



COVENANT

Bible-Presbyterian Church

Preaching Christ for His Glory and His Kingdom

Order of Worship – 17 April 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	34 - <i>Immortal, Invisible</i>
*Invocation & † <i>Gloria Patri</i>	
Scripture Reading	Romans 12:1-21
Hymn	TP 133
Tithes & Offering	
*†† <i>Doxology</i> & Offertory Prayer	
Scripture Reading	Philippians 1:27-2:11
Hymn	187 - <i>Blest Be the Tie that Binds</i>
Confession of Faith & Pastoral Prayer	
Sermon	"True Unity in Christ"
*Closing Hymn	333 - <i>May the Mind of Christ, My Savior</i>
*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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Does God Receive a Christian Who Commits Suicide?

Introduction

Last Lord's Day, at the Adult Bible Class, we had a very interesting and lively discussion. The lesson was on the 20th article of the Westminster Confession of Faith - Of Christian Liberty, and Liberty of Conscience.

We discussed that Christ had purchased freedom for all believers - freedom from guilt of sin, from the wrath of God and the curse of the moral law.

Because we are saved, we are no longer guilty before God. We are also not under God's anger. And the curse of the law (which is eternal death) no longer has a grip on us. We are free.

But because the Christian can still sin, he is capable of suicide. Suicide is a sin against the sixth commandment - thou shalt not kill.

Just as he is capable of killing others, lying, cheating on a test, and having lustful thoughts, a Christian, is capable of committing suicide.

Yet, because he is free from the guilt of sin, the wrath of God, and the curse of the law, God will receive him to himself.

There were some questions raised.

Isn't Suicide Worse than the Other Sins?

The Bible views suicide as a sin. It is murder - self-murder.

Our lives are not ours to take. Psalm 31:15 tells us that our lives are in God's hands. Since God gives life and takes away life (Job 1:21), it is never our right to take a person's life - whether others or our own.

So even if we say that God will still save a believer who has committed suicide, it is not to be taken as permission to commit suicide.

Suicide is a very bad sin *as with all other sins*. When you determine the end

of your life, you are exalting yourself above God's position.

This is true with all other sins. It exalts us above God who commanded us not to sin. And therefore, suicide, as with other sins, deserves eternal damnation.

Suicide, considering all things, is not worse than other sins. It deserves the same penalty; but it has the same redemption.

Suicide Is Not the Unpardonable Sin

There is only one sin in the Bible that is unpardonable. That's the sin of unbelief.

All sins and blasphemies can be forgiven - all except the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (Matthew 12:31).

That was the sin of the Pharisees - despite seeing all that Jesus had done, they hardened their hearts and refused to believe that he was their Messiah.

If believing in Jesus brings eternal life, then refusing to believe in Jesus does not bring eternal life (John 3:16). A Christian cannot commit the unpardonable sin. Only unbelievers can commit the unpardonable sin.

Apart from this, all other sins are forgivable. As long as we believe in Christ and call on his name, our sins are forgiven. Nothing can separate us from the love of God.

Romans 8:38-39 says, "*For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*"

Are Some Suicides Are Less Forgivable than Others?

It is said that if a Christian commits suicide out of despair and distress,

impulsively rather than intentionally, then God would forgive him.

Every person who commits suicide does so in despair and distress. There is a certain amount of intention even in the one who does so more impulsively.

The question here would be - what's the measure of impulse and intention that God would take into account when determining whether to forgive or not to forgive?

That would be capricious on God's part. It would make his judgment dependent on our emotions. We must not forget that the sin of suicide is willful.

How Can God Receive Him If He Hasn't Repented of His Sin of Suicide?

Salvation is a gift. When we truly believed in Christ and repented, we were saved. So does that mean that suicide cannot be forgiven now that the person has no way of repenting?

No, it doesn't. If our salvation depended on us repenting of our sins before we die, then we're all lost! There will always be sins that we have committed that we will never repent of before we die.

Why? There's the matter of timing. We may repent of our sins in the morning, but die at mid-day. Sins committed

between morning and mid-day would never have been repented of.

There's also the matter of knowledge. We will never be able to acknowledge all our sins. We commit far too many sins - and many of them are unknown to us - for us to repent of all of them before we die.

Our salvation is not based on how perfectly we repent, or how completely we repent of every sin before we die.

Conclusion

A Christian who has genuinely believed and repented, is capable of suicide. But that does not mean the person is lost. Jesus bore all that person's sins, including suicide.

If one sin of suicide is able to undo the entire work of Christ, then there's something wrong with Jesus' payment on the cross. This cannot be. Jesus either saves completely or He does not.

The sin a Christian will commit tomorrow was forgiven at Calvary - where Jesus justified us, declaring us righteous.

But please, don't commit suicide. It's a sin. And Christians are freed from the power of sin to live unto Christ. And though life is filled with suffering, Christ gives us tenacity to live it. ~ *Pastor*



Westminster Larger Catechism

Q. 57. What benefits hath Christ procured by his mediation?

A. Christ, by his mediation, hath procured redemption, with all other benefits of the covenant of grace.

Q. 58. How do we come to be made partakers of the benefits which Christ hath procured?

A. We are made partakers of the benefits which Christ hath procured, by the application of them unto us, which is the work especially of God the Holy Ghost.

Q. 59. Who are made partakers of redemption through Christ?

A. Redemption is certainly applied, and effectually communicated, to all those for whom Christ hath purchased it; who are in time by the Holy Ghost enabled to believe in Christ according to the gospel.

Worship Service Roster

Service	This Week (17.4.16)	Next Week (24.4.16)
Speaker	Mark Chen	Mark Chen
Worship Leader	Jacob Woo	Jimmy Orchard
Pianist	Elizabeth Huang	Marilyn Woo
Welcomers	Josephine Austin & Cheryl Nannup	Yen Fye & Angela Yap
Offering Stewards	Paul Butler*, David Ong* Rex Sriharan, David Lim	Jansen Ng*, Chris Budiman* LH Chua, Micah Chiang
Usher	Eva Chiu, Marilyn Woo	Jemima Ng, Josephine Austin
Kitchen Duties	August Ng*, Lydia Orchard Grace Wang	May Poon*, Mary Loh Angela Yap
<i>Prayer Meeting</i>	<i>22 April 2016</i>	<i>29 April 2016</i>
Facilitator	No Prayer Meeting	Mark Chen
Pianist		Ian Tay

Announcements

1. A warm welcome to all worshipers. May God richly bless you. Please stay behind after the service for fellowship and tea.
2. Next week's message: "Revolutionized by Christ" (Philippians 2:12-30).
3. Next week's Junior Worship message - "A Stubborn Man" (2 Chronicles 16:1-14). Speaker - Vincent Chiu.
4. Church Anniversary Catered Lunch next Sunday. Offerings to defray the cost are welcomed. Those who are not staying for lunch are reminded to park in a spot where they are not blocked by double-parked cars.
5. Prayer Meeting on recess this Friday; JF, TF, and YPG are on recess this Saturday.
6. Ladies' Bible Study is postponed to 30 April 2016.
7. Congratulations to Micah and Hannah Chiang on the gift of a baby girl, Aurora, born 10 April 2016.

Appointments for the Week	Last Lord's Day Tithes & Offering, & Attendance
<p>SUN 9:00 am Sunday School</p> <p>10:00 am Worship</p> <p>12:00 pm Church Anniversary Lunch</p>	<p><i>General Fund</i> - \$4,155.60 (#551 - \$200.00, #552 - \$20.00, #553 - \$35.20, #554 - \$500.00). <i>Missions Fund</i> - \$570.00 (#555 - \$100.00). <i>Building Fund</i> - \$960.00 (#358 - \$860.00, #359 - \$100.00). <i>Total Tithes & Offering</i> - \$5,685.60. Attendance - 161.</p>

Building Fund to Date	
Available Building Fund	\$73,775.60
Outstanding Pledges	\$12,814.00
Last Week's Collection	\$960.00
Total	\$87,549.60
<i>Outstanding Loan</i>	- \$430,000.00
<i>Amount Still Needed</i>	\$342,450.40
Building Fund Account:	
Covenant Bible-Presbyterian Church (Westpac Bank, Applecross)	
BSB: 036-031 Acct: 316969	
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.

True Unity in Christ
Philippians 1:27-2:11

Many churches experience great disunity. Or they can experience great unity in disunity - factions in church are united against other factions in church. Families in church are united against other families. This is unity - but not Christian unity. False unity tears down the church. True unity builds up the church.

1. Our Unity Is an Indication of How We Live the Gospel
 - a. Our conduct must match the gospel
 - b. We must be united spiritually and biblically
 - c. A united church has a good reputation
2. How Do We Cultivate Unity?
 - a. How to cultivate disunity
 - b. The basis for unity
 - c. We must want what Christ wants
 - d. We must not be competitive
 - e. We must prefer and serve one another
 - f. We must emulate Christ's humility

What is our reputation? Is it that of a united church? Or a bickering church? Are we living the gospel?

Questions for Reflection:

1. Consider Matthew 10:38. How are loving others who are different than we are, and being patient with their differences and intolerant of our impatience with them a demonstration of taking up the cross?
2. Christ's greatest humiliation is what a Christian glories in most (Galatians 6:14). Often what the world glories in is retaliation (not forgiveness), tolerance (not evangelism), and selfishness (not selfless love). It glories in sin. What has the example of Christ on the cross taught you about the attitude you should take toward what the world glories in?