



# COVENANT

## Bible-Presbyterian Church

*Preaching Christ for His Glory and His Kingdom*

### Order of Worship — 3 June 2018

**Theme for the Year: "King Jesus Must Reign" (1 Corinthians 15:25)**

Prelude	<i>The Lord Is in His Holy Temple</i>
Call to Worship	
*Opening Hymn	23 - <i>Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise</i>
*Invocation & † <i>Gloria Patri</i>	
Scripture Reading	Genesis 3:17-19, Romans 8:18-25
The Lord's Supper	
Hymn	422 - <i>He Took My Sins Away</i>
Hymn	420 - <i>Love Lifted Me</i>
Tithes & Offering	
*† <i>Doxology</i> & Offertory Prayer	
Scripture Reading	Ecclesiastes 1:1-18
Hymn	TP 71:17-20
Confession of Faith & Pastoral Prayer	
Sermon	"Life Is Messy"
*Closing Hymn	510 - <i>He Giveth More Grace</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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## A Christian Response to Life's Suffering and Messiness

### *Suffering and the Existence of God*

Life is messy. And life is filled with suffering. But how can suffering be congruent with a loving God?

Many people who do not understand the character of God question the existence of God because suffering exists.

And they define suffering as being evil.

They make statements like - *"If God were omnipotent and holy, he could and should destroy evil. But since evil exists, then God does not."*

Because suffering is a daily reality - for Christians and non-Christians - then God could not exist.

The Bible tells us something completely different. The reason for suffering is due to the sin of man.

Because man sinned, the earth was cursed (Genesis 3:17-19, Romans 8:20).

The Bible tells us that this curse was pronounced by God because man had sinned (Ecclesiastes 1:13).

### *Suffering Is a Daily Reality*

Suffering is a daily reality. One just has to turn on the news to read and watch reports on suffering.

There are images of death, disease, hunger, floods, earthquakes, suicide, rape, terrorism, genocide, etc.

And often, religion is the cause for some of this suffering.

Suffering is not just on TV. We have struggled with things that have brought suffering in our life to us.

Sometimes our friends or loved ones suffer - this in turn causes us to suffer.

### *Christians and Suffering*

And being Christian does not exempt us from suffering. Even Jesus told his

disciples that he came to bring a sword and not peace.

Those that followed him would have to take up their cross and deny themselves.

In fact, Christians should expect suffering in their lives.

The people of the world try to explain suffering as something outside God. But Christians acknowledge that suffering is in God's will.

When we fail to understand God's will for suffering in our lives, we will have great grief.

The reason for that is we have false expectations. We think that being Christian should free us from all kinds of suffering.

And without a truly biblical perspective, we often do not think about suffering until it happens to us. By that time, it is hard to accept the biblical perspective.

Job, for all his godliness, didn't have a theology of suffering - which is why he was in such a conundrum. And his friends were no better - their theology was faulty.

They blamed him for his suffering. *"God is picking on you because you have sinned. He wouldn't do this to anybody. So you must be at fault."*

### *Suffering Is Temporary*

Suffering on earth is only for a moment. The messiness that we all go through now is only for 70-80 years.

As Christians, we remember Christ's word in Revelation 22:20 - *"Surely I come quickly."* And the church responded with *"Even so, come, Lord Jesus."*

As Christians, we live knowing that there's a light at the end of the tunnel.

In the same manner, Jesus was able to go through the suffering because he saw the light at the end of the tunnel.

He subjected himself to the trials and the pain because of the prize he knew he had.

Hebrews 12:2 says, "*Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*"

### *The Purpose of Suffering*

Why does God allow his people to go through suffering?

There are many reasons.

Firstly, suffering endured by Christians, work for their spiritual good. In Jeremiah 36:3, God revealed that the suffering he proposed to bring upon his people would act as a means to get them to turn back to him.

Secondly, suffering stimulates prayer. In Psalm 25:17-18, the psalmist cried out to God because he was in pain.

God uses suffering for our spiritual good. When we are divested of all our confidence and strength, then we turn to God.

Thirdly, suffering teaches us patience. James 1:2-3 teaches us that when we fall into manifold trials, we should rejoice - because these trials are meant to work patience.

In order that we are not overcome by self and our own confidence, God interferes our lives with suffering so that we would be made more spiritual.

Fourthly, suffering produces joy. 1 Peter 1:6-7 teaches us that despite suffering, or rather because of suffering, the Christian looks to Christ.

And because he looks to Christ and sees Christ's own sufferings, the Christian rejoices with an indescribable joy.

Christians may view trials like the people of the world - as evils. But when we see them as God's helps and aids to us, we can rejoice in them.

Fifthly, suffering prepares us for heaven. 2 Corinthians 4:17-18 teaches us that our suffering now won't last very long. Rather, these sufferings will produce a glory that will outweigh even themselves, because we will fix our eyes on the glory to come.

Like Cinderella who dreamed of her palace as she scrubbed floors, the Christian hopes for glory because he suffers.

And like Cinderella who didn't know that it was her scrubbing of floors caused her to dream of a palace; we don't always realize that suffering helps us look to heaven.

But unless we see that life is messy and full of suffering; and unless we see that God is ultimately responsible for our suffering, then we will not appreciate the purpose of suffering in our lives.

They are to make us more spiritual, prayerful, patient, joyful, and heavenly minded.

May the Lord grant us a heart and mind to perceive that in our lives.

~ *Pastor*



## **Westminster Shorter Catechism**

Q. 24. How doth Christ execute the office of a prophet?

A. Christ executeth the office of a prophet, in revealing to us, by his word and Spirit, the will of God for our salvation.

## Worship Service Roster

Service	<i>This Week (3.6.18)</i>	<i>Next Week (10.6.18)</i>
Speaker	Mark Chen	Glen Lock
Worship Leader	Mark Chen	Jacob Woo
Pianist	Valerie Lee	Edward Lim
Welcomers	Josephine Austin & Wendy Gong	Kim & Jesslyn Leow
Offering Stewards	Micah Chiang*, Ian Read* Rex Sriharan, Johnny Orchard	Lye Heng Chua*, Jansen Ng* Julian Poon, Kim Leow
Ushers	Dolphin Wai, Angela Yap	Wendy Gong, Putri Harapan
Kitchen Duties	Dina Portillo*, Aliza Chiu Peggy Woo, Julian Poon	Sarah Siew*, Grace Wang Josephine Austin
PA Duty	Raymond Woo	Ian Tay
<i>Prayer Meeting</i>	<i>8 June 2018</i>	<i>15 June 2018</i>
Facilitator	Mark Chen	Mark Chen
Pianist	Jerome Ng	Nancy Lim

### Announcements

1. A warm welcome to all worshipers. May God richly bless you. Please stay behind after the service for fellowship and tea.
2. We are celebrating the Lord's Supper today. First time visitors wishing to partake the Lord's Supper should see an elder before the service.
3. Next week's speaker is Pastor Glen Lock. Message: "The Right and Wrong Use of the Tongue" (James 3:1-12).
4. Pastor Mark will be ministering at Emmanuel Reformed Baptist Church next Lord's Day.
5. Next week's Junior Worship message - "People Will Hate Christians" (Acts 4:1-12). Speaker: Dolphin Wai.
6. Visitation this week by Elder Jimmy Orchard and Deacon Jacob Woo.
7. Church keys. If you hold any and have not informed Valerie, please do so today.

<b>Appointments for the Week</b>	<b>Last Lord's Day Tithes &amp; Offering, &amp; Attendance</b>
<p>WED 10:00 am Craft Group</p> <p>FRI 7:30 pm CBI &amp; Prayer Meeting</p> <p>SAT 4:30 pm JF &amp; TF</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">7:30 pm Men's Bible Study</p> <p>SUN 9:00 am Sunday School</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">10:00 am Worship Service</p>	<p>General Fund - \$2,441.70 (*DD - \$200.00, #795 - \$18.20). Missions Fund - \$220.00 (*DD - \$100.00). Building Fund - \$2,000.00 (*DD - \$300.00, #586 - \$800.00, #587 - \$200.00, #588 - \$700.00). Total Tithes &amp; Offering - \$4,661.70. Attendance - 126.</p> <p><i>*DD: direct deposit</i></p>

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.

Life Is Messy  
Ecclesiastes 1:1-18

Many have high hopes - for their jobs, careers, exams, etc. But even those who have high hopes struggle in life - their jobs, family, finances, and health are often messy. And things don't always get better. If we think that being Christian spares us from the messiness of life, we don't have an accurate picture of Christianity.

1. Life On Earth Is Messy
  - a. The wise investigator
  - b. The messiness of life
2. How Messy Is Life?
  - a. It has always been and will always be messy
  - b. The more you know, the messier you know it is
3. Why Life On Earth Is Messy
  - a. God is responsible
  - b. Man can't change it
  - c. We endure messiness through the gospel

Being Christian does not rescue us from life's messiness. We acknowledge the messiness and learn to live contentedly through the gospel. We learn to bear our crosses and deny ourselves and yearn for heaven. Until then we live by faith.

Questions for Reflection:

1. Do you have a messy life? Which parts of it are messy and why? Which parts are a result of your sinfulness and the sinfulness of others? And which parts are a result of God's providence?
2. As a Christian, how do you react to this messiness by the gospel?