



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. 24 No. 21

LORD’S DAY 24 MAY 2020

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Morning Service – 11am

Afternoon Service – 2pm

Call to Worship

Psalm 65:1-4

Psalm 116:1-2

Opening Prayer

Jonathan Kim

Jonathan Kim

Responsive Reading

Psalm 61

Scriptural Text

James 1:19-27

Malachi 2:4-9

Pastoral Prayer

Pr Mok Chee Cheong

Pr Mok Chee Cheong

Sermon Message

How to Hear the Word with Profit

Corrupting the Covenant

Benediction

Pr Mok Chee Cheong

Pr Mok Chee Cheong

NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please note that due to instructions from the government with regards to the ongoing Corona Virus epidemic, we will be suspending our Activities and Sunday Worship Services in the Church premises with immediate effect.

Instead we will be streaming the sermons via a video conferencing facility each Sunday.

Please email *admin 'at' newlifebpc.org.uk* for more information.

Tithes & Offerings – these can be by cheque made payable to: New Life Bible Presbyterian Church. For direct bank transfer to the church account, please contact the treasurer, Mr Tom Tan.

Bi-Weekly Bible Study will be held online this Wednesday 27th May. Please speak with Pr Mok for more information.

SHORTER CATECHISM QUESTION 12

Q: What special act of providence did God exercise toward man in the estate wherein he was created?

A: When God had created man, he entered into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of perfect obedience, forbidding him to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, upon the pain of death.

Comments:

When God made Adam and Eve, he said that if they kept his commands, they should live for ever; but if they broke his commands, they should die. This was the *Covenant of Life*. God then put forth his first command, which was that they should not eat of a particular tree, called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Their regard for this would show how far they were willing to obey him in all things.

Scriptural Reference:

Genesis 2:16-17; Galatians 3:12

MEMORY VERSE

Last Week

“My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.”
James 1:2-3

This Week

“For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts.”
Malachi 1:11

Next Week

“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.”
James 1:12

ENDURING AFFLICTION

Introduction

The psalmist says, “*Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all*” (Ps. 34:19). God does not distinguish His people from unbelievers by exempting them from affliction. He distinguishes them by causing all things - even their afflictions - to work out for their spiritual good and eternal deliverance (Rom. 8:28). But how should we respond to afflictions in order to be best assured that we properly submit to Him in times of affliction? Think of not only persecution, but also grief, an accident, physical sickness, depression, unemployment, a strained family relationship, abuse, or any other hardship. Any of these can trouble our souls and we might ask, “Why?”

How to respond to affliction?

God has His sovereign purpose for everything. Whatever God is doing, it is better for us to ask submissively: “Lord, what must I do? How should I respond so that this works for my good and Thy honour?”

The Bible’s answer is not an extensive “how-to” list that taps into man’s inner potential, but simply says, “by faith.” Faith directs us to entrust ourselves to God. Faith is exercised in a variety of ways, but every proper response to affliction is rooted in faith.

This is best illustrated by Hebrews 11. In the Book of Hebrews, we read Christians faced all kinds of afflictions in a hostile culture. To encourage them to persevere as Christians, the apostle pointed to Old Testament saints as examples. Here we find a wide spectrum of afflictions. We can only list a few samples:

- How could Enoch endure living in such wicked times just before the Flood (Heb. 11:5)? How can you spiritually survive in the wicked culture of our godless society? The same way Enoch did. Faith in God must be a living part of your daily walk. If God is for you, what can man do to you (Rom. 8:31)?
- How could Abram leave his homeland, not knowing where the Lord was leading him (Heb. 11:8)? Is God taking you down an unfamiliar path? How can you avoid anxiety? As Abram did: by faith in the Lord who “*leads you in the way you should go*” (Isa. 48:17).
- How could Moses’ parents obey God rather than Pharaoh’s wicked command (Heb. 11:23)? How can we stand up against the immoral trends of our infant-killing culture and obey God rather than man? Only by faith in the Lord who is the sovereign King of kings.
- How could Moses choose to “suffer affliction with God’s people” and resist the temptation of Egypt’s treasures and pleasures (Heb. 11:25)? The same way Joseph ran from a seductress. By faith in the Lord, whose name they did not forget in Egypt (Gen. 39:9). By faith they valued the “reproach of Christ” more than Egypt’s treasures and pleasures and saw “*him who is invisible*” (Heb. 11:27).

Hebrews 11 also mentions that believers faced other dangers (Heb. 11:27-30). They *“stopped the mouth of lions, quenched the violence of fire...”* (Heb.11:33ff). How? These believers had no super powers (James 5:17). It was simply by faith. Not that faith itself is a “magical potion” for physical or even psychological strength. While humanly weak, faith connected their soul to Christ (2 Cor12:10). For His Sons’ sake, God puts all things under Christ’s feet for their good (Eph. 1:22). He also renews and sanctifies believers, preparing and preserving them for glory. Faith unites them to the Victorious One (1 John 5:4-5). Therefore they can endure *“all things through Christ”* (Phil. 4:13).

Conclusion

If you are afflicted but still an unbeliever, then you are in great danger. Your temporal affliction is a prelude to eternal affliction. Your affliction calls you to repent and believe. For the believer, affliction is also a call to persevere in faith. Do not stumble in unbelief at your struggle. *“Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray”* (James 5:13). Call upon the Lord in the day of your trouble (Ps.50:15). Believer, remember that Christ also *“was oppressed and afflicted”* (Isa. 53:7). Continue *“looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross”* (Heb. 12:2). The best way to cope with affliction is by faith in Christ, who exchanged His cross for a crown.

- PM (adapted)