



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. 15 No. 52

LORD’S DAY 25 DECEMBER 2011

ORDER OF WORSHIP

	<i>Morning Service – 11am</i>	<i>Evening Service – 4pm</i>
<i>Prelude</i>	<i>The Lord Is in His Holy Temple</i>	
<i>Call to Worship</i>	Isaiah 9:6	Psalm 95:1-3
<i>Opening Hymn *</i>	RHC 152 – “Joy to the World!”	RHC 163 – “Angels, from the Realms of Glory”
<i>Opening Prayer *</i>	John Poh	John Poh
<i>Gloria Patri *</i>	<i>Glory Be to the Father</i>	
<i>Responsive Reading 1</i>	The Proclamation - Luke 1:26-38	Proverbs 6:1-35
<i>Second Hymn *</i>	RHC 165 – “Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne”	RHC 157 – “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”
<i>Responsive Reading 2</i>	The Birth of Christ - Luke 2:1-20	---
<i>Third Hymn *</i>	RHC 155 – “The First Noel”	---
<i>Announcements & Memory Verse</i>	John Poh	John Poh
<i>Tithes & Offerings & Doxology *</i>	RHC 160 – “As with Gladness Men of Old”	---
<i>Scriptural Text</i>	Luke 2:11	Exodus 20:17
<i>Pastoral Prayer</i>	Rev Timothy Ki	Rev Timothy Ki
<i>Sermon Message</i>	The Promised Messiah	The Tenth Commandment
<i>Closing Hymn *</i>	RHC 151 – “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”	RHC 247 – “Cleanse Me”
<i>Benediction / 3-Fold Amen *</i>	Rev Timothy Ki	Rev Timothy Ki
<i>Postlude</i>	<i>The Lord Bless You</i>	<i>Lord Dismiss Us (stanzas 1 & 4)</i>
* 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.

DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav’nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

GLORIA PATRI

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost,
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen, 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.

Church Theme 2011 – “Continue in the Word” – 2 Timothy 3:14

BIBLICAL PRAYER – PART 43

Now is the time to evaluate and digest all the information we have collected in order to produce a conclusion. As I said in the beginning, this study begins with an open mind and purposes to see every possible interpretation of the given text and consider controversial issues related to head covering. What we must not forget is that we should be able to show Christian charity and humility to anyone who may not share the same conclusion we may come up with. I must begin my deliberations by putting in place some boundaries for this talk. I do not intend to analyze the whole passage piece by piece. I am going to talk about a few key elements of the passage, and all of them are to contribute to the main issue of women's head covering. Therefore, I need to ask your understanding for the limitation of this article. There are a few things we need to consider in order to understand the issue of the head covering.

First, it has been controversial whether prophesying and praying in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 were for public or for private meetings. (1) The meaning of public or private assemblies needs to be defined. If they were for public assemblies, how much public are we talking about? Some have said that they are for public worship services, while others have made a differentiation between public worship services and public gatherings or assemblies, which effectively exclude worship services. If they were for private sessions, how much private are we talking about? Are they for private but large assemblies or private in closet? (2) If the passage is understood that they are for public worship services, immediate challenges arise not only from the practice of public prayer by women, but also from the practice of public preaching by women. It is an irony that most conservative churches do require their women to wear head coverings, and that they are the ones not allowing women either to pray or preach in public worship services. (3) We also need to understand whether prophesying refers to the preaching of the Word of God in public worship services or not. If prophesying is the same as preaching, are we going to allow women to preach during worship services? (4) If prophesying refers to charismatic gifts, then the issue grows into the issues of apostolic gifts for today. If we take the cessationists' position, then we may not need to talk about prophesying, but how about praying? (5) If we say that the passage is about private sessions by women in their closets, it is a bit strange that the headship of man over woman may be demonstrated only in private, but not in public. (6) We must recognize that praying and prophesying are mentioned together in the given passage. Therefore, we may have a difficulty to separate one from the other. However, it does not mean that there is no way to understand the issue: (a) It is possible that prophesying in this passage may not mean "to preach the Word"; or (b) it may mean to preach, but Paul does not deal with the role of women for preaching here in this passage, but later in 1 Corinthians 14:34. (7) We also need to recognize that there are examples of women prophesying in the Bible. However, none of the examples is related to public worship.

Second, most commentaries mention cultural elements in relation to the head covering. Some say that it was a custom of Paul's day that decent women wore a head covering, while prostitutes showed their hair. They also say that there were many religious prostitutes in those days. Paul wanted to make a clear distinction between Christian women and the pagan religious prostitutes by commanding Christian women to wear head covering. However, there are equally good and godly commentators who argue that it was a custom of Paul's day that women did not wear head covering in Greek culture. Therefore, by commanding Christian women to wear head coverings, Paul promoted a distinctive Christian tradition. They also argue that the Jewish custom in his days was to ask male worshippers to wear head coverings during worship. Therefore, man without head covering was uniquely Christian. However, any argument from culture is not decisive evidence for or against any view concerning woman's head covering.

I have read a short essay, "Head Covering Customs of the Ancient World", written by Michael Marlowe. In his conclusion, he says, "From the discussion of customs given above, it may be seen that interpreting 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 in the light of customs of the day is no simple matter. Aside from our uncertainties about Jewish, Greek and Roman customs, in Corinth we have these three cultures coming together in one place, at a time when the Greek and Roman traditions were losing their force. In fact this cultural ferment and dissolution is one of the things that set the stage for Paul's successful mission in Greece. . . . In any case, "cultural expectations" in Corinth were probably much more complex and fluid than some scholars think they were, and I do not think that the ambiguous information and speculations about Greek customs provide us with any sure basis for a general interpretation of this passage." I have heard and read completely contradicting arguments using cultural factors to interpret 1 Corinthians 11:3-16. However, neither of them is completely convincing. It does not appear to be wise to use cultural understanding to interpret this passage.

Third, the churches which practice women's head coverings have argued that women in worship services must wear head coverings. This practice inevitably produces two questions. (1) The first question is: Does it mean that women with head coverings are allowed to prophesy (to preach) in worship services? There are various approaches to answer the question. (a) Paul forbids women from prophesying (preaching) in public services. One of the principles of Bible interpretations is to compare less clear passages with clearer passages. It is very clear that Paul prohibits women from preaching in 1 Corinthians 14:33-35 and 1 Timothy 2:11-13. 1 Corinthians 14:33-35, "For God is not *the author* of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.³⁴ Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but *they are commanded* to be under obedience, as also saith the law.³⁵ And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." 1 Timothy 2:11-13, "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.¹² But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.¹³ For Adam was first formed, then Eve." 1 Timothy 3:1-2, "This *is* a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.² A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach." It is clear that Paul emphatically denies women's involvement in preaching and pastoral offices. (b) Women have been excluded from preaching and pastoral offices in church history. Though it is such an issue today that women vie for pastoral offices, it has not been the case in church history, especially early Christian churches. For example, In his commentary on First Corinthians, Origen (AD 185-254) simply observed that various women who are said to have prophesied in Scripture need not have done it in a public assembly: "If the daughters of Philip prophesied, at least they did not speak in the assemblies; for we do not find this fact in evidence in the Acts of the Apostles. Much less in the Old Testament. It is said that Deborah was a prophetess ... There is no evidence that Deborah delivered speeches to the people, as did Jeremiah and Isaiah. Huldah, who was a prophetess, did not speak to the people, but only to a man, who consulted her at home. The gospel itself mentions a prophetess Anna ... but she did not speak publicly. Even if it is granted to a woman to show the sign of prophecy, she is nevertheless not permitted to speak in an assembly. When Miriam the prophetess spoke, she was leading a choir of women ... For [as Paul declares] 'I do not permit a woman to teach,' and even less 'to tell a man what to do'" (Origen, *Fragmenta ex commentariis in epistulam i ad Corinthios (in catenis)*, Greek text published in Claude Jenkins, "Documents: Origen on I Corinthians. IV," *Journal of Theological Studies* 10, 1909, p. 41; English translation from Roger Gryson, *The Ministry of Women in the Early Church*, Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1976, p. 28).

I'll continue with this talk next week.

Lovingly,

Your Pastor

WELCOME TO NEW LIFE B-P CHURCH LONDON

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.

APPOINTMENTS FOR THE WEEK			WELCOME					
Fri 30 Dec	No Young Adults Fellowship		We extend a warm welcome to all worshippers this Lord's Day. We like to welcome Robert Vallance to our worship services last Lord's Day.					
Sat 31 Dec	No Prayer Meeting & Bible Study							
<i>Next Lord's Day</i>	<i>Morning Service</i>	<i>Evening Service</i>						
<i>Preacher</i>	Rev Timothy Ki	Rev Timothy Ki	LORD'S DAY DUTIES					
<i>Message</i>	Have a Mind to Work	Covenant Confirmed						
<i>Text</i>	Nehemiah 4:1-23	Exodus 24:1-18						
NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS			TODAY: 25/12/2011					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunday Pre-Lunch Bible Study: Pastor Ki will continue the series of studies on "The Doctrine of the Church." • Saturday Bible Study from January 2012: Pastor Ki will begin a new study on "Eschatology". • Pray for those who are sick: Douglas, Barbara, Prema, Eld Ford, Margaret, May Chew, Constance, Deborah Sherwood, Jonathan's father, Brian, Mrs Ki, Lai Kheng. • Pray for those who are/will be on travel: Sonia, Nana, Lee Wei's Family, Elizabeth, Scott & Venise, Joy, Hannah, Matthew, Alan & Naomi, Daniel & Samuel. • Pray for those seeking employment: Yetta, Rachael, Michelle. • Christmas Day Offering: Today's offering will be used as love gifts to the Kenya Missions and Pilgrim Tabernacle. 			Chairman: John Organist: Anthony Pianist: Anthony Ushers: Daniel / Jonathan Sunday School: No Sunday School Lunch: Christmas Lunch Washing Up: Volunteers PA Crew: Lee Wei					
			NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS	NEXT WEEK: 01/01/2012				
			Worship Service Collections - Last Sunday: £699.10, Lunch: £62.20 Attendance - Morning: 30 (A) 3 (C), Evening: 26 (A) 3 (C)			Chairman: Jonathan Organist: Anthony Pianist: Anthony Ushers: Daniel / Evelyn Sunday School: No Sunday School Lunch: Mrs Ki Washing Up: Volunteers PA Crew: John		
						SHORTER CATECHISM QUESTION 104		
						Q: What do we pray for in the Fourth Petition? <i>A: In the Fourth Petition – (which is, GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD) – we pray, That of God's free gift we may receive a <u>competent portion</u> of the good things of this life, and enjoy <u>his blessing</u> with them.</i> <u>Comments:</u> We now come to the petitions concerning ourselves – the <i>order</i> of the prayer being God <i>first</i> , and <i>ourselves afterwards</i> . In this petition we pray for the supply of our bodily wants. We ask for two things – a sufficient portion for the day, and God's blessing with it. <u>Proofs:</u> Proverbs 30:8, Psalm 90:17		
			MEMORY VERSE					
Last Week	This Week	Next Week						
<i>"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."</i> Titus 2:13-14	<i>"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."</i> John 3:16-17	<i>"So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work."</i> Nehemiah 4:6						