



# COVENANT

## Bible-Presbyterian Church

*Preaching Christ for His Glory and His Kingdom*

### Order of Worship – 19 January 2020

Prelude	<i>The Lord Is in His Holy Temple</i>
Call to Worship	
*Opening Hymn	28 – <i>How Great Thou Art</i>
*Invocation & † <i>Gloria Patri</i>	
Scripture Reading	1 Corinthians 1:1-31
Hymn	479 – <i>I Am Not Skilled to Understand</i>
Tithes & Offering	
**†† <i>Doxology</i> & Offertory Prayer	
Scripture Reading	Job 38:1-7
Hymn	563 – <i>Lord, Speak to Me</i>
Confession of Faith & Pastoral Prayer	
Sermon	“Where Were You?”
*Closing Hymn	542 – <i>My Faith Looks Up to Thee</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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## Remedy Against Politics in Church

### *The World in the Church*

We are often optimistic when it comes to the church. After all, it is called glorious by God - Christ is her foundation, sinners have been brought into her fold, and they worship him with joy.

However, anyone who has been in church knows that church politics is real. Sometimes it is obvious and other times it's an under current. And politics makes the church inglorious.

Many people are guilty - including those in office. We are sinful and human after all. And much of the world can be in the church.

Ironically, the church can be worldlier than the world. Why? Because politics in the church serves Satan's purposes much more than politics in the world.

According to William Hendricksen, Dr Herman Bavinck once noted that the politics of the world *sometimes* has a dirty side, but politics in the church is *always* dirty!

But this should not be because the church is Christ's body. It is a holy nation. If so, how can there be politics? God has called us to be holy (Leviticus 11:44-45) and new creatures in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17).

How can the church stay clear of politics?

### *Envy and the Desire for Prominence*

In the church of Philippi, there were 2 warring women - Euodias and Syntyche. We're not sure what their exact problems were - but it was so bad that Paul had to ask others to help these two women.

But what is evident was a desire for prominence that caused the problem. Paul had to give this counsel in Philippians 2:3 - "*Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.*"

It was vainglory that had caused problems between the two women. We can only imagine what the cause was and what happened.

But scenarios are not hard to imagine. They happen all the time in churches as people vie over whose food is better,

whose flower arrangement is more pleasing, whose musicianship is more musical.

Perhaps Euodias was jealous Syntyche had more friends and so criticized her casserole. Perhaps Syntyche was envious of Euodias' service and dumped on her fashion sense.

There are many little petty things that can cause rivalry and problems. Therefore, church of God, stay away from envy and a desire for prominence.

### *Complaints Instead of Faithful Wounds*

Proverbs 27:5-6 tells us that open rebuke is better than secret love. And the wounds of a friend are faithful but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.

Unfortunately, these sayings of Solomon are not followed. People serve along side one another, for years - but secretly harbor ancient grouses instead of plainly rebuking them.

In my ministry in various places, I've experienced people bringing complaints against others to me. And what's amazing is that there didn't seem to be any obvious problems between them.

Suspicion, bitterness, and uncharitable thinking were present underneath, but were masked outwardly by a facade of niceness. This facade is the kisses of the enemy.

Christ was clear that if we have something against another, we do not wait, but rebuke the person to win that person (Matthew 5:23,24; 18:15).

But very sadly, complainants would not speak to the offending party. When they are asked to speak to the other person, the reply is often - "No, please don't tell him I said this" or "this is just my feeling."

You see, if there is real offense, and the complaint is justified; if faithful wounds are not meted out, then the complainer becomes guilty (Ezekiel 3:18). But if the complaint is just a feeling, then the complainant has no reason to complain. Instead, he should repent of the prejudice.

Therefore, church of God, stay away from complaints against others but practice plain and loving rebuke.

### *Rumors and Informants*

This is closely related to the previous problem. If you have been in church long enough, you have heard rumors about others. Why is this a problem? Because if you choose to repeat the complaint and the problem, you become a rumor monger.

How far the rumor will spread depends on what the recipient does with it. Proverbs 26:20 speaks of rumor like it's a fire. If there is no wood, the fire will die; and when there is no talebearer, the strife will cease.

There are several appropriate responses to rumor. Firstly, it is ignore it. If no one will believe it, it cannot be spread. Secondly, it is to confront the originator of the rumor according to Matthew 18. Thirdly, it is to verify the truth with the object of the complaint.

Unfortunately, despite these appropriate principles, rumors are not abated. Why? Because the recipients of the rumor will not do the above. They listen to the informant and get involved. Rather than esteeming others better, they believe the reports.

Paul was a recipient of the rumors of informants. In the Corinthian church, some people sided with Cephas and Apollos, and others sided with Paul. And whatever that had happened in the Corinthian church was reported to Paul by those who sided with him. But Paul was wise enough to reveal the source of the information - the household of Chloe.

Too often, a shroud of secrecy and confidentiality covering the sources of rumors adds to the politics of the church. It is even worse when the recipients get involved without a proper understanding.

We forget that talebearing and rumor mongering are sins against the 9th commandment.

Therefore, church of God, stay away from rumors and informants. Ultimately, there is a due process and that should be followed.

### *Confusion*

Beloved, church politics, or more plainly, in Bible speak - debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, divisions, evil surmisings, talebearing, favoritisms (2 Corinthians 12:20; 1 Corinthians 3:3; 1 Timothy 6:4, etc) provide a foothold for Satan to create trouble.

May the Lord deliver us from such as we make a conscious effort to remove it. Church politics is not unavoidable!

We are not completely pure, but we seek to maintain a purity that would show forth the glory that God sees in the church. ~Pastor

## **Catechism for Younger Children**

63. How can you get the help of the Holy Spirit? God has told us to pray for the Holy Spirit's help.

64. How long ago did Christ die? About two thousand years ago.

# Worship Service Roster

<i>Service</i>	<i>This Week (19.1.2020)</i>	<i>Next Week (26.1.2020)</i>
Speaker	Mark Chen	Mark Chen
Worship Leader	Mark Chen	Chris Budiman
Pianist	Magdalene Tay	Jerome Ng
Welcomers	John & Adeline Ng	Kim & Jesslyn Leow
Offering Stewards	Johnny Orchard, Chris Budiman Jemima Ng, John Chandran	Kim Leow, Ken Chong John Tan
Ushers	Sharon Sriharan, Nicole Tan	Rebecca Lee
Kitchen Duties	Carmel Sriharan, Heng Qi Ban Peggy Woo	Mary Loh, Jenni Budiman Michelle Tan
PA Duty	Raymond Woo	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: "God Restores" (Job 42:1;17).
3. Adult Bible Class and Children's Sunday School is in recess until February

### Appointments for the Week

SUN	9:30 am	Prayer Meeting
	10:00 am	Worship Service

### Last Lord's Day Tithes & Offering, & Attendance

General Fund - \$1655.45  
(ET - \$300.00)  
Mission Fund - \$80.00  
Building Fund - \$300.00 (ET - \$300.00)  
Total Tithes & Offerings - \$2035.45

\*ET: Electronic Transfer    Attendance - 98.