



COVENANT

Bible-Presbyterian Church

Preaching Christ for His Glory and His Kingdom

Order of Worship – 23 July 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	TP 139:13-18
*Invocation & † <i>Gloria Patri</i>	
Scripture Reading	Galatians 2:1-21
Hymn	127 - <i>The Saviour of the World</i>
Tithes & Offering	
**† <i>Doxology</i> & Offertory Prayer	
Scripture Reading	Acts 11:1-18
Hymn	719 - <i>Jesus Loves Me</i>
Confession of Faith & Pastoral Prayer	
Sermon	"Outraged Men Appealed to Glorify God"
*Closing Hymn	566 - <i>Channels Only</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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Contact: pastor@covenantbpc.org.au

The Public Reading of Scripture

Two weeks ago, we studied question 156 of the Westminster Larger Catechism.

Q. 156. Is the Word of God to be read by all?

A. Although all are not permitted to read the Word publicly to the congregation, yet all sorts of people are bound to read it apart by themselves, and with their families: to which end, the holy Scriptures are to be translated out of the original into vulgar languages.

There is no question that the Christian is to love God's Word. All Christians agree that it is important to read the Word daily - in private and in families. All also agree that there's a need to translate the Bible into the various languages of the world.

However, there was a question raised about the legitimacy of the Confession's assertion that "all are not permitted to read the Word publicly to the congregation."

Well, who is not permitted to read publicly to the congregation? Does it exclude six year olds? Does it exclude mute people? Does it exclude people with gingivitis?

The context determines the meaning.

All sorts of people are obligated to read the Bible privately. All sorts means all sorts who are not permitted to read the Bible publicly.

Hence, those who are permitted to read the Bible publicly to the congregation are restricted to those appointed to read it publicly in worship.

And this is done in most churches. No one may take upon themselves the responsibility of leading in the public meeting of the church (the congregation) without being appointed.

Even the Brethren, who believe in no order of worship except in how the Spirit leads, only have men leading in the reading, singing, praying, and preaching.

The Westminster Divines chose, as their Scripture proofs, Deuteronomy 31:9-13 and Nehemiah 8:2-5.

In Deuteronomy, the priests, Levites, and elders were appointed by Moses to read the Word of God to the people. And the publicly read Word had to be explained.

Verses 11-12 - "*When all Israel is come to appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the LORD your God, and observe to do all the words of this law.*"

Similarly, in Nehemiah, it was Ezra the Priest and the Levites who were appointed who read the Word and made the people understand it.

Verse 8 - "*So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.*"

Another salient text is 1 Timothy 4:13 - "*Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.*"

Paul was giving instruction to Timothy, the pastor of the Ephesian church, to give priority to the public reading of the Word and to exhortation.

This was the pastor's appointed ministry. This is why he is called a minister of the Word and sacraments. He has been appointed to be the steward of gospel (1 Corinthians 4:1).

These passages tell us 2 important things.

Firstly, they tell us that there are those appointed to read and explain the Word. Not everyone is permitted to do so publicly to the congregation of God's people.

Secondly, they tell us that there is no reading without explanation. Reading by

itself is pointless without the explanation of the passage. Worship is not only meant for the glorifying of God, but the edification of man - and if a hymn is sung, a reading is read, and there is no explanation - there is no edification.

So therefore, those who read must explain. This is the function of a minister of the Word; this is the function of the elder. This is also the function of the worship leader.

Johannes Vos, a Presbyterian pastor, theologian, and missionary, wrote in his commentary of the WLC - "*Reading the Scriptures 'publicly to the congregation' is a part of conducting the public worship of God, and therefore it is to be done only by those who have been properly called to that office in the church. Of course in the absence of an ordained minister or licentiate, the elders of the church may properly appoint some person to read the Scripture and conduct a prayer meeting or 'fellowship meeting.'* What the catechism denies is that any private Christian may lawfully take it upon himself to conduct public worship, without being appointed to do so by those whose office it is to rule the house of God."

This is the historic practice of Christianity. While our 6 year olds are

encouraged to read the Scriptures in our family devotions, we do not appoint them to read and explain the Word at our public worship.

The Westminster Directory of Public Worship states - "*Reading of the word in the congregation, being part of the public worship of God, (wherein we acknowledge our dependence upon him, and subjection to him,) and one mean sanctified by him for the edifying of his people, is to be performed by the pastors and teachers. Howbeit, such as intend the ministry, may occasionally both read the word, and exercise their gift in preaching in the congregation, if allowed by the presbytery thereunto.*"

This is why in our church, worship leaders (who are not elders) have been appointed to lead the people in worship - in prayer, in praise, and in the reading of the Word.

If you notice, they do not simply read the Word but they also explain it, if only briefly.

Not to do so, would disrespect the Word of God. To explain it wrongly would hinder the understanding.

This is why not all are permitted to read the Word publicly to the congregation.

~ Pastor



Westminster Larger Catechism

Q. 158. By whom is the Word of God to be preached?

A. The Word of God is to be preached only by such as are sufficiently gifted, and also duly approved and called to that office.

Q. 159. How is the Word of God to be preached by those that are called thereunto?

A. They that are called to labor in the ministry of the Word, are to preach sound doctrine, diligently, in season and out of season; plainly, not in the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power; faithfully, making known the whole counsel of God; wisely, applying themselves to the necessities and capacities of the hearers; zealously, with fervent love to God and the souls of his people; sincerely, aiming at his glory, and their conversion, edification, and salvation.

Worship Service Roster

Service	This Week (23.7.17)	Next Week (30.7.17)
Speaker	Mark Chen	Mark Chen
Worship Leader	Mark Chen	Johnson Lim
Pianist	Merylyn Woo	Nancy Lim
Welcomers	John & Adeline Ng	Ian & Merrill Read
Offering Stewards	Steven Lim*, Terence Lee* David Pang, Lye Heng Chua	Ian Read*, Ken Hong* Johnny Orchard, Rex Sriharan
Ushers	Dolphin Wai, Jesslyn Leow	Putri Harapan, Josephine Austin
Kitchen Duties	Eileen Tay*, Grace Wang Ken Hong	Carmel Sriharan*, Vincent Chiu Jenni Budiman
PA Duty	Joel Chua	Jacob Woo
Prayer Meeting	28 July 2017	4 August 2017
Facilitator	Mark Chen	Mark Chen
Pianist	Nancy Lim	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: "A Well-Taught Church" (Acts 11:19-30).
3. Next week's Junior Worship message: "It Is Dangerous for You Not to Believe" (Hebrews 3:7-19). Speaker: Dolphin Wai.
4. Retirees' Bible Study. Tuesday, 25 July 2017, 10am. Message by Pastor: "Making Sure of Your Salvation - Are You Sure You've Started Well?". Potluck lunch after meeting.
5. Presentation by Creation Ministries International on 4 August 2017, Friday at 7.30pm. Speaker: Dr Ron Neller. Topic: "From Evolutionist to Creationist!"
6. Ministry reports for ACM 2017. Please submit by 31 August 2017 - email Jacob Woo (jacob.woo@gmail.com).

Appointments for the Week	Last Lord's Day Tithes & Offering, & Attendance
TUE 10:00 am Retirees' Bible Study	General Fund - \$3,896.30 (*DD - \$1,255.00, #728 - \$100.00). Missions Fund - \$640.00 (*DD - \$500.00). Building Fund - \$400.00 (*DD- \$300.00 , #548 - \$100.00). Total Tithes & Offering - \$4,936.30. Attendance - 135. *DD: direct deposit
WED 10:00 am Craft Group	
FRI 7:30 pm CBI & Prayer Meeting	
SAT 4:30 pm JF & TF	
SUN 9:00 am Sunday School	
10:00 am Worship Service	

Building Fund to Date & Bank Account Details

Available Building Fund	\$67,467.45	General Fund:	
Last Week's Collection	\$400.00	BSB: 036-031	A/C: 316942
Total	\$67,867.45	Missions Fund:	
Outstanding Loan	- \$396,000.00	BSB: 036-031	A/C: 316950
Amount Still Needed	\$328,132.55	Building Fund:	
		BSB: 036-031	A/C: 316969

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. **Johnson Lim** 0402 145 682.
Jacob Woo 0421 212 206.

Outraged Men Appealed to Glorify God

Acts 11:1-18

God shows no favoritism when it comes to salvation - anyone regardless of ethnicity, language, or country is welcome. But Christians frequently discriminate. There are feuding people and families in church - we are easily outraged at others because they do not as we do nor meet our standards. We need to be reminded not to judge superficially.

1. Who Are the Outraged Men?
 - a. Jewish Christians
 - b. The circumcision party
 - c. Their surprising and critical outrage
2. Why the Need for Repetition?
 - a. To convince the outraged men
 - b. Because it was a turning point in the church
 - c. To convince us
3. Are Outraged Men Permanently Appeased?
 - a. Peter and the rest continued to discriminate
 - b. We continue to discriminate

We may know the Word, like Peter and the Jewish Christians, but we are forgetful. We continue to have social, intellectual, and spiritual preferences that hinder our fellowship with others in church. But we are not married to our preferences, but to Christ.

Questions for Reflection:

1. Why is a mono-cultural church not biblical? Why should the church be multi-cultural and multi-racial?
2. What do you think are the wrong thinking, scruples, and preferences that are present in our church that make it hard for us to fellowship with those who are different from us?