



COVENANT

Bible-Presbyterian Church

Preaching Christ for His Glory and His Kingdom

Order of Worship – 26 May 2019

Theme for the Year: "Strength in Weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9)

Prelude	<i>The Lord Is in His Holy Temple</i>
Call to Worship	
*Opening Hymn	3 - <i>Holy, Holy, Holy</i>
*Invocation & † <i>Gloria Patri</i>	
Scripture Reading	Leviticus 20:22-26
Hymn	452 - <i>Oh, To Be Like Thee</i>
Tithes & Offering	
**† <i>Doxology</i> & Offertory Prayer	
Scripture Reading	2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1
Hymn	Psalm 119f
Confession of Faith & Pastoral Prayer	
Sermon	"A Heartfelt Plea to be Separate and Holy"
*Closing Hymn	561 - <i>Living for Jesus</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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Freedom of Speech Religion and Israel Folau

Free Speech in Australia

There has been much talk about the freedom of speech since the dismissal of Israel Folau from Rugby Australia.

Note that Rugby Australia did not condemn Folau for having done anything unlawful - that is, against Australian law.

However, it insists that he has broken their code of conduct by sharing materials "on social media that condemns, vilifies or discriminates against people on the basis of their sexuality."

This means that there is freedom of expression in Australia.

However, that freedom is not absolute.

According to the Attorney General's Department, while there is a right to opinion which cannot be restricted, the expression of that opinion in any medium is not absolute.

This means there is no absolute freedom of expression in Australia.

According to the Attorney General's Department, that freedom may be curtailed in various circumstances such as when violence is being incited, or the rights or reputations of people are being violated.

The idea of freedom of speech has political roots - and American roots.

Free Speech in the Bible

But is freedom of expression taught in the Bible?

The Bible does not condemn free speech - neither does it permit the wanton use of it. There are always consequences to one's actions and speech.

Instead of free speech, the Bible teaches responsible speech. And it provides guidelines for our speech and our freedom.

As Christians, we are not to use our tongues sinfully. It is sin to curse, blaspheme, lie, deceive, slander, and use filthy language.

Instead, the Bible instructs us to speak the truth and to use our lips to praise God. It instructs us to preach the gospel and to warn others of sin.

Therefore Ephesians 4:29 gives a wonderful guideline - "*Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.*"

And sometimes to minister grace and to edify, our tongues must be sometimes used to prevent disaster.

When Queen Esther was in a unique position to save the Jews, staying silent was sinful. It would harm many.

Mordecai made this crystal clear to her when he said, "*For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?*" (Esther 4:14).

What we note is that while Esther was positioned close to the king, it still did not allow her the freedom of expression. She would have had to break that restriction to speak.

That would have been responsible speech.

But sometimes, responsible and loving and urgent speech can be looked upon as hateful.

This was the experiences of Jesus and the disciples. When they preached the gospel and called for people to repent, they were met with great hostility.

In fact, they were accused of speech that incited hatred for the religious order and government. Of course, this was not true, and their detractors had to find false witnesses to back up their claims.

As a result, Jesus was crucified for it and his disciples were persecuted.

Israel Folau and the Freedom of Religion

The issue surrounding Israel Folau is not so much an issue of free speech as it is the freedom of religion. And in Australia, people are free to practice whatever religion they want.

Israel Folau believes in Jesus Christ and the eternity of hell and judgment. He is free to believe and practice his religion.

But part of our faith is to warn and to speak up. We are here to warn against sin and to point people to Christ so that they might come to Christ and forsake their sin before it is too late. This is responsible Christian speech.

This is exactly what Israel Folau did. What did Israel Folau do? He posted a

Bible verse on his social media page and urged people to repent.

But according to Rugby Australia's code of conduct, Israel Folau fell far short. And potentially, according to free speech restrictions in Australia, he may have gone too far.

Some may interpret his post as vilifying others. And they would because pointing out sin is unpopular and unloving in this world of darkness. However, it was simply preaching the gospel.

There is a danger for Christians in Australia. Your preaching of the gospel, sharing your understanding from the Bible, and proclaiming it to be your opinion will be seen as contravening freedom of speech.

But rest assured, Christ will see it as responsible and loving speech. Leviticus 19:17 says, "*Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.*"

And this is loving. James 5:20 - "*Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.*"

If only the world sees it as we do.

Let us pray for Israel Folau.

~ Pastor



Westminster Shorter Catechism

Q. 100. What doth the preface of the Lord's Prayer teach us?

A. The preface of the Lord's Prayer, which is, Our Father which art in heaven, teacheth us to draw near to God with all holy reverence and confidence, as children to a father, able and ready to help us; and that we should pray with and for others.

Worship Service Roster

<i>Service</i>	<i>This Week (26.5.19)</i>	<i>Next Week (2.6.19)</i>
Speaker	Mark Chen	Mark Chen
Worship Leader	Johnson Lim	Mark Chen
Pianist	Nancy Lim	Ian Tay
Welcomers	Kim & Jesslyn Leow	John & Adeline Ng
Offering Stewards	Vincent Chiu, Kim Leow Micah Chiang, Eugene Lim	Yen Fye Yap, Micah Chiang Paul Butler, Ken Chong
Ushers	Faith Chiu, Putri Harapan	Sharon Sriharan, Rebecca Lee
Kitchen Duties	Aliza Chiu*, Alison Wong Lydia Orchard	Carmel Sriharan*, Helen Wong Grace Wang, Vincent Chiu
PA Duty	Ken Hong	Raymond Woo
<i>Prayer Meeting</i>	<i>31 May 2019</i>	<i>7 June 2019</i>
Chairman	Jimmy Orchard	Micah Chiang
Pianist	Eugene Lim	Ian Tay

Announcements

1. A warm welcome to all worshippers. May God richly bless you. Please stay behind after the service for fellowship and tea.
2. We will be celebrating Lord's Supper next Lord's Day. Please bring a dish to share at the fellowship lunch.
3. Next week's message: "A Heartfelt Regret and Desire to Be Restored" (2 Corinthians 7:2-16).
4. Integrated Fellowship Retreat for people aged 15 to 35, organized by Hope Bible-Presbyterian Church. Topic: "The Opportunities and Perils of Youth" Speaker: Pastor William Yap. Dates: 4-7 October 2019. Venue: Glenhaven Park in Stockport, SA 5410. Camp fees: \$130 (working adults) and \$75 (students). Please see Wendy Gong for more information.
5. Retirees' Bible Study. Tuesday, 28 May 2019, 10am. Message by Pastor Mark: "Solus Christus." Potluck lunch after meeting.
6. Ladies' Fellowship meeting today at 12.30pm. Lunch and DVD "How People Change". Ladies of all ages welcome. Please see Wendy Gong for more details.
7. Church 9th anniversary dinner on Sunday 30 June 2019 at 6 pm at North Lake BBQ. Cost: \$20 (adults) and \$10 (children). Please register with Ken Hong or Micah Chiang.

Appointments for the Week

WED 10:00 am Craft Group
 FRI 7:45 pm CBI & Prayer Meeting
 SUN 9:00 am Sunday School
 10:00 am Worship Service

Last Lord's Day Tithes & Offering, & Attendance

General Fund - \$2,274.10 (DD - \$210.00, #865 - \$200.00). Missions Fund - \$100.00 (DD - \$100.00). Building Fund - \$300.00 (DD - \$300.00). Total Tithes & Offering - \$2,674.10. Attendance - 125.
 *DD: direct deposit

Elders: **Mark Chen (Pastor)** 6114 4242, 0415 932 373. **Jimmy Orchard** 0413 274 407.

Johnson Lim 0402 145 682. Deacons: **Jacob Woo** 0421 212 206. **Vincent Chiu** 0417 929 149.