

Sunday July 19, 2020

Service for Swansea & Charlestown Presbyterian Church

Welcome & Prayer (Greg W)

Good morning and welcome to our church service for today. It is good to have you join in worshipping our great God and joining in bringing glory to His name. It is only another week now until we commence an extra service in the morning, which will mean that most people will be able to come to church once a fortnight if they desire to do so, or every week if you worship at Swansea or at night at Charlestown.

Well friends, how have you been going with coping with the idea of a possible second wave of coronavirus affecting the community. Our brothers and sisters in Victoria have been living that experience for a few weeks now, and the threat of community transmission in NSW remains a possibility. In times of trouble, or when you are burdened, do you cast your cares on God, and have confidence that He will hear your prayer?

In Psalm 5, which will be the passage for the sermon today, we find David still being pursued by wicked people being led by his son Absalom. We see David crying out to God, asking for help, and laying his requests before Him. David does this with an expectation that God hears his prayer and will respond in an appropriate way. He is confident that those who rebel against God will come to ruin whilst those who take refuge in God will have His protection – which is something David was in need of.

Let's pray

Father God, we give you thanks that you are the God of all hope, and that nothing is outside of your knowing, or your care. We acknowledge you as the creator of all things, and give you thanks and praise that you continue to sustain your creation. We ask Lord, what are mere mortals that you should think about them, human beings that you should care for them. But we know that you have made us to have a special place in your creation.

Thank you that because of your grace, even though we continue to sin you have adopted us as your children and made us your heirs. We give you thanks that before the beginning of time you had already devised a rescue plan to restore the relationship between us, that was broken when sin entered the world. We pray that we will never take for granted the ransom that was paid by Jesus when he died on the cross, and that we will strive to live lives that reflect that we have died to sin and live for Christ. We pray that we will not continue to be ensnared by sin, but rather we will live our lives in a way that seeks to honour you and bring glory to your name.

Father God, as we learn more about your character today and hear of how David continued to place his trust in you, may we be strengthened in the knowledge that in times of trouble we too can place our trust in you with the same confidence that David had. Through your Holy Spirit may we be convicted of the truth that all scripture is God breathed, and that it is helpful for our teaching about how to grow to be more like Christ. Speak to us today, through your Word and by your mighty Spirit. We pray that you will challenge us, change us, and make us your people. Through Christ and led by the Spirit we pray. Amen.

Holy, Holy, Holy -



HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Bible Reading - Psalm 5 (NIV)

For the director of music. For pipes. A psalm of David.

Listen to my words, Lord,
consider my lament.

Hear my cry for help,
my King and my God,
for to you I pray.

In the morning, Lord, you hear my voice;
in the morning I lay my requests before you
and wait expectantly.

For you are not a God who is pleased with wickedness;
with you, evil people are not welcome.

The arrogant cannot stand
in your presence.

You hate all who do wrong;
you destroy those who tell lies.

The bloodthirsty and deceitful
you, Lord, detest.

But I, by your great love,
can come into your house;
in reverence I bow down
toward your holy temple.

Lead me, Lord, in your righteousness
because of my enemies—
make your way straight before me.
Not a word from their mouth can be trusted;
their heart is filled with malice.
Their throat is an open grave;
with their tongues they tell lies.
Declare them guilty, O God!
Let their intrigues be their downfall.
Banish them for their many sins,
for they have rebelled against you.
But let all who take refuge in you be glad;
let them ever sing for joy.
Spread your protection over them,
that those who love your name may rejoice in you.
Surely, Lord, you bless the righteous;
you surround them with your favor as with a shield.

Romans 3:10-26 (NIV)

10 As it is written:

“There is no one righteous, not even one;

11

there is no one who understands;
there is no one who seeks God.

12

All have turned away,
they have together become worthless;
there is no one who does good,
not even one.”[b]

13

“Their throats are open graves;
their tongues practice deceit.”[c]

“The poison of vipers is on their lips.”[d]

14

“Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.”[e]

15

“Their feet are swift to shed blood;

16

ruin and misery mark their ways,

17

and the way of peace they do not know.”[f]

18

“There is no fear of God before their eyes.”[g]

19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. 20 Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God’s sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin.

Righteousness Through Faith

21 But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. 22 This righteousness is given through faith in[h] Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. 25 God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, [i] through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because

in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished— 26 he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus

Announcements 19 July 2020

- Zoom Prayer Meeting (Monday July 20 @ 8pm). We are going through many changes in our church life (as well as life in general!). We need to carve out time to commit our plans as a church to God. We want to unite as a church in prayer on Zoom on Monday July 20 at 8pm. We are encouraging Bible study groups not to meet that week so we can prioritise prayer. Please set aside this time and join us by clicking this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82554956586>
- Second Morning Service at Charlestown for Term 3. We are excited to be starting a second morning service at Charlestown in Term 3. This will allow our people to come every two weeks. The current thinking is a service at 9:15-10:05 (followed by cleaning). And then a second service at 10:30-11:25. Everyone is given the choice whether they would prefer to attend one or the other. To make this happen we will need people to help serve. Please contact Stephen or Jon if you are able and willing to help.
- Baptism of Barnabas Brown - July 26. We are excited to announce this will happen at Sunday @ 6 on July 26. Stephen Taylor will be baptising Barnabas.
- Focus for July – Bible Challenge. Each July we aim to encourage each other to read the bible more with our yearly bible Challenge. This year we are spending July reading more about the name and character of God. The challenge can be found at <https://rachelwojo.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/the-names-of-god-bible-reading-challenge.pdf> The plan is to choose one reading each day. After reading the Scripture we are to meditate on this aspect of God's character and to pray about it. Let's see if we can do one a day for the whole month.

Prayer points – Sunday 19h July 2020

Pray for China. Pray for the millions left homeless in the floods. Pray that the government would help them. Pray for the church that they would be showing you mercy to those in need. Thank God for the great work he has been doing in saving millions of Chinese people. Pray that during a year of disasters that many more would turn to the living God.

Pray for Victoria and the COVID-19 outbreak. Pray for wisdom for the government. Pray for the church that as they go online God would be drawing many people to himself. Pray for comfort for the lonely and isolated.

Pray for Sparklers, Impact, SYBS, Home Groups, JOY - thank God for these ministries and the people who serve. As we plan to start back in Term 3, please be praying God would use these ministries and others for his glory. Pray for the leaders that they would be refreshed after the break and come back ready to serve. Pray that the Lord Jesus would be at the centre of all we do. Ask that God would be using these ministries to build the church and save the lost.

Pray for schools, teachers, and students. Pray as school goes back the students would be ready for another semester. Pray that God would help them to stand firm in the Lord. Pray for those finishing this year that they would finish well and be trusting their future to God. Pray for the teachers that they would be strengthened and God would help them to do all they do for His glory.

Pray for the preaching of the word. Pray that God would be giving us ears to hear. Pray for the preaching at Charlestown that it would come with the Holy Spirit's power, authority and conviction. Pray that the messages would be Christ centred and exalting.

Pray for the starting of the second morning service. As we make the step to start a new morning service please be praying that God would be directing our steps. Pray for people to be raised up to serve in both services.

Church Prayer (Steve Gillard)

Father in Heaven we thank you again for the good things you give us, and in particular our church family. Even though we are not meeting together every week, we thank you for the unity we enjoy through the saving work of Jesus, who died for our sins on the cross. We thank you for school holidays and pray that it has been a time of refreshment as we look forward again to the commencement of another school term.

With a new term starting we commit to you our ministries in term 3 including sparklers play group, impact youth group, our home groups, and our ministry to the elderly. We pray for good support of these groups and that we will all be strengthened and encouraged in our Christian walk.

As always, we pray for those struggling with ill health. We ask for healing if it is according to your will, and comfort for those who are mourning. We pray for those who are isolated, that they will find comfort in drawing close to you.

We commit to you our schools and our teachers as they prepare for another term. We commit to you the teaching and preaching of the Word in our church. We pray that we will remain faithful and bold. We pray that we will continue to bring God's message week by week to his people, and for your assistance in reaching as many people as we can.

We commit to you the second morning service commencing at Charlestown for term 3 and thank you for the opportunity to meet more regularly again. We pray for Stephen and Jon; that you will encourage them in their work; that we will remember them in our prayer time at home; and that we will support them with encouraging conversations and messages. Through this we pray that they will remain good shepherds to the sheep.

For the COVID-19 outbreak, both internationally and here in Australia, we pray for wisdom for the government and for those seeking to develop a vaccine. We pray that your church will be sustained and continue to grow, and those who are lost are sought out and will indeed come to know you.

We commit all this to you, the one true God and our Heavenly father, in Jesus name, Amen.

Quizworx!

Watch the kids talk on You tube.

What does it mean to be a real Christian? Do you have to be a certain type of person? Do you have to do certain things? That's what some people were saying in Acts chapter 15. But NO! This Kids' Talk video assures us that the only way to be made right with God is by repenting and accepting Jesus as our King. This is what being a real Christian is all about. And it's for anyone!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MOBaxm9D0dY&feature=youtu.be>

Grace Awaiting

Sermon - The Refuge of the Righteous (Psalm 5) by Jon Brown

Sermon Link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7jzfHbqKGk-TjLNfTE6DzQ/>

We walked through the double doors of the Psalms (Psalms 1-2) and we walked straight into trouble didn't we. David always seemed to be trouble didn't he. He was always on the run. His life constantly under threat. When he was a youngster king Saul was after him. And in his old age, his own son Absalom was out to get him. So he spent a lot of time hiding didn't he. And this comes out in his prayers to God in the Psalms. One of the major categories of the Psalms is the 'Psalms of Refuge'. It comes up over and over again.

In the Old Testament there were actual places called 'cities of Refuge'. God spoke to Moses in Numbers 35 and said, "designate cities to serve as cities of refuge for you, so that when someone who kills someone unintentionally may flee there" (Num. 35:11). So these were places that you could hide, but only if you were innocent. And when we read the Psalms that speak of refuge this is what's in the background. That's why David is often claiming his innocence before God and seeking refuge. Except the refuge isn't a city but God himself. And when we turn to Psalm 5, it falls into this category. Notice in verse 11, "let all those who take refuge in you rejoice!" And in verse 12, "for you Lord bless the righteous one."

But how can David be so confident that God would hide him? He sure wasn't innocent was he? And if you weren't innocent you wouldn't get refuge. Numbers 35:33 says the one who commits murder should be put to death. How did David claim the refuge of the righteous? How was he so sure God would hide him? Or to put it another way, how is God right to say David is right when we know he's wrong? Notice there are five stanzas in Psalm 5. And as David prays at dawn, five things dawn on him about God which lead him to claim God's refuge.

1. God's Covenant (vv. 1-3)

Notice how David starts, "Listen to my words, LORD; consider my sighings. Pay attention to the sound of my cry, my God and my King." You'll remember Psalm 4 started like this didn't it. A lot of Psalms start like this. David is persistent isn't he? He won't let go of God. Although if he judged by his circumstances, it seemed like God had let go of him. If we take it that he penned this during the time he fled from Absalom. Remember back in Psalm 3 the people were saying that God had let go of him. Why? Because his life was falling apart in front of their eyes wasn't it.

Yet he doesn't let go of God does he. There's a real urgency isn't there. "Listen to my words, hear my sighings. Pay attention to my cry. Pleading." David demands God hears his every sound doesn't he. And where does his confidence come from that God will hear him? Notice in verse 2 David calls God, "My King and my God." He is claiming the covenant promise. The central promise God makes to his people is that "I will be your God, and you will be my people." In the covenant God binds himself to his people, like a marriage. God makes his vows. And David had made his vows. David is pleading his case before God. God you promised to do this, do it. That's the marrow of prayer - pleading the promises of God back to him. Calling on God to do what he has promised. And God promises to hear the cries of his people. All sort of sounds? Prayer is words, but also mediations (grumbings), cries, out loud. Pleading. Looking up. And just like a ewe can hear her lamb crying among thousands of others. So God among thousands hears the cries of his children.

Notice David waits expectantly in verse 3? But as he's waiting at dawn something else about God dawns on him.

2. God is Holy (vv. 4-6)

The holiness of God dawns on him. Notice in verses 4-6? It dawns on him that God doesn't delight in wickedness. And then it's as if the more God's holiness dawns on him, the more ugly evil becomes. Notice David goes from saying God not delighting, and then not dwelling, not being able to stand it, hating, destroying, abhorring? That's intense language isn't it. Hating, abhorring. That's about as intense as you can get isn't it? That makes me feel a bit uncomfortable.

But if you want God to hate anything, it's evil isn't? Notice God doesn't find evil funny? That's good to know isn't it! People commit the most horrendous crimes against each other don't they? And isn't it good to know God isn't sitting up in heaven finding it funny? He's not watching evil and finding it entertaining like we watch a criminal TV series.

God's holiness is good. It means evil crimes and evil people will be held accountable.

Especially if the evil and injustice is being done against you personally, like it was for David. It's good to know that God isn't laughing isn't it. It's good to know that he can't stand evil. David knew God was holy through the covenant he made with Israel. But this created a big problem: 'How can a holy God dwell with a sinful people?' That's why the temple existed. Because God is holy he must be approached in a certain way. No one can just walk up to him willy nilly. Evil can't dwell with him. That's what Leviticus is all about. David knew this.

But David also knew something else. I think as David was focussing on God's holiness, something else dawned on him. David might have started off with a sideways glance at his enemies, but then his own evil dawned on him. As David says to God, "you will destroy all those who speak lies." We know David lied a few times during his life. He lied twice to Achish king of Gath. He lied to Ahimelec the priest. And then in 2 Samuel 11 we know David both committed murder and deception. He lied to Uriah about his adultery with Bathsheba. And then he had him murdered. Well then, David is pronounced guilty by his own words isn't he. He shed blood, and doesn't that mean the Lord hates David. Doesn't that mean that David can't dwell with him? And if we're honest - doesn't that mean that we can't dwell with God either?

Well notice there's a 'but'....

3. God is Love (v. 7)

Look in verse 7, an emphatic but....'But as for me.' The preacher Martin Lloyd Jones said this word 'but' is the most important word in the Bible. And as David pondered God's holiness and his own sinfulness, the love of God dawns on him. Notice David says, But I, or as for me, I will enter into your house. I will enter into your presence. How? "Because of the multitude of your mercy." The light of grace dawned on David's soul. The Hebrew word is 'hesed'. It means something like unconditional love. David focuses on God's covenant love. God promised to be David's God no matter what. When God revealed himself to Moses in Exodus, he said, "The LORD, the LORD, is gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love." God promised himself to Israel. And he promised himself to David.

And notice its God's grace that leads David to fear God and worship. If God's holiness alone dawned on David, he would be running from God, not running to him. Like Adam and Eve in the garden, there's a fear of God that can make you run and hid from him. But there's a fear that makes us run to him and worship: the goodness of God. The grace of God leads us to repentance. And it's led David to repent hasn't it? Look in verse 8. He wants God to lead him down the right path. He's changed his ways.

But the question is still there about David evil. How can God be right to say David is right when we know he's wrong? Doesn't God's holiness mean David must be punished? But if he destroyed David for his evil, his promise to be his God no matter what would be broken wouldn't it - 2 Samuel 7. But on the other hand if God doesn't cast him out and judge him, his holiness would be jeopardised, right? What a conundrum! And so there's this tension. How will it be resolved?

Notice David pleads for justice. In verse 9 he does call on God to judge his enemies.

4. God is Just (vv. 9-10)

God's holiness and love lead David to focus the fact that God is just. So God because he is holy and loving he hates evil and must deal with it. If you love your child, you'll be furious if someone hurts them wouldn't you? If you're not angry, and let them just go on being hurt, that would be cruel not loving right. So David pleads with God to judge his enemies. He's probably thinking of Absalom and his rebels. And David is saying they're wicked down to the core. They are totally depraved. And he calls God to judge them. He is calling on God to give them the guilty verdict that they deserve.

But the problem arises again - what about David? Hasn't he pronounced himself guilty as well?

The apostle Paul seems to think so. He picks up on David's words here in his letter to the Romans. In chapters 1-2 Paul makes his case for the universal guilt of all humans. That is that everyone, Jew and Gentile; religious and pagan, are guilty before God. Why? Because no one is righteous, no not one! From head to toe we are corrupt with sin. All have sinned and fallen short of God's glory. David did and so have we. What's the solution?

The righteousness of God. That there is a way where God can be both just and justify the ungodly. The way that God solved our whole conundrum is the cross. God sent him to be a propitiation for our sins. That is the

punishment we deserve fell on him. The gospel reveals God's righteousness. That is that sin was fully punished on the cross. God's holiness and justice was shown. But also God's love in that Christ died for our sins. Jesus the righteous one died for the unrighteous to bring us to God. To jump the gun and go to the end of the Psalm - the righteous One is blessed. The righteous one gets refuge. And through faith in Jesus rebels like you and I become God's friends.

We all want justice don't we. Like David crying out here, there's many crying out for justice now. Social justice is what everyone is talking about. Justice for black lives. Justice for women. Justice for those who abuse power. We come down like a ton of bricks on people who we think deserve it. G. K. Chesterton said 'the modern world is full of the world's virtues gone mad'. Unlike God we have no balance. All love without holiness. Plenty of justice but there's little kindness. And it's good news for us that God is holy. God is just. But he is also kind.


5. God is Kind (vv. 11-12)

Last point. Notice the last thing to dawn on David is God's kindness in verses 11 and 12. "But let all those that put their trust in you rejoice. Let them shout for joy because you defend them. You defend them. You surround them with favour like a shield." In Christ God is always smiling on you. In Christ you're surrounded with God's unfailing love like a shield.

You know if you're a Christian there's only three things that can happen to you and they're all good. Things can go well in your life and with your circumstances, and that's good. Or God can send trials your way, your circumstances can be full of trouble, but that's ultimately for your good too. Or you can die and go to heaven.

This sort of confidence that Martin Luther had during the Reformation. He was summoned to Augsburg to recant. Other heretics had been burnt at the stake. But Luther went resolved to stand on God's word. When Luther arrived he was turned by someone saying, "Where will you find shelter if your patron, the Elector of Saxony should desert you?" Luther answered, "Under the shelter of heaven." This was David's shelter. And it should be yours too.

Rock of Ages



Whiche draw this heed in brough
 Wh simple eyes shall see chingath
 Whered sounce of this for chown
 Sedt pless to thy judgmen for graone
 Rock of Ages inle of for my
 Leash hide my self in thee

Benediction - Psalm 5:11-12

But let all who take refuge in you be glad;
let them ever sing for joy.
Spread your protection over them,
that those who love your name may rejoice in you.
Surely, Lord, you bless the righteous;
you surround them with your favor as with a shield.

Church Engagement

To help us know who has participated in today's service would you please either

- Like the sermon on Facebook OR
- Share the sermon on Facebook with someone that you believe would benefit from it. OR
- Fill out a two question survey (approx. 1 minute) at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/6D9VPZK>

Morning Tea

Our morning tea is a vital way that we give and receive fellowship during a time like this. We don't want to be just consumers of Church, we want to be a part of the family of God. Why not join our virtual morning tea on Zoom. Click on the link at 10:45am to join: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89081952206?pwd=aGVUcm1oOHp3VXMxYVg0bk5HSS9rZz09>
Meeting ID: 890 8195 2206 Password: 797654

Or you could give one or two people a call. Who might your ring now?