



# COVENANT

## Bible-Presbyterian Church

*Preaching Christ for His Glory and His Kingdom*

### Order of Worship — 20 March 2016

**Theme for the Year: "What Would Jesus Say About Your Church?" (Rev 3:22)**

Prelude	<i>The Lord Is in His Holy Temple</i>
Call to Worship	
*Opening Hymn	1 - <i>O Worship the King</i>
*Invocation & † <i>Gloria Patri</i>	
Scripture Reading	Psalm 27:1-8
Hymn	228 - <i>My Faith Hath Found a Resting Place</i>
Tithes & Offering	
**† <i>Doxology</i> & Offertory Prayer	
Scripture Reading	Jonah 3:9-10
Hymn	318 - <i>I Need Thee Every Hour</i>
Confession of Faith & Pastoral Prayer	
Sermon	The Anatomy of Repentance III - Man Is Dependent on a Merciful God
*Closing Hymn	TP 51:1-6, 14-17
*Benediction & <i>Threefold Amen</i>	
Silent Prayer & Postlude	
Announcements	<i>*Congregation standing</i>

† 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.

†† Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise him, all creatures here below;  
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.  
Amen.

Covenant Bible-Presbyterian Church meets every Sunday at 10:00 am  
at 47 Davis Road, Attadale, Western Australia

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## What Is Excommunication?

### Definition

Excommunication is the official and formal removal of an individual from church membership. It is also the removal of spiritual fellowship of Christians from that individual.

### Reasons Leading to Excommunication

A person is considered a Christian if he has believed the gospel and repented of his sins. He will be poor in spirit, he will mourn for his sins, he will hunger and thirst after righteousness, and will come meekly to Christ.

The proof of his conversion is seen in his continual belief and repentance. There will be fruits of repentance (Matthew 3:8). There will be a love for God and his people. They would be members of a church (Acts 2:41, 47; 5:14; 16:5).

And while Christians will continue to sin (1 John 1:8), they will not practice sin perpetually without repentance (1 John 3:9). And when they do sin, they will go to Christ, their advocate (1 John 2:1), who represents them before God (Hebrews 7:25).

But when a professing Christian lives in sin without repenting and without remorse, there is a problem. This is not the characteristic of a Christian. The goal of a Christian is to be more like Jesus (1 John 2:6, Galatians 2:20).

### The Importance of Church Discipline

The work of making sure church members are walking in Christ and growing in holiness belongs to all members (Romans 15:14, Galatians 6:1-2, James 5:20).

It is especially the work of the elders of the church toward their members (Colossians 1:28, Hebrews 13:7, 1 Peter 5:3). See Covenant Bible-Presbyterian Church Constitution Article 9.1.

If a person is living in sin and not repenting, the church members are to intervene. Matthew 18:15-20 gives the procedure and authority for a church to do this.

It instructs us that one individual is to go to the offending individual. If he does not repent, then two or three go to confirm the situation and the refusal to repent. If there is still no repentance, it is taken before the church.

### Why Is Church Discipline Necessary?

To live as a Christian according to God's laws is a duty of the Christian (Matthew 22:36-40, John 14:15). Church discipline is a means to ensure that Christians are living as Christians.

If discipline is not meted out, it leads to several undesirable outcomes. Firstly, the witness and testimony of Christ Jesus and his church would suffer before unbelievers.

When David sinned with Bathsheba, the name of God was blasphemed by God's enemies (2 Samuel 12:14).

"Look at the church! She doesn't even deal with sin! So much for believing in a holy God! Christians can do that too? Why bother becoming a Christian?"

Secondly, if sin is not dealt with in church, it will spread. If allowed to exist, it spreads to those nearby in the same way that "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (1 Corinthians 5:6-7).

Bakers only require a bit of yeast to make a whole lump of dough rise. Sin that is not repented of can have that effect.

Gossip that is not arrested spreads. Anger that is not abated flares up. Adultery unstopped emboldens others. False teaching unhindered confuses and deceives others.

We have been saved by Jesus so that we might be set apart from sin - so that we might be "unleavened" - free from sin's corruption (1 Corinthians 5:7-8). Christ's desire for His bride, the church, is that she might be pure and undefiled (Ephesians 5:25-27).

### Excommunication as a Last Resort

When through the work of admonition, rebuke, and appeals, repentance can't be

produced, the last resort is excommunication.

A person who calls himself Christian, but has no desire to live as a Christian, despite the appeals of his church, is not a Christian.

Such a person should not be a member of Christ's church. Excommunication removes him from church membership.

But if perchance the person is a genuine Christian, then the excommunication serves a good purpose in his life.

1 Corinthians 5:5 explains that excommunication is a way of delivering a person's flesh over to Satan to be destroyed.

When a Christian is out of the fellowship of the church, the care of God, and the ministry of the Word; the person is able to indulge in sin. But no genuine Christian can be truly satisfied with sin and will eventually return to Christ.

The Prodigal Son, out from the protection of the father, indulged in his sins until he could no longer bear them. He finally woke up and returned to his father.

If the person is a Christian, the disciplinary action of the church will eventually bring about godly sorrow and repentance. When this occurs, the individual can be restored to fellowship.

Unfortunately, disciplinary action, even when done in love and in the correct manner, is not always successful in bringing about such restoration.

But even when church discipline fails to achieve its goal of bringing repentance, it is still needed to accomplish the other good purposes. It glorifies God.

In our human wisdom, we often imagine that excommunication is a cruel and punitive measure of the church. But a wise and loving God instituted it; and we are not wiser or more loving than God.

#### What Excommunication Is Not

Excommunication is not unfriending the person. It is not shunning the person. It is not disowning the person. It is, however, to see the person as an unbeliever. And to witness to him. It is to preach the gospel to him again.

The person is always welcome to church. When we see him, we are to greet him. We are to have meals with him. We are to treat him as we would treat any other unbeliever. We are to love him.

We are not to count him as an enemy (2 Thessalonians 3:15). But there is no spiritual fellowship because there can be none with unbelievers.

The need for church discipline and the rationale for excommunication underscore the importance of church membership, in keeping the witness of Christ in our church.

#### Conclusion

We have all witnessed badly behaved children who are allowed to do as they please with no consistent discipline. It is not a pretty sight.

Such forms of parenting are not loving. It dooms the child to a miserable future. Discipline, though not easy, is necessary.

Similarly, discipline in the church, while never enjoyable or easy, is not only necessary, but loving as well. Moreover, it is commanded by God.

~ Pastor



### **Westminster Larger Catechism**

Q. 53. How was Christ exalted in his ascension?

A. Christ was exalted in his ascension, in that having after his resurrection often appeared unto and conversed with his apostles, speaking to them of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, and giving them commission to preach the gospel to all nations, forty days after his resurrection, he, in our nature, and as our head, triumphing over enemies, visibly went up into the highest heavens, there to receive gifts for men, to raise up our affections thither, and to prepare a place for us, where he himself is, and shall continue till his second coming at the end of the world.

# Worship Service Roster

Service	This Week (20.3.16)	Next Week (27.3.16)
Speaker	Mark Chen	Mark Chen
Worship Leader	Johnson Lim	Ken Chong
Pianist	Edward Lim	Nancy Lim
Welcomers	Jacob & Meryl Woo	Danny & Susie Tan
Offering Stewards	Micah Chiang*, David Pang*, Jacob Woo, LH Chua	Ken Hong*, David Lim*, David Ong, Chris Budiman
Usher	Jerome Ng, Jesslyn Leow	Eva Chiu, Josephine Austin
Kitchen Duties	Sarah Siew*, Peggy Woo Chris Budiman	Carmel Sriharan*, Nancy Lim Lisa Lim
<i>Prayer Meeting</i>	<i>25 March 2016</i>	<i>1 April 2016</i>
Facilitator	No Prayer Meeting	Mark Chen
Pianist		Eugene Lim

## Announcements

1. A warm welcome to all worshippers. May God richly bless you. Please stay behind after the service for fellowship and tea.
2. Next week's message: "The Prodigal God" (Jonah 4:1-11).
3. Next week's Junior Worship message - "She Would've Split Her Heart Trying" (Luke 8:1-3, John 20:1-2, 11-18). Speaker - Terence Lee.
4. Gospel Meeting on Friday, 25 March 2016, at 10 am. Speaker: Mark Chen, Pianist: Evelyn Lee, Welcomers: Ken and Jackie Hong. Please invite your unbelieving friends and family to hear the Gospel. No prayer meeting or JF on Friday night.
5. Membership Covenant next Lord's Day. Those wishing to be baptized, transfer their membership, or reaffirm their faith, please approach an elder.
6. Catechism Class (14 lessons) for baptism, transfer of membership, and reaffirmation to start next Lord's Day at 9:00 am.
7. Ladies' Bible Study on Saturday 26 March 2016 at 7:30 pm at the residence of Hui Min Chen. For more information, please contact Evelyn Lee at 0403 504 186.

Appointments for the Week	Last Lord's Day Tithes & Offering, & Attendance
WED 10:00 am Craft Group	<i>General Fund</i> - \$3,327.90 (#545 - \$200.00). <i>Missions Fund</i> - \$480.00 (#544 - \$100.00). <i>Building Fund</i> - \$2,200.00 (#348 - \$1,500.00, #349 - \$100.00, #350 - \$600.00). <i>Total Tithes &amp; Offering</i> - \$6,001.90. Attendance - 157.
FRI 10:00 am Gospel Meeting	
SAT 7:30 pm Ladies' Bible Study	
SUN 9:00 am Sunday School	
10:00 am Worship	

Building Fund to Date		
Available Building Fund	\$69,365.60	Building Fund Account:
Outstanding Pledges	\$15,984.00	
Last Week's Collection	\$2,200.00	Covenant Bible-Presbyterian Church (Westpac Bank, Applecross)
Total	\$87,549.60	
<i>Outstanding Loan</i>	- \$430,000.00	BSB: 036-031 Acct: 316969
<i>Amount Still Needed</i>	\$342,450.40	SWIFT: WPACAU2S

Elders: **Mark Chen (Pastor)** 6114 4242, 0415 932 373. **Jimmy Orchard** 0413 274 407.  
 Deacons: **Ken Chong** 0402 553 313. **LH Chua** 0435 601 373. **Terence Lee** 0418 845 617. **Johnson Lim** 0402 145 682. **Jacob Woo** 0421 212 206.

The Anatomy of Repentance III:  
Man Is Dependent on a Merciful God  
Jonah 3:9-10

Repentance is a good thing. Because repentance brings life. It's wonderful thing to admit our sins. Spurgeon said - "I do not know when I am more perfectly happy than when I am weeping over my sin at the foot of the cross." Repentance shows dependence on God.

1. True Repentance Is a Hopeful Dependence on the Mercies of God
  - a. It is God's prerogative to show mercy or to withhold it
  - b. Repentance is not presumptuous
  - c. Pagans versus Pharisee
  - d. They had hope in Jonah's preaching
  - e. They had hope in Jonah's testimony
  - f. Are we respectable or repentant?
2. True Repentance Will Always Receive Mercy
  - a. God is love
  - b. God forgives when we return to him
  - c. God forgives repenters, God punishes Christ

What is your sin? Is it scandalous? All sin is scandalous. But guilt is not the end. We all have guilt, but God forgives.

Questions for Reflection:

1. Do you agree that Christians in churches chase after respectability rather than revel and rejoice in their repentance? If yes, why do you think this is?
2. How do you reconcile God repenting from the evil that he said he would do to the Ninevites with the eternal decrees of God?
3. Does God forgive when there is no repentance?