



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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GROWING IN PERSONAL HOLINESS

A. The Christian's Deliverance from the Power of Sin

What is it that makes a born-again Christian different from others? Or is there supposed to be any difference at all? According to the Word of God when a person is saved, he is changed from being dead *in* sin (Ephesians 2:1) to being dead *to* sin (1 Peter 2:24; Romans 6:2). What are some things that will be seen in a person that is dead to sin?

Firstly, he will have a changed attitude towards sin. He no longer loves it but hates it. Now he loves righteousness instead of sin. He desires to please God, live according to His principles and do good to others. God's commandments become a delight to obey, rather than a chore or duty to perform.

Secondly, he will experience a freedom from the power of sin that he has never known before (Romans 6:18). Where in previous times he used to yield to sin easily whenever it calls, he now hardly responds to the calls of sin. Its 'spell' or irresistible influence over him has been broken because of the new nature he has received from God. O what joy it is to be liberated like this!

These are some things that will become noticeable in a person who is truly saved. They can be likened to beautiful fruits appearing on a barren tree after it has been transplanted into fertile ground and received refreshing rain. All this is the Lord's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes (Psalm 118:23)!

But what if there is no change at all? What if he has no change of attitude toward sin and no freedom from the power of sin even after a long time? Has he really been saved? The answer is No. A person who is saved is *dead* to sin. If he is still very much *alive* to sin, he is not saved and his profession of faith in Christ is questionable (cf. Acts 8:9-21).

Please examine yourself (2 Corinthians 13:5) and ensure that you are no longer dead *in* sin, but dead *to* sin. The Word of God instructs you to "*give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.*" (2 Peter 1:10)

However, while the Lord's work in your life has made you dead to sin, that does not mean that there is nothing more for you to do to overcome sin. On the day you were saved, you started on a spiritual journey that requires discipline – a journey that leads you onward and upward to holiness!

What is holiness? Holiness is defined as separation from, and hostility to, all evil and...

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defilement. It is the attribute of God described in verses like 1 John 1:5 – *"God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all."* And Habakkuk 1:13 – *"Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity."* Since you have become His dear child, God's will for you is that you will grow in personal holiness. And you can grow only by doing three things consistently:

1. Consider yourself to be dead to sin.

Romans 6:11 – *"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."* As you live each day of your life, take into account the fact that you are now dead to sin. Remind yourself that Christ has already freed you from the power of sin, and act according to that fact. Put away any lingering notion that sin still has full control over you and that you must yield to it. Be firmly convinced that through the grace of Christ you can grow in personal holiness and become holy, like Him.

There may be times when your faith will weaken and you begin to doubt. You feel that even though you have Christ, you can never be free of certain besetting sins in your life. As a result of this you give up trying to resist altogether, and you admit defeat. You think that your sin problem is too great to overcome. If this is your thought, then change your thinking: Believe the promise that *"sin shall not have dominion over you"* (Romans 6:14) and that with God's help you can win your battle against it (Romans 8:37). Begin, by considering yourself to be dead to sin, and then go on to do the next thing...

2. Yield your members as instruments of righteousness.

Romans 6:13 – *"Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."*

The members mentioned here are the body parts and their functions, such as seeing, hearing, speaking, touching, and walking. A Christian can choose to use them in daily life either as instruments of unrighteousness, or as instruments of righteousness. What we are told to do here is to yield them to God as instruments of righteousness.

Growing in personal holiness therefore involves constant effort to yield yourself fully to fulfill God's righteous purposes. This means devoting your body in all its parts to do works that bring glory to God, works that bring you closer to Him, and works that will help to make Him known. By yielding yourself to God, you will be able to do the next thing...

3. Obey the Word of God as a servant.

Romans 8:16 – *"Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, His servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death or of obedience unto righteousness?"* Obedience implies a servant-master relationship. You are no longer a servant of sin, which was your former master. You are now a servant of righteousness (v.18) and more specifically, you are a servant to God (v.22). Your role as a servant requires obedience.

What does obeying mean? It simply means doing whatever God instructs you to do. It also implies self-denial and total submission. Growing in personal holiness requires you to render this kind of obedience. You may ask, "What exactly are we to obey?" This is...

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given in the next verse as *"that form of doctrine which was delivered unto you."* (v.17) In other words, you must obey the teachings of God's Word.

Thus we have seen that a Christian's growth in personal holiness depends on how consistently he considers himself to be dead to sin, yields his members as instruments of righteousness and obeys the Word of God as a servant. Romans 6:22 says, *"But now being made free from sin and become servants to God ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."* This verse shows that the outcome of doing these things is holiness.

B. The Christian's Struggle with the Presence of Sin

However, this does not mean that holiness can be reached overnight. It is attained progressively and gradually. This also does not mean that you will one day reach a stage where sin is no more present in your life – a stage of perfect holiness. You can only reach that after you have been called home to glory at the end of your earthly life (1 John 3:2). As long as you live in this world, the presence of sin will not be completely removed from your life (1 John 1:8). You may sin less and less as you grow in personal holiness, but you will not become sinless in this present life.

The Bible shows us the struggles that many godly men had with sin even though they had attained a high degree of holiness: men like Noah, Moses, Elijah, David, the apostle Peter and the apostle Paul. Paul describes his struggle with sin in Romans 7:18-21 – *"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me."*

C. The Christian's Help for His Pursuit of Holiness

Is there anything then that can help you in your struggle with sin? Yes, there is. God has provided you with the very best help: the Holy Spirit! He dwells permanently within every born-again Christian and His power is always available to you. You should therefore keep relying on Him. This reliance on the Holy Spirit is described in various ways: Being filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18), walking in or after the Spirit (Galatians 5:16,25; Romans 8:1,4) and being led by the Spirit (Romans 8:14).

Begin each new day by asking the Lord to grant you the power of the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:13). This request has to be renewed every day because the filling of the Spirit (unlike His indwelling) is not permanent. And since the Holy Spirit makes use of your knowledge of Scripture to do His work in your life (John 14:26), please be sure to keep feeding your soul with a healthy diet of God's Word. Psalm 119:11 – *"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."* This will provide Him with all the necessary tools and materials He needs to accomplish His work in you (2 Timothy 3:16,17).

I trust that the Lord will use this article to stir up a fervent desire in you to grow in personal holiness. God's will is that you should be holy, as He is holy (1 Peter 1:15,16). The multitude of biblical encouragements, warnings and exhortations to be holy make this point very clear. So do not ever give up your pursuit of holiness, but keep pressing on!

*Rev Charles Seet, Singapore
(adapted from Life B-P Church bulletin dated 7 September 2008)*

WELCOME TO NEW LIFE B-P CHURCH LONDON
CHURCH THEME: WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION WITH FEAR
AND TREMBLING. (Philippians 2:12)

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: 02/11/2008	Next Week: 09/11/2008	We extend a warm welcome to all worshippers this Lord's Day. We like to welcome Daphne, Melissa, Wai Yee, Peng Yu, Louise, Marina, Vivienne and David to our worship services last Lord's Day.
<i>Chairman:</i>	Jonathan Kim	Jonathan Kim	
<i>Preacher:</i>	Mark Chen	Rev Yeo Seow Phong	
<i>Message:</i>	Christ Took the Dirt	Christ Crucified	
<i>Text:</i>	Ruth 4:1-9	1 Corinthians 2:1-5	
<i>Organist:</i>	Anthony	Mark	
Evening			
<i>Chairman:</i>	Jonathan Kim	Joshua Flinn	<p style="text-align: center;">NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lord's Supper: Next week, we will be observing the Lord's Supper. Please come with your hearts prepared. • Calling of Resident Minister: Continue to pray for the Lord's calling for a resident minister. The church leaders are praying about calling Rev Timothy Ki. • Duty Rota for Nov and Dec '08: The rota for the next 2 months can be found on the notice board in the Fellowship Hall. • Pray for those who are sick: Douglas (knee pain), Maria (ankle and joint pain), Constance (left heel pain), Maureen (knee pain), John • Pray for those who are seeking employment: John, Constance • Pray for Journey Mercies: Douglas (Ghana), Joey & family (vacation for 2 weeks), Hubert (S'pore), Jiak Eng (S'pore) • Those serving on the Lord's Day: Please gather behind the pulpit area at 10.30am for prayer.
<i>Preacher:</i>	Mark Chen	Rev Yeo Seow Phong	
<i>Message:</i>	God Is My Healer	The Characteristics of False Teachers	
<i>Text:</i>	Exodus 15:22-26	2 Peter 2:10-19	
<i>Pianist:</i>	Grace	Sophia	
Other Duties			
	Today: 02/11/2008	Next Week: 09/11/2008	
<i>Ushers</i>	Josh / Sharon	Daniel / Yetta	
<i>Sunday Sch:</i>	Hui Min	Hui Min	
<i>Lunch:</i>	Maureen	Constance	
<i>Washing-up:</i>	Volunteers	Volunteers	
<i>PA Crew:</i>	Nicholas	John	
Appointments of the Week			
Fri 7 Nov	7:30pm	Young Adults Fellowship: Prayer Meeting	
Sat 8 Nov	4.00pm	Prayer Meeting & Bible Study: Led by Rev Yeo Seow Phong	
Last Week's Worship Service Collections			
Offering: £384.38		Lunch: £39.10	
Memory Verse			
<i>Last Week (October 08 Wk 4): 1 Corinthians 13:2</i>			
And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.			
<i>This Week (November 08 Wk 1): 1 Corinthians 13:3</i>			
And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.			