



# **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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**LORD’S DAY 14 FEBRUARY 2021**

### ORDER OF WORSHIP

	<i>Morning Service – 11am</i>	<i>Afternoon Service – 3pm</i>
<i>Call to Worship</i>	Psalm 100	Isaiah 41:10
<i>Opening Prayer</i>	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	John Poh
<i>Opening Hymn</i>	<i>Now Thank We All Our God</i>	---
<i>Responsive Reading</i>	Psalm 99	---
<i>Second Hymn</i>	<i>Psalm 99 verse 1-5</i> <i>(to the tune of Ellacombe)</i>	
<i>Scriptural Text</i>	Hebrews 13:7	Esther 2:21-3:2
<i>Pastoral Prayer</i>	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	Pr Mok Chee Cheong
<i>Sermon Message</i>	<b><i>Remember - The Key to Spiritual Progress</i></b>	<b><i>The Test of Obedience</i></b>
<i>Closing Hymn</i>	<i>Thy Word Have I Hid in My Heart</i>	---
<i>Benediction</i>	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	Pr Mok Chee Cheong

### **SHORTER CATECHISM QUESTION 50**

**Q: What is required in the Second Commandment?**

*A: The Second Commandment requireth the receiving, observing, and keeping pure and entire, all such religious worship and ordinances as God hath appointed in his Word.*

Comments:

This commandment bids us: 1. Adopt the way of worshipping God appointed by himself; 2. Adhere to it; 3. Not add to it; 4. Nor take from it. There must be no will-worship.

Scriptural Reference:

Matthew 28:20, Deuteronomy 12:2

### **MEMORY VERSE**

**Last Week**

*“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”*

**Hebrews 12:2**

**This Week**

*“Let brotherly love continue.”*

**Hebrews 13:1**

**Next Week**

*“The king’s heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.”*

**Proverbs 21:1**

# **SURVIVING A TIME OF MORAL IMPLOSION**

**Our culture has certainly self-destructed—morally speaking. Values have been turned upside down. We can also discern things collapsing in on themselves spiritually. This is because sin constantly pushes towards self-destruction. These are times when nations and Churches seem to have destroyed themselves just like Israel (Hosea 13:9). Will the Church survive? Will we and our children come through it with the same faith and values? Other generations have been here before us. We can learn much from those in the past who brought God’s truth to bear on their situation.**

The period following the Restoration of King Charles II in 1660 was marked by spiritual self-destruction. The Covenanters in Scotland faced a tyrannical attack on the spiritual independence of the Church. These were times of persecution for those who sought to remain faithful. Along with hundreds of other faithful ministers, William Guthrie of Fenwick was forced out of his pulpit. His ministry had been accompanied by true revival.

The Wednesday before his final service was observed as a day of humiliation and prayer. Guthrie preached about Israel’s self-destruction from Hosea 13:9. The point was clear: Scotland had reached the same point of self-destruction. Years later, while being hunted down by soldiers, Richard Cameron preached at a hill-side gathering from the same text.

We have it in commission to say to the Church of Scotland: “Thou hast destroyed thyself, O Church of Scotland, O ministers of Scotland, O commons and people of all sorts in Scotland, ye have destroyed yourselves”

## **1. IS IT REALLY THAT BAD?**

In our generation, which champions self-esteem and self-confidence, this is not a palatable message. Not everyone can see the reality of moral self-destruction. As Guthrie observed: “No doubt there are many, who think there is no wrath on Scotland. They think that we are in a good condition and have not destroyed ourselves”.

Guthrie referred to the force raid on the Church which dismantled its biblical worship and government. “All our precious things are taken captive by the adversary”. Ministers had been banished, imprisoned or prevented from their work. Godless men had taken their place. “Do you not yet see, how the land is ruined and destroyed, and the flocks of the Lord’s people scattered? And are these things and many more no evidences of God’s wrath?”

## **2. WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?**

Guthrie observed much prayer but not much evidence of being “humbled and weeping”. “The Lord’s people meet and pray, and there is no answer returned, but one ill upon the back of another”. Sometimes it is difficult to know how to respond to such violent moral changes. Perhaps we feel wearied by the onslaught and at times even confused.

Guthrie believed that our weakness and lack of understanding results from sin. “Why are God’s people so faint hearted and weak? Are there not many of you faint-hearted? Is not your spirit and courage and ability to be valiant for the truth gone? And is that no evidence of wrath?” “Israel has sinned, and therefore his heart is faint and his hands feeble. He has fled from the pursuer”.

Why is there such weakness? It is due to sin and lack of real conviction about our sin. We must see that we have much for which we should repent. We must abandon the idea that we are completely immune from the moral self-destruction around us. This is the only way to survive a time of moral self-destruction in the nation and professing Church. Guthrie poses some searching rapid fire questions about our response to moral self-destruction.

- have we been silent before the Lord under our conviction?
- have we been busy in searching out the sins by which we have destroyed ourselves and others?
- have we been quick to turn from the sins we have discovered?
- have we diligently pled at the throne of grace for pardon and peace with God and the loosing of our bonds?
- have we been ashamed at every new declaration of wrath because of our responsibility for it?
- would we be satisfied with no release or deliverance unless the Lord frees us from the yoke of our sins and heals our backsliding?
- have we been brought to submit to God afflicting us in any way He sees fit?
- have we been zealously stirred up against sin when newly exposed by God's judgements?

### **3. WHAT HAVE WE DONE TO BRING IT ABOUT?**

Guthrie's message is unusual. His reflections on the moral implosion affecting the land are not detached social commentary. Neither were they merely a passionate denunciation of social evils. It is easy for us to consider moral self-destruction within the Church and nation in a detached way. We observe God's sovereign judgements and discern the intentions of those who are enemies to the cause of truth. We might be able to acknowledge that sin has had a ruinous impact on the Church of God. Yet it is difficult to be truly and thoroughly convicted that we personally have any responsibility.

We need to go beyond even a generalised conviction about our sin and its consequences to being sorely convicted in an abiding way about particular sins we have committed. Guthrie observed that few had arrived at this point.

Guthrie speaks directly about the sins of different groups within society. He addresses the specific sins of ministers in their office. Then he speaks to elders and deacons about their omissions. He addresses leaders in society, servants and people in general. Lastly, he comes to make solemn charges against professing Christians.

1. I charge you with falling from your first love, evidenced by falling away from your former diligence.
2. I charge you that all your religious duties are a matter of form.
3. I charge you with slothfulness, in giving to the Lord the refuse of your time and serving Him by fits and starts.
4. I charge you with worldly-mindedness. Covetousness has overwhelmed everyone.
5. I charge you with inordinate affections to every idol that comes in your way.
6. I charge you with pride and self-conceit, and despising those who do not come up to your standard.
7. I charge you with unbelief and ignorance of God and his Word.

8. I charge you with a decay of the substance of true religion. This includes lack of tenderness of conscience, prizing the promises, zeal for the glory of God and against sin. Christian fellowship has been abused and neglected.

#### 4. WHAT HOPE IS THERE?

It is clear that Guthrie believed that the pressing need was to set time aside to mourn over such sins and seek for grace to help against them. The message of hope was that the Lord will hear and give some help and deliverance, if not their condition would only get worse. Hosea 13:9 does not just speak about the Church and nation destroying itself. It also offers the hope that their help is in God alone. This is truly encouraging and bright with hope: “notwithstanding we have destroyed ourselves, yet there is hope of help in Him”. “If Israel was thoroughly convicted that he has destroyed himself, there would be hope that God would be Israel’s help”.

The people of God should not despair even though their condition seems to be irrecoverable. It seems so to you, but it is not so to God. The things that are impossible to men are not impossible to God. What though God smite us all down, if He does good to our souls and teaches us out of His law? What though we lie under these folk’s feet for a time? He will make our worst condition best. What though we lack public ordinances for a while, if He prove a little sanctuary to us? What though He shatters all outward worldly helps (showing their emptiness) since He can help either by ordinary or extraordinary means? Let us never be discouraged and lose heart. If the heart is gone, all is gone.

*- adapted from William Guthrie (1620–1665) - minister of Fenwick in Ayrshire,  
reformationScotland.org*

#### **NEWS / ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Dear fellow worshippers and friends,

The government has announced that London has entered the Tier 4 category for Covid-19 restrictions. Whilst places of worship are able to stay open, the Church Committee has decided to close the Church to safeguard the wellbeing of the congregation.

**Both Morning and Afternoon Worship Service will be conducted online.**

If you require the link to our online zoom services, or have any questions or require further clarity, please call the church manse, or email us at admin 'at' newlifebpc.org.uk.

**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.