



COVENANT

Bible-Presbyterian Church

Preaching Christ for His Glory and His Kingdom

Order of Worship — 5 August 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	TP 99:1-5
*Invocation & † <i>Gloria Patri</i>	
Scripture Reading	1 Peter 4:12-19
The Lord's Supper	
Hymn	487 - <i>Sometime We'll Understand</i>
Hymn	361 - <i>Jesus Loves Even Me</i>
Tithes & Offering	
*†† <i>Doxology</i> & Offertory Prayer	
Scripture Reading	Ecclesiastes 5:8-20
Hymn	521 - <i>My Times Are in Thy Hand</i>
Confession of Faith & Pastoral Prayer	
Sermon	"Our Good and Comely Portion"
*Closing Hymn	357 - <i>All That Thrills My Soul Is 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

Website: www.covenantbpc.org.au

Contact: pastor@covenantbpc.org.au

Absolute Confidentiality?

Confidentiality Is Good and Right

How do Christians deal with issues of confidentiality in church?

We share many things with our friends, especially our personal struggles. We expect others to keep it confidential.

This is especially the case in personal trials. I may have cancer and I ask for prayer from a close friend. If I ask him to keep it confidential, I expect him to honor it.

This is good and right. To share it with another is to reveal a secret. "*He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets...*" (Prov 20:19).

Why is that? Because we are obligated to honor secrets told to us unless there are pressing reasons not to.

Confidentiality is also expected in areas of sin. This was the case of Joseph and Mary. When he knew she was pregnant, he didn't spread it around; but intended to break the betrothal quietly (Matthew 1:19).

And even when a brother sins against another, the offended party does not publish the sin immediately, but approaches the offending party privately (Matthew 18:15).

Confidentiality Is Not Absolute

However, confidentiality is not absolute. At some point, it may be necessary to denounce sin publicly.

Paul advised Timothy to rebuke publicly those that sin, that others would fear (1 Timothy 5:20). But this rebuke was not the first course of action.

But at times, breaking confidentiality must be the first course of action. In 1 Kings 19, King Saul had it in for David. He plotted against him.

And the one to whom King Saul told all his evil plots was his son Jonathan. So what did Jonathan do? He warned David.

1 Kings 19:2 - "*But Jonathan Saul's son delighted much in David: and Jonathan*

told David, saying, Saul my father seeketh to kill thee: now therefore, I pray thee, take heed to thyself until the morning, and abide in a secret place, and hide thyself."

There are times, even in the church, when it is not right to hold confidences. If there is rape, incest, abuse, murder - not to report it is to abet the crime.

We are not Catholic priests!

This is also something that the world knows about. While psychologists and counselors are required to keep their clients' secrets, they are obligated to break confidentiality in cases of crime, self-harm, and court subpoenas.

Similarly, if what has been entrusted to us concerns sin that must be dealt with, to keep confidential is to abet it.

There are times we are obliged to reveal sin (Leviticus 5:1, Deuteronomy 13:8) - like Peter did with Ananias and Sapphira.

Not to do so is to hate your brother who sins (Leviticus 19:17). And not to do so would be against justice (Isaiah 59:4).

Unfortunately, there is a cultural idea that has invaded the church and has become the norm.

It's the idea that "*whatever I tell you must always be kept confidential.*"

This can be damaging. Why?

Because absolute confidentiality is a biblical anomaly. The Bible knows nothing of it. What then is the biblical norm?

Discipleship Is the Biblical Norm

Christians are expected to build each other up. 1 Thessalonians 5:11 - "*...and edify one another, even as also ye do.*"

Christians are also expected to grow in holiness. 1 Thessalonians 4:3 - "*For this is the will of God, even your sanctification...*"

And when Christians edify others by teaching, admonishing, rebuking, and

comforting them for the purpose of their sanctification, this is called discipleship.

If this is the case, then confidentiality can severely affect discipleship.

Confidentiality and Gossip

What happens if you are the recipient of damaging gossip?

What happens if you hear a person speaking ill of another? What happens if you have heard of allegations of sins and crimes?

And what happens if you are called upon to keep all of this confidential?

There is a need to rebuke the indiscretion.

In the guise of deep concern, Christians can transgress clear biblical guidelines. And by securing confidentiality, Christians will freely run our tongues.

We forget that the Bible forbids indiscrete use of words, slander, and gossip.

It also forbids us from aggravating smaller faults, unnecessary discovering of infirmities, raising false rumors, receiving and repeating evil reports, and evil suspicion (WLC 145).

And there is also a need to effect communication.

God is a speaking God. He commands us to speak in certain ways. He spoke to us to effect reconciliation. And he did that by means of the gospel.

Under the gospel, we can confront each other, rebuke, admonish, and confess. Only when there is communication can

there be forgiveness and seeking of forgiveness.

Jesus is mediator between God and man. He effects communication. That's why he is called the Word.

Between Christians who have been redeemed, the middle wall of partition has been erased.

In Christ there is light and no darkness. Confidentiality, the reluctance to talk biblically, and the desire to hide sin are refusals to walk in that light.

The Bible should not accommodate cultural expectations of confidentiality because it has something better.

It has biblical communication. When there are sinful offenses, our call to action should be redemption, not reticence.

When we are reticent, then sin, like leaven, will continue to spread until more are affected (1 Corinthians 5:6).

Conclusion

Confidentiality is important. But it is not absolute. It is certainly not a means by which to hide sin.

Yes, confidentiality is easy because sin does not need to be addressed. It can be tolerated.

But discipleship - edification and sanctification - is paramount. That cannot be done when confidentiality is absolute.

If your motive is loving God and others, then cultural norms of confidentiality will give way to biblical speech.

~ Pastor



Westminster Shorter Catechism

Q. 15. What was the sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created?

A. The sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created, was their eating the forbidden fruit.

Worship Service Roster

<i>Service</i>	<i>This Week (5.8.18)</i>	<i>Next Week (12.8.18)</i>
Speaker	Mark Chen	Mark Chen
Worship Leader	Mark Chen	Chris Budiman
Pianist	Elizabeth Huang	Ian Tay
Welcomers	Xuan Tee & Yen Fye Yap	Kim & Jesslyn Leow
Offering Stewards	Ian Read*, Paul Butler* Chris Budiman, Jansen Ng	David Lim*, Yen Fye Yap* Johnny Orchard, Kim Leow
Ushers	Jemima Ng, Rebecca Lee	Putri Harapan, Jerome Ng
Kitchen Duties	Aliza Chiu*, Jenni Budiman August Ng, Peggy Woo	Grace Wang*, Sarah Siew Josephine Austin
PA Duty	Raymond Woo	Jacob Woo
<i>Prayer Meeting</i>	<i>10 August 2018</i>	<i>17 August 2018</i>
Facilitator	Mark Chen	Mark Chen
Pianist	Eugene Lim	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 message: "Always Hungry" (Ecclesiastes 6:1-12).
4. Next week's Junior Worship message - "Abraham and the God of Glory" (Acts 7:1-8). Speaker: Dolphin Wai.
5. Men's Bible Study. Saturday, 11 August 2018, at 7:30 pm. Residence of Eugene Lim. Please read "The Scandal of the Cross" - chapter 2 of *20 Controversies that Almost Destroyed a Church*.

Appointments for the Week			Last Lord's Day Tithes & Offering, & Attendance	
WED	10:00 am	Craft Group	General Fund - \$2,719.90 (*DD - \$200.00, #804 - \$6.30, #805 - \$8.50). Missions Fund - \$340.00 (*DD - \$100.00, #803 - \$100.00). Building Fund - \$400.00 (*DD - \$300.00, #602 - \$100.00). Total Tithes & Offering - \$3,459.90. Attendance - 118. *DD: direct deposit	
FRI	7:30 pm	CBI & Prayer Meeting		
SAT	4:30 pm	JF & TF		
	7:30 pm	Men's Bible Study		
SUN	9:00 am	Sunday School		
	10:00 am	Worship Service		

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.

Our Good and Comely Portion
Ecclesiastes 5:8-20

While Ecclesiastes is about vanity and disappointment, it also teaches us to add to them joy and thanksgiving. We must appreciate both sides. And while life can be filled with trials, we are taught practically how we can turn those sorrows into joys.

1. The Sad and Difficult Parts of Life
 - a. Don't be surprised - things are already bad
 - b. But we make them worse
2. The Good and Comely Portions from God
 - a. Broken toys are the best
 - b. God gave them to us

When we seek first God's kingdom and his righteousness, he will give us joy in the midst of broken toys. He will give us a good and comely portion. And as believers, why can we rejoice despite the messiness of this world? Because just as Christ suffered in this life, we should expect to partake in it. But Christ was received into the highest heaven, as we will be. That is cause for exceeding joy. But meanwhile, we can still rejoice in our broken toys, they are given by God for us to enjoy.

Questions for Reflection:

1. Do you find it difficult to rejoice in your broken toys? Why?
2. How does the fact that God is the one who apportions his gifts to his children in this life - that you have what you have and others may have more (or less) - affect you?
3. If you have been given more, what are you to do with it in investing in God's kingdom? And why is this important for you to enjoy what you have?