



COVENANT

Bible-Presbyterian Church

Preaching Christ for His Glory and His Kingdom

Order of Worship — 10 December 2017

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 | 89 - <i>Angels We Have Heard on High</i> |
| *Invocation & † <i>Gloria Patri</i> | |
| Scripture Reading | Romans 16:1-23 |
| Hymn | TP 87 |
| Tithes & Offering | |
| **† <i>Doxology</i> & Offertory Prayer | |
| Scripture Reading | Acts 18:1-17 |
| Hymn | 605 - <i>Dare to Stand</i> |
| Confession of Faith & Pastoral Prayer | |
| Sermon | "Help in the Ministry" |
| *Closing Hymn | 224 - <i>I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord</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

Website: www.covenantbpc.org.au

Contact: pastor@covenantbpc.org.au

Mark, Aren't We Taught to Pray "In Jesus' Name?"

Last week, we covered question 180 of the Westminster Larger Catechism in our worship service.

It asks and answers - *Q. 180. What is it to pray in the name of Christ? A. To pray in the name of Christ, is, in obedience to his command, and in confidence on his promises, to ask mercy for his sake; not by bare mentioning of his name, but by drawing our encouragement to pray, and our boldness, strength, and hope of acceptance in prayer, from Christ and his mediation.*

I was asked a couple of times this week to clarify what I meant when I said that it does not prescribe ending our prayers with those mere words - *"In Jesus' name. Amen."*

It is true that Christ instructed his disciples in John 14:13-14 that *"Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it."*

Hence, for many Christians, this has meant that we must end our prayers with - *"In Jesus' name, Amen."*

This is what I was taught from young. Others may end their prayers with similar formulas like - *"for Jesus' sake we pray"* or *"we ask it through His name."*

Sometimes we may even think these prayers, that end without such formulas, to be incomplete or insincere and prayers that may not even be heard by God.

However, we should not think in this way. Firstly, if that were the case, then all the prayers found in the Scriptures would be illegitimate prayers because not a single prayer in the Bible ends with the formula *"In Jesus' name."*

Secondly, Jesus himself would be out of line. Not only did he not use that formula, but he never taught his disciples to pray using that formula.

That phrase is conspicuously missing from the prayer that Christ taught his disciples.

Hence, *"to pray in the name of Christ"* is not a prescription to end with that formula or the bare mentioning of his name.

Certainly, in public prayer, it is very appropriate to use it for one reason. It is practical. People know when the prayer is ended and when to say a corporate "amen" - whether audibly or in the heart. This helps the people to affirm, together with the person praying, the words of his prayer.

In my experience, it has helped me to be part of that prayer - to share in the convictions and burdens of the one praying. But that is all the bare mentioning of his name does, as I understand it.

So what does it truly mean when we pray in Jesus' name, as taught by our catechism?

It means that when we come to God in prayer, we do not come brazenly. God does not owe us an audience with him.

But we can come boldly, knowing that Christ has earned us an audience with God.

So to pray in the name of Christ, we are asking God to show us mercy and hear our prayers because of what Christ has done and because of our union with him.

We would not expect to walk up to Malcolm Turnbull's house and gain entry. But if we were friends with the Prime Minister's family member, we would gain entry by association.

Hence, coming in the name of Christ has more to do with just a mentioning of his name, but it has to do with our being in God through Jesus.

Yes, we may mention his name reverently. And the name of Jesus should always be on our lips (Hebrews 13:15).

But praying in the name of Christ is more than that - it is to be encouraged that God hears us because of Christ and therefore we should go boldly to him.

It is to go with the knowledge that without Christ, we can never expect to be heard.

And therefore, an unbeliever who simply prays uttering the name of Jesus, but without believing in his mediation, will never be heard.

And a believer, who trusts in Christ and prays according to his will, but may never mention the formula, will always be heard.

This is because God has not left us without help. He has given us a Great High Priest - who intercedes for us daily before God's throne. Our names are engraved on the palm of his hands (Isaiah 49:16).

And why we are to come to God through Christ alone is also to tell us that our prayers are different from the prayers of pagans.

Pagan prayers are made to the gods of idolatry which are fashioned after the

likeness of men. And it doesn't cross their minds that their prayers may not be acceptable. As long as they perform the correct rituals, they believe their prayers are heard.

On the contrary, God is a living and true God - and God will not hear the prayers of mere men. Even the skies over Perth are not clean enough for him - Job 15:15 - "*yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight.*"

So we can't have access to God without a mediator. This is what today's question and answer tell us.

And this mediator must be as pure and holy as God is; and he must be human to represent human beings and yet be without sin.

Only this can ensure that his mediation is acceptable to God.

As the apostle Paul reminds us in 1 Timothy 2:5 - "*For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.*"

It is in recognition that we cannot find acceptance before God except through Christ our mediator, that we pray coming in his reputation and name.

And God knows who his children are.

So please, do not be superstitious - the bare mentioning of his name does nothing.

But Christ himself, our Lord and Mediator, represents us before God. That is power and assurance sufficient for us. ~ *Pastor*



Westminster Larger Catechism

Q. 181. Why are we to pray in the name of Christ?

A. The sinfulness of man, and his distance from God by reason thereof, being so great, as that we can have no access into his presence without a mediator; and there being none in heaven or earth appointed to, or fit for, that glorious work but Christ alone, we are to pray in no other name but his only.

Worship Service Roster

| Service | This Week (10.12.17) | Next Week (17.12.17) |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| Speaker | Mark Chen | Mark Chen |
| Worship Leader | Jacob Woo | Mark Chen |
| Pianist | Ian Tay | Valerie Lee |
| Welcomers | Kim & Jesslyn Leow | Johnny & Lydia Orchard |
| Offering Stewards | Steven Lim*, Yen Fye Yap* Kim Leow, Lye Heng Chua | John Tan*, Vincent Chiu* Paul Butler, Jacob Woo |
| Ushers | Josephine Austin, August Ng | Wendy Gong, Jerome Ng |
| Kitchen Duties | Grace Wang*, Helen Wong Ken Hong | Adeline Ng*, Carmel Sriharan Val Withnell |
| PA Duty | Ken Hong | Jacob Woo |
| <i>Prayer Meeting</i> | <i>15 December 2017</i> | <i>22 December 2017</i> |
| Facilitator | Mark Chen | Mark Chen |
| Pianist | Ian Tay | Jerome Ng |

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: "Training a Preacher" (Acts 18:18-28).
3. Next week's Junior Worship message: "Faith of the Old Testament Believers" (Hebrews 11:20-31). Speaker: Jerome Ng.
4. Special Gospel Meeting in Vietnam Pavilion, Kings Park (May Drive/ Synergy Parkland/ near Zamia Cafe) at 5pm today. Please bring a seat. Organised by Perth Free Presbyterian Church.
5. Bible Conference 2018. Dates: 23-26 April 2018. Speaker: Pastor Allen Beardmore. Venue: Hotel Lord Forrest, Bunbury.

| Appointments for the Week | Last Lord's Day Tithes & Offering, & Attendance |
|--|---|
| <p>WED 10:00 am Craft Group</p> <p>FRI 7:30 pm CBI & Prayer Meeting</p> <p>SUN 9:00 am Sunday School</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">10:00 am Worship Service</p> | <p>General Fund - \$3,767.70 (*DD - \$450.00). Missions Fund - \$180.00. Building Fund - \$3,900.00 (*DD-\$3,900.00). Total Tithes & Offering - \$7,847.70. Attendance - 151.</p> <p><i>*DD: direct deposit</i></p> |

| Building Fund to Date & Bank Account Details | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Available Building Fund | \$88,601.82 |
| Last Week's Collection | \$3,900.00 |
| Total | \$92,501.82 |
| Outstanding Loan | - \$390,000.00 |
| Amount Still Needed | \$297,498.18 |
| General Fund: | BSB: 036-031 A/C: 316942 |
| Missions Fund: | BSB: 036-031 A/C: 316950 |
| Building Fund: | BSB: 036-031 A/C: 316969 |

Elders: **Mark Chen (Pastor)** 6114 4242, 0415 932 373. **Jimmy Orchard** 0413 274 407.
 Deacons: **Johnson Lim** 0402 145 682. **Jacob Woo** 0421 212 206. **Vincent Chiu** 0417 929 149.

Help in the Ministry

Acts 18:1-17

What do you do when you are discouraged in service? There are different reactions - from quitting or cooling off to encouraging oneself in the Lord and serving. If anyone had any excuse to quit, it was Paul - but Christ encouraged him in his service.

1. God Gave Friends and Funds
 - a. No longer alone in the work
 - b. Support in the work
2. God Gave Fruits
 - a. Opposition and abandonment
 - b. Opportunity and conversion
3. God Gave Fortification
 - a. God's presence and Paul's anxiety
 - b. Paul's commission and God's people
4. God Gave Freedom
 - a. An allegation and an expulsion
 - b. A beating and a healing

Christ is advancing his church. He is not merely encouraging workers in the ministry for their sake, but for his kingdom's sake. Despite the great opposition, Paul remained because he knew God was at work. There are many things that would discourage us in ministry, if we look to men, the situation, and the fear. But if we were to look at Christ, we know he cares for his church.

Questions for Reflection:

1. How much is murmuring and repetitive faithless thinking a cause for discouragement? Why do so many people choose to indulge in such thinking when the Bible instructs us to encourage ourselves in the Lord?
2. What encouraging effect do you think people like Aquila and Priscilla, Justus, and Crispus had on Paul? How have you been an encouragement to those who are serving?