



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. 11 No. 11

LORD'S DAY 11 MARCH 2007

My dear readers,

1. "To walk where Jesus walked" Holy Land Study Tour, November 1-17, 2007

In eight months' time another opportunity will be made available to our members to "walk where our Lord walked," where the Son of God lived and died to give us hope and life everlasting. The Land is like no other land. It contains "history in every step" and man's future destiny. It is the Land that holds the future of the world.

To our overseas BP Churches: several members who had missed our last trip said, "Why didn't you tell us? Don't leave us out next time." So, here we go! Eight months' notice for everybody's benefit. It will be a profitable and unforgettable trip.

2. A Voice from the past: on "Membership Vow"

Every new member promises two things: a) to keep the peace and harmony of the Church, and b) to submit to the authority of its leaders. Some, like the unthinking people of the world, say "vows are made for breaking." But this is not what God's Word says.

Charles Bridges, in the 19th Century (about 160 years ago) has excellent exposition from Ecclesiastes, especially for those who think nothing of breaking vows, but justify themselves with many words, forgetting that "in the multitude of words there wanteth not sin" (Prov 10:19). Here then is godly wisdom from the past by a man of God, Charles Bridges' commentary on Ecclesiastes.

3. On Making and Breaking of Vows

Ecclesiastes 5:4-7 - *When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?: For in the multitude of dreams and many words there are also divers vanities: but fear thou God.*

This subject of vows requires a very careful and delicate treatment. A solemn engagement advisedly made with God is a transaction needing much prayer and...

Continued on Page 2...

consideration. It should rest upon the clear warrant of God's Word. It should concern a matter really important, suitable, and attainable. It should be so limited, as to open a way for disentanglement under unforeseen contingencies, or altered circumstances. It will be an hindrance or an help, according as it is the result of impulse, or of intelligence. There must be a real conviction of our total weakness, acted out in simple dependence upon Omnipotent grace; else the most sincere vow will be found too feeble an engagement for the hour of temptation, and will issue in discouragement and perplexity. The soul is rather ensnared than helped, and the enemy gains an advantage even in the very posture of resistance.

And yet some special season of covenanting with God may be valuable, to strengthen the weakness of the young disciple, to remind him when he is apt to forget, and to humble him in the consciousness of short-coming or fall. Vows however are not like prayers – our daily work, "*without ceasing*" (1 Thess 5:17). We have burdens and infirmities enough pressing upon us. Let us be careful, that we do not rashly or needlessly multiply them. The obligation indeed more fully belongs to the Old dispensation. The "*law of liberty*" gives no express direction. We might suppose that a clear apprehension of the terms of the Gospel would render vows altogether unnecessary.

Here, however, is not the direction to *make a vow*, but the obligation – having made it – cheerfully and instantly to pay it. It is an engagement we should be careful to discharge to man; much more to God. The rule is therefore emphatically repeated – *Defer not to pay it. Pay that which thou hast vowed*. Instant readiness is the best proof of sincerity. Oh! my God, what is there? – Is there anything that withholds my whole heart this moment from thee? Let me live under the awful weight of the words – *He hath no pleasure in fools* – "who go about, one while to flatter him in making a vow, and afterwards to mock him in refusing or delaying to pay it." Far *better* to have refrained from *the vow*, which was a self-imposed obligation, than from the payment, which is now a bond upon the soul. To refuse to enlist may be guiltless; but to desert the colours is to be guilty of death. We had need be cautious in making vows, that we may be upright in *paying* them.

"Make a strait path for our feet." Go onward in singleness and simplicity of heart. There must be a living faith, not only that we may lay hold at the beginning, but hold on to the end. All depends – not only on laying hold, but holding on.

Every member – so active is the principle of sin – stirs the whole body. *The rashness of the mouth causes the flesh*, - the whole corrupt mass, - to sin. To how many inconsiderate and unwarranted vows does this warning apply! Never *suffer thy mouth* to promise what thou canst not, and oughtest not to perform. This is to bring sin upon us, by seeking occasion for it, when God has left us free. The vow of celibacy, without the gift of continency – what a torrent of sin has it poured in upon the Church! (*End of quote*)

Continued on Page 3...

4. Keep the Lord's Day

Reminder to God's faithful. There is blessing in keeping the Lord's Day holy, in service and worship. Your worship is made complete and blessed when you remember the Lord both **morning** and **evening**.

5. "Farewell China!"

(Memoirs continued from February 4, 2007)

For Father and Mother, their sole source of support was cut; their meagre savings would not last long. By 1931 they had three more hungry mouths to feed. The family had left the homeland and its natural disasters of earthquake (1918) and typhoon (1922) and political turmoil for Nanyang's "greener pastures." The drastic southward move was taken after months of deep soul searching and careful "weighing the pros and cons," fully persuaded that it was God's will.

But now things seem to have gone wrong. Was it a big mistake?

The family were marooned, abandoned by God and forsaken. So it seemed to be the case. Father found help from a few friends in Singapore, but the long term solution was nowhere in sight.

During those anxious moments, our comfort and assurance came only from God's Word: "*Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?*" (Matt 6:26).

In their forty-year wilderness sojourn, two million Israelites were sustained. God sent manna, the bread from heaven, wholesome and fresh everyday. *Can the same God not keep you supplied also, O ye of little faith?*

Thank God, He sustained the family through the dark days of the Great Depression which lasted for most of the decade of the nineteen thirties. Like Job the patient, we learned to wait upon the Lord, and to say with Job, "*But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold*" (Job 23:10).

He who had called us out of China to Nanyang will surely see us through the days ahead. The Depression was great, but our God is greater. Only trust and be not fearful. Our God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. What He did for the Israelites, He will surely do for us, for we also are His people.

*Lovingly in the Lord
Dr Tow Siang Hwa, Sr Pastor*

WELCOME TO NEW LIFE B-P CHURCH LONDON

CHURCH THEME: WALK IN THE NEWNESS OF LIFE (Romans 6:4)

Our **worship services** begin promptly at **11.00 am and 4.00 pm**.

Please stay back for Bible Study and fellowship lunch after the morning worship and for tea after the evening service. Do invite your friends to come to Church.

Worship Services			WELCOME
Morning	Today: 11/03/2007	Next Week: 18/03/2007	We extend a warm welcome to all worshippers this Lord's Day. We welcome Maria Maio, Louise Chng, Joanne Liao and Mari to our morning worship service last week.
<i>Chairman:</i>	Seetoh Yoong Chiang	Jonathan Kim	
<i>Speaker:</i>	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	
<i>Message:</i>	The Pursuit of Holiness	True And False Conversion	
<i>Text:</i>	1 Peter 1:15-16	Matthew 7:13-23	
<i>Organist:</i>	Yanning	Anthony	
Evening			
<i>Chairman:</i>	Jonathan Kim	John Poh	
<i>Speaker:</i>	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS • Family Worship: For those who interested to open their homes for family worship for the months of March and April, please contact Pr. Mok. • Church Easter Camp: Please register early so as to facilitate planning of food and accommodation. Please see Sis Sharon Chan and Grace Lim. • Membership Roll Update: Please be informed that in preparation of the upcoming ECM in Apr 07, members are to prayerfully seek the Lord's will whether they would like to continue their membership with this church. Letter pertaining to this will be sent out soon. The closing date is 31 Mar 07, after which it will be assumed that you have decided otherwise. Thank you for your co-operation. • RPG & Junior RPG for the month of Apr – Jun 07 are available for your collection at the book table. Please take as many copies as you need and pass a copy to your friend.
<i>Message:</i>	The Names of God – Jah	The Names of God – Jehovah-Hoseenu	
<i>Text:</i>	Exodus 3:14	Psalms 95:6	
<i>Pianist:</i>	Anthony	Feng Qian	
Other Duties			
	Today: 11/03/2007	Next Week: 18/03/2007	
<i>Ushers</i>	Daniel/Joyce	Wah Soon/Constance	
<i>Sunday Sch:</i>	Carol	Joyce	
<i>Lunch:</i>	Maureen	YC, Jonathan & YAF	
<i>Washing-up:</i>	Volunteers	Volunteers	
<i>Bible Study:</i>	BBK / DHW	BBK / DHW	
Appointments of the Week			
Fri 16 Mar	7.00 pm	Young Adults Fellowship: Led by Anthony Poh	
Sat 17 Mar	4.00 pm	Prayer Meeting & Bible Study: Spkr: Jonathan	
Last Week's Worship Service Collections			
Offering: £647.43		Lunch: £41.00	
Memory Verse			
<i>Previous Week (Mar07 Wk 1): James 1:19</i>			
Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:			
<i>This Week (Mar07 Wk 2): Hebrews 12:14</i>			
Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:			