

MARANATHA MESSENGER

Weekly Newsletter of

MARANATHA BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

"Present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Colossians 1:28)

Private Circulation Only

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Address: 63 Cranwell Road, Singapore 509851 Tel: (65) 6545 8627 Fax: (65) 6546 7422

E-mail: maranatha.bpc@pacific.net.sg Website: www.maranatha-bpc.com *

Sunday School: 9.45 am Worship Service: 10.45 am Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8.00 pm

Pastor: Rev (Dr) Jack Sin (HP: 9116 0948)

A Need to assemble one-self for Worship

Introduction

Scripture in Hebrews 10:25 states: *"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching"*.

This portion of scripture reminds us not to stay away one from another. We belong in the Body of Christ, The Church. We worship the Thrice Holy God: The Only Living and True God (1 Thess 1:9).

God has been so gracious and merciful to grant us salvation. God's Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ, has perfected His work of Salvation at Calvary's Cross. Through His vicarious death as atonement for our sins, we are justified through faith in Him (Roms 5:1). And, in so receiving this Faith which was imputed unto us, we are called in *"....in one hope; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all"* (Eph.4:4-6). Moreover, as believers, we believe the Bible is the Word of God. The finality of our faith rests solely on the promises of the Word of God - For God is the *"Author and Finisher of our faith"* (Heb 12.2).

Christian Reflection

When we 'forsake the assembling of ourselves together', we have lost the desire to worship in coming together in oneness of spirit. Sadder still, by not coming to worship together, we have dishonoured the One who has called us out of 'darkness' into His marvelous 'light'. We choose to stay in 'darkness' and in this way, we give sign of a breakaway of faith. This faith that has been imputed unto us the moment we believed in Him. As believers, we come together by faith in the Body of Christ. We also bear testimony of a Born-again Christian and identify our allegiance to the God of our Salvation, Jesus Christ - also our Risen Saviour, our soon coming King and Judge.

To come together in worship is paramount in our obedience and reverence to God, our Creator. We need to remember that He created us in His own image. He gave us life and more than that, He is also the 'taker' of lives (Eccl 8:8). Can it all be that we have not the fear of God? To stay away from coming to church for worship is a worrying thought and un-becoming of a child in the family of The Most High God. It is taking God for granted. God in His ever graciousness and mercies, He allows us to exercise our free will. But, can our conscience be clear that we do not offend Him for He is the head of The Church even the Body of Christ?

As Believers, we whole-heartedly adhere to the Word of God. Our faith rests solely in the promises of God in His Word - THE BIBLE. In coming together in worship, we keep the blessed hope even of His second coming. We must need to exhort one another in coming together for worship to keep the burning desire in us awaiting upon for His second coming as in Titus 2:13-15: *"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. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee"

In this unsettled and a world full of uncertainties, we cannot but, be confronted with multiple trials and tribulations. There is certainly no sight of total recovery nor a passage of clear escape. The sufferings and unpleasantness of volcanic upheavals, mammoth floods, fires, pestilences and diseases all add up to the wrath of God. In the earlier portion of Paul's Epistle to Timothy, Chapter 3, he warned that in the 'last days perilous times shall come'. Time and time again, we manifest our depravity. We believe in ourselves rather than give reverence to God.

We keep clinging to our carnal even our vicious ways, "*For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not: but what I hate, that do I*" and "*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*" (Roms 7:15, 18).

The above captioned verse on Hebrews10:25 do have a clarion injunction. We must take every effort to be steadfast to come in mutual expectation of worshipping God in Spirit and in Truth in the Body of Christ. God has accomplished His creation of the 'heaven and earth and all things therein' in 6 days. On the 7th day, God rested from all His works. As His redeemed people, God expects us to also rest on the 7th day. Yet, it is a rest of joy and gladness where we need to come together in worship. It is the Sabbath Day of the Lord and must we not come for worship and or to do otherwise? Will this please God to know that we have totally 'bypassed' His 4th commandment if we forsake assembling ourselves together for worship?

When we come for the Sabbath Day worship, we have the foretaste of heavenly bliss in worship as Apostle John revealed in the Book of Revelation Chapter 4. How very fortunate for us as we come for worship being a Redeemed of God; separated from the sinful flesh and now with a newness of life offering our praises and adoration to our Almighty God. When we are present in the Sabbath Worship and hearing of God's Word, indeed it will edify us just like the Psalmist in his outpouring of joy and jubilation in Psalms122:1, "*I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go unto the house of the LORD*". Do we want to lose all these blessings and stay away from it? God forbid!

Another important point to consider when we come for the Sabbath Worship is the taking of the holy elements even of silent prayers of searching our hearts to repent and ask for forgiveness of our sins. Is not this our earnest desire to come for the Lord's Supper on Sabbath Day Worship? Perhaps, we may not come because of some other engagements but, do consider that, by not coming, we miss blessings of peace when we commune with the Lord. The whole week may go with irreparable regrets. It is a sad reflection of our deceitfulness and wickedness of heart. We have ignored or rather rejected the invitation to meet the Lord in our personal and inner reflection.

Last and not least, we gather together not only for worship but, to also be in oneness with God's people for fellowship. We gather in His Name and in the right Spirit, we show love and concern one for another. We learn to be forgiving and show our concern for those who are in need. This is very important as scripture in Galatians 6:2 states, "*Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ*". On another section of Scripture, we are also reminded to "*Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep*" (Roms 12:15).

Conclusion

May we always '*Trust in the LORD.....*', '*Delight thyself also in the LORD.....*', '*Commit thy way unto the LORD.....*' and lastly, '*Rest in the LORD and wait patiently for him.....*' (Psa 37:3-7). O! Lord, this is our earnest prayers for we ask all these in the Blessed

Name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, Amen!

Dn. George Tan

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Heavenly Objectives (by Jack Sin)

Be Changed in Our Perspective of Life

Col 3:1, *'If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.'*

■ If we are true Christians, we are new regenerate beings in Christ, transformed and, sanctified. We have a higher purpose in life which is to seek things above and not be enamoured with temporal things of the earth . Be heavenly minded in an earthly abode.

■ Normal human beings (those who are not in Christ) will think only of earthly pleasures and possessions as their aim in life. But as Christ followers, we have different objectives. Our focus, priorities are based on heavenly goals for an eternal cause.

■ Why do we seek things above? Because we will spend eternity in heaven one day.

Col 3:2, *'Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.'*

■ The Affection of our mind, affects our thinking and it needs to be heavenly. Our mental faculty must be heavenly minded and not one that is only concerned with the ephemeral things of this life.

■ What saturates your mind today? In the light of eternity, let us seek things above, including thinking on the blessed Word of God daily and to win souls for Christ who will live forever.

Col 3:3, *'For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.'*

■ We are to be dead to the world. Our life is hid with Christ in God.

■ This is about submitting our mind to the power of the Gospel that requires our entire being and attitude to focus on Christ and his purpose for us. Do not be seduced by the temptations of this fleeting world and all it allures but be risen with Christ.

Col 3:4, *'When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.'*

■ Christ is our life. We live with Christ and we should glorify and enjoy God forever and not self or the world.

■ We await the glorification which is not only the change of our body but the day when we appear in the presence of Christ.

■ What then is our objective and motivation of living? What drives us? Is it Christ and His glory and His kingdom or just self and work and studies and more money? Something to think and pray about and to examine ourselves.

Things that we should change

Col 3:5, *'Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.'*

■ Mortify: It means to put to death. We should put to death some attributes listed here which are part of our old sinful nature. We are dealing with unedifying characteristics, deadly affections, evil desires, immorality, violence and covetousness.

■ Everyone is vulnerable to temptations. We can succumb and fall into iniquity anytime. But Joseph is the best example that shows that we can escape from temptations. Genesis 39:9, he says, *'There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?'*

■ Remember also 1 Corinthians 10:13, *'There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.'*

■ A particular characteristic, covetousness, which is said to be equal to idolatry. It is an inordinate affection for something that eats into our life. Beware of this deadly craze for wealth, position, power or pleasures. Luke 12:15 says, *'And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.'*

■ When we covet something, we are actually allowing ourselves to be obsessed by what we desire, which can then become a deity in our hearts and minds if we are not careful; and it will take us away from the worship of our God.

■ Even the harmless things that we do, our interests (i.e. sports computer games, studies, work etc.) can become an idol for us if we become obsessed with them and put them as more important than God or the things of God. Rather remember 1 Timothy 6:6 which says, *'But godliness with contentment is great gain.'*

Things to put off

Col 3:6-7, *'For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.'*

■ If we are God's children, we are not under His wrath. But yet, sometimes we provoke God's wrath on ourselves because we walk in disobedience. We should give up our depraved ways.

■ Do not go back to our old ways anymore. Do not do things that are not pleasing to God's sight because we are now in Christ, we are not children of disobedience anymore.

Col 3:8-9, *'But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;'*

■ We have to put off evil deeds or practices like malicious words or anger that do not build up faith.

A New Person & New Desires In Christ

Col 3:10-11, *'And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.'*

■ Instead, we have to put on a spiritual garment of righteousness which is after the image of Christ and live daily for Him unto godliness.

■ In Christ, we are renewed day by day by the meditation of His Word and prayer. There is no difference one or another before God even though we may be of a different race or nationality. Everyone who justified by Christ and set apart for Him will enjoy the sanctification in Him as we grow in holiness and the fear of God daily.

Conclusion

So remember, as Christians we have a totally changed perspective, because we have Christ, our risen Saviour as our primary focus. Matthew 6:21, 33 says, *'For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.'* We have things in us changed because our life is not ours anymore but Christ is our entire lives. We have new

desires in Christ, because He is our all in all. Let us live with this new perspective in mind and glorify Him till He comes.

Summarised by Wiwin Sunarto

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Wedding of Ian and Amy Tan on 9 Sept 2009.

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At the Pulpit
Theme for the Quarter:
“Experiencing God through the Psalms”
Rev Dr Jack Sin
“Spiritual X-Ray – Divine Examination” Psa 139

[End of MM]