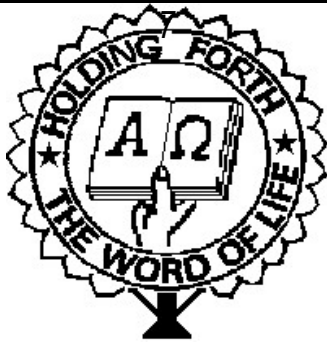




NEW LIFE

BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

Vol. 30 No. 34

LORD'S DAY 23 AUGUST 2026

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Morning Service – 11am

Prelude

The Lord Is in His Holy Temple

Call to Worship

Isaiah 11:1–10

Opening Hymn *

RHC 26 – “Come, Thou Fount”

Opening Prayer

Dn Jonathan Kim

Responsive Reading

Psalm 66

Second Hymn *

Psalm 66:1–4

(To the tune of Azmon, RHC 61)

Scriptural Text

Exodus 17:8–16

Pastoral Prayer

Rev Lim Chee Boon

Sermon Message

“The Lord is My Banner”

Closing Hymn *

RHC 435 – “The Banner of the Cross”

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.

WESTMINSTER SHORTER CATECHISM QUESTION 19

Q: What is the misery of that estate whereinto man fell?

A: All mankind by their fall lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse, and so made liable to all miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever.

Comments:

We are here taught the extent of the misery which has come upon us through Adam's sin. We are told that we have, in consequence, no longer that intercourse with God which Adam enjoyed, but are living under his displeasure, and therefore exposed to all the sorrows of this life, the pangs of death, and the pains of hell for ever. This is the condition in which we all are by nature; and, unless God had taken pity on us, this is the condition in which we should all have remained.

Scriptural Reference:

Isaiah 59:2, Ezekiel 18:4, Genesis 3:17, Psalm 9:17

Dear brethren, starting this week, Rev Lim Chee Boon will be authoring the main article in our church bulletin. The articles have been specially prepared for our edification, and we hope they will be a source of encouragement and growth.

ALL IS VANITY (ECCLESIASTES 1:1-18)

There is no doubt that King Solomon is the author of the book of Ecclesiastes. In verse 1, it is said that he is a king in Jerusalem and the son of King David. Another son, Adonijah, tried to usurp the throne after David's death, but he was swiftly executed (1 Kings 2:25). One other reason to believe in Solomon's authorship is the mention of wealth and knowledge in the writing. Solomon possessed all the wealth of the country. His extensive knowledge of natural history, literature, and music demonstrates that his wisdom was not confined to matters of state but encompassed a broad spectrum of intellectual pursuits.

Verse 2 is very disturbing; the preacher says, "Vanity of vanities, vanity of vanities; all is vanity." The author doubles and redoubles this melancholic word to emphasize the utter emptiness of the whole world, with all the pleasures and profits and honors and endeavors and business and events that are under the sun. Derek Kidner explains the vanities as, "A wisp of vapor, a puff of wind, a mere breath, nothing you could get your hands on, the nearest thing to zero: that is the vanity this book is about. What makes this reading of life disturbing is that this airy nothingness is not seen as a mere flicker on the surface of things, where it might even have had a certain charm. It is the sum total."

First, life under the sun is vanity (meaningless) (1:3-11).

The word "vanity" has the following connotation:

1. Life is brief and empty.

Job loathed his own life by saying, "my days are vanity" (Job 7:16). The reasons are that life is like a wind (a breath, v. 7), a passing cloud (transitory, v. 9), soon to end (v. 8), and will never come back (v. 10).

2. Life is very fragile.

The psalmist describes the frailty of life in Psalm 62. The writer says that God is our rock and defense. He is a refuge to those who trust in Him (vv. 6-8). The "men of low degree" (v. 9) is a statement about the futility and emptiness of human existence. Regardless of their station in life, all people are ultimately subject to the same fate and are equally unable to secure lasting significance through their own efforts. "Men of high degree"—This statement challenges the common assumption that success, power, and social status confer value and meaning upon a person's life. In the eyes of the psalmist, those who are esteemed in the eyes of the world are ultimately living a falsehood, believing themselves to be significant based on temporary and ultimately meaningless achievements. This idea reflects the biblical theme of the transience of human glory and the emptiness of pride.

3. Life is full of uncertainties, with ups and downs.

The book of Ecclesiastes poignantly captures the unpredictability of life. In 9:11, Solomon says, "I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all." This verse underscores the reality that human efforts do not always lead to predictable outcomes, as life is subject to time and chance.

A. All labour under the sun is vain (1:3, 8)

³ What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun? ⁸ All things are full of labour; man cannot utter it: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.

The writer is not begrudging labour. Labour has its benefits. "Profit" has the same meaning as dividends. The Bible does teach that hard work pays. A Christian should be diligent. In the context, the writer is saying that labour under the sun is vain. "Under the sun" has reference to the temporal

life on earth. So, the writer learns from experience that all labours just for this earthly life is vain. Because material things have no eternal value. The lesson here is, lay up treasure in heaven. *“¹⁹ Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: ²⁰ But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal”* (Matt. 6:19-20)

B. Life on earth without spiritual significance is meaningless (1:4-11)

C.

⁴ One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever. ⁵ The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose. ⁶ The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits. ⁷ All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again. ⁹ The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. ¹⁰ Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us. ¹¹ There is no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after.

History of mankind passed on from one generation to another. The earth and its elements remain unchanged. “there is no remembrance of former things.” So, what is life. In the play “Julius Caesar”, Shakespeare says, “Out, out, brief candle! Life’s but a walking shadow, A poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage, and then is heard no more: It is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.”

Second, man’s wisdom is also vain (1:12-18)

A. Seeking wisdom (vv. 12-15)

¹² I the Preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem. ¹³ And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven: this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith. ¹⁴ I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit ¹⁵ That which is crooked cannot be made straight: and that which is wanting cannot be numbered.

Solomon was internationally famous for his wisdom. If the answers to the seeming emptiness of life could be found by wisdom, he would be the person to find them. God gave Solomon wisdom to rule the nation (1 Kings 3:5-28). And he wrote thousands of proverbs. Solomon is an epitome of wisdom—“As wise as Solomon” (1 Kings 4:29-34). However, Solomon sighed because wisdom alone is futile. But he did not leave us to suspire. The wisdom that comes from God is to be embraced. When it is used to live, to serve, and to give account to Him. If God is not in the equation, wisdom itself is truly futile. The lesson here is, “For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” (Mark 8:36)

B. The Preacher’s Despair (1:16-18)

¹⁶ I communed with mine own heart, saying, Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten more wisdom than all they that have been before me in Jerusalem: yea, my heart had great experience of wisdom and knowledge. ¹⁷ And I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit. ¹⁸ For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.

The preacher’s search on life ended with despair. The sentiment is, the more one get to know, the more he realised he does not know. “In much wisdom is much grief.” The increase in knowledge systematically increases sorrow.

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WELCOME TO NEW LIFE B-P CHURCH LONDON

Our Lord's Day activities begin with the **Worship Service** at **11.00 am** followed by a **Bible Study & Children's Sunday School** at **1:30pm**. 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 worshipping with us today.

For those unable to attend Church in person, please join our Worship Service and Bible Study on our live-stream via YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/@NewLifeBPCLondon>

We thank God for providing Rev Lim Chee Boon to minister to us today. Rev Lim will be ministering to us until end September.

Tithes & Offerings – The offering box is located at the entrance to the Church Sanctuary.

After-Service Fellowship – Please join us for lunch fellowship after the morning worship service – for this week, sis Mui Leng will be providing lunch.

Afternoon Bible Study, 1:30pm – Rev Lim will continue the study from 1 John.

Children's Sunday School, 1:30pm – held in the manse after the After-Service Fellowship.

MEMORY VERSE

This Week

"And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovahnissi."

Exodus 17:15

Last Week

"Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the LORD."

Haggai 1:8

The summary of this chapter of Ecclesiastes is, our earthly life must have spiritual significant. When a person is wholly earthly, then everything he does, possesses, and achieves is temporal. These things end with the person's life on earth. There is nothing amassed that has eternal value.

Christians realized that all they have is from God. They will use their material goods to glorify God. In their lives, they will seek God's presence and power. We must be able to hear God's voice in the midst of the bustling and hustling of lives on earth.

A Story

A Native American was visiting New York City. Walking with a friend near the center of Manhattan, the Indian suddenly stopped his companion and whispered, "Wait, I hear a cricket." His friend was disbelieving. A cricket? In downtown New York? Impossible. The cacophony of sounds from passing taxis, impatient honking, people shouting, brakes screeching, and subways roaring would make it virtually impossible to hear a cricket, even if one were present. But, the Indian was insistent. He stopped his friend and began to crisscross the street and sidewalks with his head cocked to one side, intently listening. Then, in a large cement planter where a tree was growing, he finally found the cricket and held it up for his friend's benefit. Amazed, his friends asked how he could have possibly heard that cricket. Reaching into his pocket, the Indian grasped some coins, held them waist-high, then dropped them on the sidewalk. Everyone within a block turned to look in their direction. Charles Swindoll explains: "It all depends on what you're listening for. We don't have enough crickets in our heads. We don't listen for them. Perhaps you have spent all your life searching for a handful of change and you've missed the real sound of life."