



COVENANT

Bible-Presbyterian Church

Preaching Christ for His Glory and His Kingdom

Order of Worship – 23 September 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	495 - <i>Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah</i>
*Invocation & † <i>Gloria Patri</i>	
Scripture Reading	Ephesians 3:8-21
Hymn	TP 36:6b-10
Tithes & Offering	
*† <i>Doxology</i> & Offertory Prayer	
Scripture Reading	Ecclesiastes 8:1-17
Hymn	458 - <i>Christ Liveth in Me</i>
Confession of Faith & Pastoral Prayer	
Sermon	"No One Can Understand Life"
*Closing Hymn	668 - <i>Speak, Lord, in the Stillness</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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Struggling in Life

We All Struggle in Life

We have been studying the book of Ecclesiastes and we can safely conclude by looking into its pages and into the pages of our lives, that life is messy.

Life is not a bed of roses.

Not only do we struggle in our lives, but we struggle spiritually. It is safe to say that every struggle we go through in life is a spiritual struggle.

We struggle in our work, health, family, and churches.

And each struggle reveals how weak we are and how much we need Christ.

And they are designed to do that - we are to come to the conclusion that all is vanity in life if lived not for Christ.

And even if we were to live it for Christ, it will not be easy.

Struggles Help Us to Grow in Christ

And each struggle helps us to press on in Christian growth. Indeed, that is how God has designed it (Romans 8:29; James 1:3, 4).

In Psalm 119:71, the Psalmist says that struggles and afflictions are good because they help us to understand the Scriptures in our hearts.

"It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes"

This is the case even with chastisement from God. Psalm 118:17-18 says that God has chastened us greatly so that we may *"declare the works of the LORD."*

One of the ways that struggles help us to grow is by realizing that God's grace is sufficient.

When we are sorely tested, and when we look to God in prayer - that's when we find grace to help in time of need (Hebrews 4:16).

It is in those times that we find his grace is sufficient - he gives us strength to endure (2 Corinthians 12:9) and he will at times give us a way out of that

temptation and trial (1 Corinthians 10:13).

As the hymn writes - *"He giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater, He sendeth more strength when the labors increase, To added affliction He addeth His mercy, To multiplied trials, His multiplied peace."*

But one of the reasons why we don't overcome or endure our struggles is because we don't go to him.

Another reason is because we do not heed his word. We still do things the same way, react the same sinful way, and dig our heels into our sins.

This is why we don't always find reprieve or endurance in our struggles.

But God is concerned for our spiritual growth - is that not why, perhaps, we experience the same kinds of struggles over and over again? God is bringing them to us to change us.

All Believers Will Struggle

Before our conversion, we struggled with our sins. But our consciences were never exactly bothered because we loved our sins.

But after we have believed in Christ, as new creatures, we hate sin. And our sins become our struggle. As believers, we struggle against our sins.

Psalm 38:3-4 says - *"There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin. For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me."*

This struggle is good because it shows that we are Christian. Our flesh wars against the Spirit that is in us and the Spirit wars against the flesh - this keeps us from doing what we want (Galatians 5:17).

Why do we struggle at work? Perhaps we have been treated badly. God calls us

to forebear - but the flesh does not want to. Hence, we struggle.

We struggle because we can't complete our work and we worry. God calls us to work hard for our bosses and not to worry - but the flesh does not want to. Hence, we struggle.

Why do we struggle at home? Perhaps we have problems with our spouses. God calls us to do our part - but the flesh wants our spouses to do their part before we do ours. Hence, we struggle.

Perhaps we have difficulties with our parents. God calls us to honor them - but we resent them. Hence, we struggle.

Perhaps we have difficulties with our sinful thoughts against others. God calls us to think charitably - but our flesh trusts our sinful judgments. Hence, we struggle.

When Struggles Become Too Strong

Believing in Christ does not mean immediate and definite triumph over your struggles in this life.

You may never have complete victory until heaven. Life is messy. We are to live by faith and to walk with Christ every step of the way.

Sometimes we will succumb to our struggles.

That will lead to things like depression and resentment. David struggled long and hard - many of his Psalms reflect the darkness of his souls in those times.

Jonah also struggled and fell into a state of resentment. Elijah also struggled and fell into a state of depression.

This was despite the grace that was shown unto them. David was assured he would have the kingdom. Jonah was shown grace by God in the shelter provided by God. Elijah was given victory over the Baal prophets.

But sometimes trials are almost too much to bear. And in our weakness, we succumb to our struggles.

Hope in Times of Struggles

While we may be deep in struggles, the assurance is this - we will never be destroyed (2 Corinthians 4:9).

We may be weakened - but we will not be removed from the love of God.

We expect trials - Jesus himself said that in the world we shall have tribulation. But yet, these struggles are sent by God for our purification (Job 23:10).

And what we struggle with now, is nowhere compared to the joys we will one day experience. Struggles turn our faces heavenward.

We have to remember that Jesus has overcome the world (John 16:33).

Therefore, the Christian can respond to struggles, oppositions, trials, and difficulties with grace and not the flesh.

We can respond with hope. We can respond with joy. We can respond with confidence. We can respond with humility of heart. We can respond with grace. And while we respond with sorrow and tears - we weep not as those who have no hope.

Spiritual struggles are real - given to us for our growth. How regrettable if we never grow from them. ~ Pastor



Westminster Shorter Catechism

Q. 41. Wherein is the moral law summarily comprehended?

A. The moral law is summarily comprehended in the ten commandments.

Q. 42. What is the sum of the ten commandments?

A. The sum of the ten commandments is, to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind; and our neighbor as ourselves.

Worship Service Roster

<i>Service</i>	<i>This Week (23.9.18)</i>	<i>Next Week (30.9.18)</i>
Speaker	Mark Chen	Mark Chen
Worship Leader	Jacob Woo	Chris Budiman
Pianist	Merilyn Woo	Eugene Lim
Welcomers	Kim & Jesslyn Leow	Yen Fye & Angela Yap
Offering Stewards	Eugene Lim*, John Tan* Rex Sriharan, Kim Leow	Vincent Chiu*, Julian Poon* Jacob Woo, Steven Lim
Ushers	Dolphin Wai, Wendy Gong	August Ng, Rebecca Lee
Kitchen Duties	Lydia Orchard*, Debbie Blake Victor Poon	Jackie Hong*, Dina Portillo Aliza Chiu
PA Duty	Raymond Woo	Jacob Woo
<i>Prayer Meeting</i>	<i>28 September 2018</i>	<i>5 October 2018</i>
Facilitator	Mark Chen	Mark Chen
Pianist	Nancy Lim	Eugene 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. Next week's message: "There Is Hope in Life" (Ecclesiastes 9:1-10).
3. Next week's Junior Worship message: "How Philip Preached the Gospel" (Acts 8:25-40). Speaker: Ken Hong.
4. Ministry reports for ACM 2018. Please submit by 1 October 2018 - email Jacob Woo (jacob.woo@gmail.com).
5. Ladies Fellowship. Sunday, 30th September 2018, 12 pm at church. Lunch and DVD "How People Change". Bring a dish to share. Ladies of all ages welcome. Please see Merilyn for more details.
6. Daily Manna and Daily Manna Jr (October-December 2018) are available at the foyer.
7. Retirees' Group. Visit to Olive Farm in Toodyay this Tuesday, 25th September 2018. Bus will leave church at 9 am sharp.

Appointments for the Week	Last Lord's Day Tithes & Offering, & Attendance
WED 10:00 am Craft Group	General Fund - \$2,855.45 (*DD - \$200.00, #819 - \$200.00, #820 - \$7.50). Missions Fund - \$250.00 (*DD - 100.00). Building Fund - \$1,400.00 (*DD - \$1,300.00, #614 - \$100.00). Total Tithes & Offering - \$4,505.45. Attendance - 132. *DD: direct deposit
FRI 7:30 pm CBI & Prayer Meeting	
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.

No One Can Understand Life
Ecclesiastes 8:1-17

Children participate in school sports events. But these team sports may not be fair - some teams have better players, bigger players, older players. And even the circumstances may not be fair - the ground is uneven or in one team's favor. Those who win gloat, and those who lose complain. Sometimes even parents complain. All this despite teachers encouraging the children to play fairly, to enjoy the game, and to suck it up. Can we accept that life is not fair but to play fairly?

1. Human Rulers Can Be Bad But We Must Obey Them
 - a. The problem with human government
 - b. God's will for Christians toward human government
2. Others Sin and Prosper But We Must Do Good
 - a. Religious wicked people sin
 - b. Justice comes too little too late
 - c. God's people must live righteously
3. We Can't Understand All that God Is Doing Now
 - a. Trying to understand God's ways is exhausting
 - b. God's wisdom gives understanding and peace

When we stick close to God, and have his wisdom, we find peace. He helps us to be at peace without understand everything he's doing here. This encourages us to serve a God who is so much higher than we are. So even though the terrain is uneven, and others are bigger, and things are unfair, we know that God will make all things right for us one day.

Questions for Reflection:

1. How bothered and affected are you by the unfairness that you perceive in this world? How can you learn to submit yourself to the commandments of God despite the unfairness?
2. What is the terrain like in your life now? Do you expect it to improve? Do you feel that you deserve an improvement?
3. How much peace do you have? Can you eat, drink, and be merry?