

SERVICE

08 OCTOBER 2017

PRAISE AND WORSHIP

OFFERING

SCRIPTURE READING

PASTORAL PRAYER

MESSAGE

RESPONSE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BENEDICTION

Thank you for joining us today.

Bethany Evangelical Free Church
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Email: admin@bethanyefc.org.sg
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vacation Bible School 2017

Dates: 13 – 15 December 2017, Wednesday to Friday

Time: 9am – 12noon

Venue: 133 Fidelio Street, Singapore 458518

Please invite your friends and their children! We are currently looking for volunteers, if you're keen to serve, please contact Jeriel.

Church Staff on Leave

Pastor Sherman will be on leave from 8 Nov 2017 – 11 Nov 2017.

Church administrator Zoey will be on leave from 8 Nov 2017 & 10 Nov 2017.

Kindly write in to admin@bethanyefc.org.sg or speak to Tat Hock / Ken Meng for any urgent matters.

Prayer Meeting October 2017

Let us come together and pray for our church on 27 October 2017 (Friday) @ 8:00pm at Bethany Evangelical Free Church, 133 Fidelio Street Singapore 458518. Members are encouraged to attend. Let us commit Bethany EFC and one another to the Lord in prayer. Please take note that the Mission's Ministry will be in-charge of this month's prayer meeting.

SERVING FAITHFULLY

We are thankful for all our faithful servants in Christ this week.

08 OCTOBER 2017	
Preacher	Pastor Sherman Tjong
Worship Team	Wong Keen Mun Zachary Teo Lee Li Hui Chan Jing Xiong Claudia Lee
AV Projectionist	Joshua Tan Rachel Tan
Ushers	Claudia Lee Calvin Han Wong Bee Tin
Worship Updater	Wong Bee Tin
Counting Stewards	Rose Hong Mavis Tan
Floral Arranger	Ng Siok Keow
Refreshments Stewards	Ng Yui Wei Foo Feng Yi
Sunday School Team	Children's Day Celebration

ROSTER

Many thanks to brothers and sisters who serve the Lord readily each week.

15 OCTOBER 2017	
Preacher	Pastor Sherman Tjong
Worship Team	Calvin Han Benjamin Wong Ng Yui Yun Lim Yen Yee
AV Projectionist	Benjamin Yap Debra Yap
Ushers	Cheok Seok Cheng Chin Hock Yew
Worship Updater	Wong Mei Choo
Counting Stewards	Tang Sai Leong Wong Mei Choo
Floral Arranger	Maureen Tan
Refreshments Stewards	Carol Hong Ng Yui Yun
Sunday School Team	Secondary 1 - Service Mavis Tan Claudia Lee Margaret Ng Chin Hock Yew

SCRIPTURE READING

The Fulfillment of the Law

Matthew 5:17-26

¹⁷“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. ¹⁸For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

Matthew 5:17-18

Some Christians say this

Have you ever heard this saying among Christians: “We are New Testament Christians, so we do not have to concern ourselves with the Old Testament.” Most people use this statement to explain why we don’t have to follow certain sections of the Mosaic law (especially the dietary laws that might potentially separate us from our favourite pork or shellfish dishes). When faced with difficult questions on the law of the Old Testament, some Christians would be quick to dismiss it.

What is your view regarding the Old Testament? Most evangelical Christians would have a high view of the New Testament, but Old Testament accounts are very quickly dismissed as archaic, complicated, confusing or just known as bible stories for Sunday school children.

In Matthew 5, Jesus gives us His view on (1) the Law and (2) the Prophets (this is how Jesus refers to the Old Testament). He says that he ‘did not come to *abolish* them but to *fulfil* them’ (v.17). The Old Testament is not *negated* by the first coming of the incarnate Son of God. Rather, the Law and the Prophets find

their fulfilment in the person and the work of Jesus Christ. Therefore, we should view the Old Testament the same way - that it finds its fulfilment in Jesus Christ.

Jesus fulfils the prophets

Jesus came to fulfil the prophets, bringing to fulfilment the prophecies from God. One of these prophecies is that Jesus is the suffering servant in Isaiah 53. He was to be tried and condemned, being silent before his accusers, executed among criminals and would be a sacrifice to be punished for sins that are not his own. Zechariah also speaks of God's own representative who is killed at the hands of His people and the people of God will eventually realize whom they have killed and mourn for the One who had died.

Jesus fulfils the law

Jesus Christ also came to fulfil the Law. The 'law' here refers to the *Torah* (the first 5 books of the Bible). He obeyed perfectly every single one of the commandments that God provided for his people. As we come to understand what Jesus himself taught; that the commandments of God require not just obedience in our actions but obedience in our hearts, we come to see how impossible it is to keep the law. But Jesus kept the entirety of the law completely, not just in his deeds but in his motivations as well.

The *Torah* does not just contain the commandments of God; it also reveals the provisions that God gave his people for the forgiveness of sin. An example of these provisions would be the Tabernacle, the temple sacrifice, and the Levitical priesthood. In New Testament language, these are called shadows because they represent something else that is to come. The book of Hebrews tells us that the performance of the ritual of these shadows does not actually take away sin, but they point towards the One who can.

Hebrews 10:1 tells us "For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near."

Jesus is our great high priest who offered the perfect sacrifice, accomplishing the priestly work of appeasing the wrath of God and making payment for our sins perfectly through his work on the cross. All the provisions and all the shadows find their *ultimate fulfilment* in the work of our Lord Jesus – He is the fulfilment of the law.

The Old Testament provides the model for obedience that Jesus lived

Just because the Law finds its fulfilment in Jesus Christ, it does not mean that we can forget about its teachings. Those that are called least in the kingdom of heaven are described here as having little regard for obedience to the commandments of God. 'Whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven' (v.19).

The good disciple would obey and teach the commandments: he would go beyond lip service and model his life to be guided by God's teachings. This does not equate to a literal observance of every single regulation (as if it is a checklist to be fulfilled), but rather, the showing of the attitude of obedience and respect to the word of God.

Any Christian who dismisses any part of the Old Testament is a weak Christian; the consistent Christian will be guided by the law, and will teach others the importance of living by it. A mature Christian, while understanding the importance of keeping the law, would also not jump to the other end in walking the path of mere legalism.

Jesus gives us a provision against legalism in v.20. He mentions the Pharisees and scribes who were an example of the greatest righteousness imaginable within Judaism. Jesus says that the strict observance of the law by the Pharisees and Scribes still would not qualify them to enter the kingdom of heaven. A greater righteousness is needed. A righteousness that has fulfilled all of the law and the prophets - which is Jesus Christ himself.

What is your view towards the Old Testament law and the prophets?

Jesus Christ revealed in *all* of Scripture

The entirety of the Old Testament points us towards the person of Jesus Christ. As we grow in our knowledge of Scripture, we should be seeing Christ peppered throughout the narrative of the Old Testament. Understanding the full implication of how he has kept the law for us and done the full work of redemption for us would bring us to have an increased appreciation for the work that He has done for us.

Not even an iota nor a dot will pass away until the complete fulfilment of the words of God (v.18). Until today, the entirety of God's law remains binding on the human race, Christian or not. Just as the Jews could not keep the entirety of God's commands, neither can we. But Jesus Christ has done it. He has fulfilled the law perfectly. And the promise given to us is that he has fulfilled it on our behalf, that we might be able to stand before God with the full righteousness of Christ with us, if only we believe.

– The End –

TRUTH BYTES

Comfort, Comfort My People, Says Your God

Kevin DeYoung

Excerpt: The Good News We Almost Forgot (Chapter 1)

1. **Q. What is your only comfort in life and in death?**

A. That I am not my own, but belong – body and soul, in life and in death – to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ. He has fully paid for all my sins with His precious blood, and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil. He also watches over me in such a way that not a hair can fall from my head without the will of my Father in heaven: in fact, all things must work together for my salvation. Because I belong to Him, Christ, by His Holy Spirit, assures me of eternal life and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for Him.

2. **Q. What must you know to live and die in the joy of this comfort?**

A. Three things: first, how great my sin and misery are; second, how I am set free from all my sins and misery; third, how I am to thank God for such deliverance.

The first question is easily the most famous in the Heidelberg Catechism. It may be the only part of the Catechism most Christians (even Reformed ones) ever hear. But I suppose, if you get to hear just one, this is a pretty good one to get. Heidelberg's first question is so striking because of the word "only". If it asked "what comforts" you, that would be a polite but underwhelming question. I'm comforted by sleep, chocolate chip cookies, a good book, and the soundtrack

from *The Mission*. But when the Catechism asks what is your *only* comfort, it is getting at something deeper. “Comfort” translates the German word *trost*, which was, in turn, rendered *consolation* in the first official Latin version. *Trost* is related to the English word “trust” and has the root meaning of “certainty” or “protection.” Heidelberg is asking, “What is your solace in life? What is your only real security?”

Heidelberg’s first question not only sets the theme for the whole Catechism, it also poses the most important question we will ever face. **What enables you to endure life and face death unafraid?** Is it that you read your Bible every day? That you attend church every Sunday? That you give to the poor? That you have a cushy retirement account saved up? That you haven’t committed any of the big sins in life?

We live in a world where we expect to find comfort in possessions, pride, power and position. But the Catechism teaches us that **our only true comfort comes from the fact that we don’t even belong to ourselves**. How countercultural and counterintuitive! We can endure suffering and disappointment in life and face death and the life to come without fear of judgment, not because of what we’ve done or what we own or who we are, but because of what we do not possess, namely, our own selves.

Heidelberg’s emphasis on belonging to Christ probably comes from John Calvin. Some people have the impression that John Calvin was a rigid, arid dogmatist, but actually his was a profoundly God-entranced heart. Listen to the passionate beat of Calvin’s heart in this passage, which finds an echo in the Heidelberg Catechism: “We are not our own: let not our reason nor our will, therefore, sway our plans and deeds. We are not our own: let us therefore not set it as our goal to seek what is expedient for us according to the flesh. We are not our own: in so far as we can, let us therefore forget ourselves and all that is

ours. Conversely, **we are God's: let us therefore live for him and die for him. We are God's: let his wisdom and will therefore rule all our actions. We are God's: let all the parts of our life accordingly strive toward him as our only lawful goal.**"

But it doesn't help much to know all about comfort and joy if we don't know what is required to live and die in this comfort and joy. Belonging to Jesus and not ourselves means knowing three things: ***guilt, grace and gratitude***. The rest of the Catechism will follow this threefold outline. **First, we understand our sin. Then we understand salvation. And finally we understand how we are sanctified to serve.**

All three things are necessary. If we don't know about our sin – which brings a true sense of guilt – we will be too confident in our abilities to do right and make the world a better place. We will ignore our most fundamental problem, which is not lack of education, or lack of opportunity, or lack of resources but sin and its attendant misery. But if we don't know how we are set free from this sin and misery – which comes through God's grace – we will try to fix ourselves in futility or give up altogether in despair. And if we don't know how to thank God, showing gratitude for such deliverance, we will live in a self-centred, self-referential bubble, which is not why God saved us from our sin and misery in the first place. If Christians would hold to all "three things" and not just one or two, we would be saved from a lot of poor theology and bad ideas.

And don't miss the underlying assumption in these first two questions: **we are meant to live and die in the joy of this comfort**. That so few Christians do is a testimony to both how hard life can be and how little we meditate on what it means to belong to Christ. Comfort does not mean Christ makes all the bad things in life go away. Comfort, as Ursinus put it, "results from a certain process of reasoning, in which we oppose something good to something evil, that by a

proper consideration of this good, we may mitigate our grief, and patiently endure the evil.” In other words, comfort puts before us a greater joy to outweigh present and anticipated sufferings.

When we think of living and dying in comfort, we imagine La-Z-Boy recliners, back rubs, and all the food you can eat. But the Catechism has in mind a different kind of comfort, one that is deeper, higher, richer and sweeter. We find this comfort by admitting our sin, instead of excusing it; by trusting in Another instead of ourselves; and by living to give thanks instead of being thanked.

DEYOUNG, K. L. (2010). GOOD NEWS WE ALMOST FORGOT rediscovering the gospel in a 16th century catechism. S.I.: MOODY PRESS, U.S.