

Sunday June 28, 2020

Service for Swansea & Charlestown Presbyterian Church

Welcome & Prayer (Ross Logan)

Welcome to church this morning.

It's good to worship together whether that's physically, online or reading the paper copy at home. If you are at home, and able to, why not log on to morning tea at 10:45 and catch up with a few others. It's good to encourage each other.

Are you a bit of a rebel? Do you allow yourself a rebellious thought or act every now and again? A bit of a kickback against authority. A "you're not going to tell me what to do" reaction. Those things that give you that feeling of exhilaration you get when you do something you know you weren't necessarily supposed to do. Things like opening the flavoured milk carton on the side that says: "Open other side", not just eating dessert before dinner, but eating dessert INSTEAD OF dinner, gunning it through an orange traffic light, not reading the instructions before putting something together, or hiding the only item of clothing left in your size at a store on the off chance you'll want to come back and buy it later.

Considering our general Australian larrikin attitude, I've been pleasantly surprised at our lack of rebellion against and our compliance with the COVID restrictions that have been put in place over the last few months.

Our small acts of rebellion usually have few consequences, but today we'll look at some acts of rebellion that have vast, lasting consequences. In Psalm 1 we learnt of two paths, that of the righteous and the wicked. As Jon helps us explore Psalm 2, we're again presented with two options. Rebellion, that has little, if any, hope of success, and an advised, wiser response, that leads to taking refuge in God and resulting blessedness.

Let's pray.

Father, we come to you today to say thankyou. We want to honour you and praise you; we want to delight in your word and in who you are.

Thank you for loving us and showing us that we are valued. We know that even though we fall short of your standards your grace brings us back to you.

You provide the food and water that we need, loved ones to cherish and have relationships with, homes to live in, creation to enjoy and good health. Thank you.

Through your word, you provide clear direction, a knowledge of you and your promises, comfort and strength in difficult times. Thank you.

You give us rest at night and wake us to a new day in the morning. Help us to recognise the blessings that you give us every day.

Father forgive us for our grumbling, our thoughts that dwell on problems, our forgetfulness and our failure to love others. Give us instead attitudes of acceptance, love and thanksgiving, hearts that trust you that are ready to hand our problems to you. Make us humble before you, not rebelling against you but taking refuge in you.

Quieten our hearts Lord, take away our distractions, so that as we come to you this morning, we will be ready to glorify you, to understand more of you and to learn of the things that you want us to do.

In Jesus name, Amen

Thine be the Glory - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RbBOOmKMLmI>

Let Your Kingdom Come - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Rh8l0r9glA>

Bible Reading - Psalm 2 (NIV)

1

Why do the nations conspire[a]
and the peoples plot in vain?

2

The kings of the earth rise up
and the rulers band together
against the Lord and against his anointed, saying,

3

“Let us break their chains
and throw off their shackles.”

4

The One enthroned in heaven laughs;
the Lord scoffs at them.

5

He rebukes them in his anger
and terrifies them in his wrath, saying,

6

“I have installed my king
on Zion, my holy mountain.”

7 I will proclaim the Lord’s decree:

He said to me, “You are my son;
today I have become your father.

8

Ask me,
and I will make the nations your inheritance,
the ends of the earth your possession.

9

You will break them with a rod of iron[b];
you will dash them to pieces like pottery.”

10

Therefore, you kings, be wise;
be warned, you rulers of the earth.

11

Serve the Lord with fear
and celebrate his rule with trembling.

12

Kiss his son, or he will be angry
and your way will lead to your destruction,
for his wrath can flare up in a moment.
Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

Mark 1:9-11 (NIV)

9 At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. **10** Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. **11** And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”

Announcements

- Church in July. Session will be meeting this week to make plans for what church in July will look like. Please pray for our elders as they consider extra services, running Kids church and Am service parallel as well as other innovative options. No matter what we intend to continue to offer our interactive and paper services.
- Balance. THIS afternoon, Jo and Stephen are holding a ZOOM webinar on Balance. Are you finding it hard to balance work, home & Church? Then why not tune in between 3:00-4:30pm where we will have a combination of teaching, practical application and group discussion on the issue of balance. **THE ZOOM DETAILS HAVE RECENTLY CHANGED AND ARE NOW...** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86343217396?pwd=TW9KaUQ3YlVFcE9wY3FkZ3kxREZYUT09>
- Focus for June – Family. How do we find balance to ensure that family gets the right amount of our time? And the right amount of our energy? And the right amount of our love? This week it would be good to think through how we balance our need for family and our need to work, sleep, exercise, play and worship.
- Prayer. Don't forget that every Monday and Thursday evenings at 7pm we are meeting to pray via ZOOM. Please join us.
- Pastoral Care. Are you in need of pastoral care? Or have awaiting a COVID-19 test or been diagnosed with COVID-19? Please let us know so that we can pray and provide any physical or spiritual help that you need.
 - After this service please like the sermon or share it with someone else or complete the following one minute Survey Monkey survey @ at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/6D9VPZK> This will help us work out who is accessing our interactive service and how we can better help out those who are not.

Pray for Laos (Pop 7 million, Christians 0.2 million). In Laos, Christianity is branded as a harmful Western influence which challenges the nation's Communist values. Government officials use society's hostile attitude towards Christians to justify monitoring believers. Christians struggle to gather. Many do not have permanent church structures and instead conduct worship services in homes. Communities often hinder churches from setting up and building places of worship. Laws require churches to have both a registered minister and a registered place of worship that is owned by the church to be considered legal. Construction of new churches is extremely difficult as personal approval from the prime minister is required.

COVID - 19. Pray for those from poorer nations where there is little testing nor medical facilities. Pray especially for the people of South America, Africa, South Asia and middle East where the pandemic is growing rapidly. Pray for balance. That we might all get the balance between family, work, Church, sleep, sport and leisure right.

Pray for SPARKLERS. Praise God for the ability to meet back each Thursday. Praise God for one family planning to do Christianity Explored in term 3. Pray that we will be able to have spiritual conversations when we are in contact with families from playgroup and be able to point them to Jesus' love for them.

Pray for reduction in corruption in our government as well as in our wider society, our Church family.

Church Prayer (Jo Barlow)

Our loving Heavenly Father, we thank You that You are sovereign over all the rulers of the earth, and though they may not acknowledge You, their hearts are in Your hands. We ask that You would give wisdom to those who are making decisions about how best to stem and respond to the pandemic; we pray that they would truly consider the needs of their people in a balanced and compassionate way. We particularly think of the poorer nations where testing is not readily available and where medical facilities are very limited. We lift up the people in South America, South Asia, the Middle East and India, where social distancing is difficult or impossible, and we ask for Your protection of the most vulnerable.

While thinking on a global level, we pray for Laos, where Christianity is considered a harmful western influence. Father, would You enable the believers there to be wise, knowing they may be monitored, but not to be cowed or defeated. Please help them to gather together by giving them access to appropriate buildings so they can legally meet.

Lord, closer to home we pray for our own government at all levels: federal, state and local. We ask that those that represent us might be men and women of integrity, who put the needs of their constituents before their own preferences. We pray that You would give them wisdom and insight as they make decisions on our half, and we particularly think of the Christians among them, and ask they might be salt and light in a challenging environment.

We thank You for our Sparklers playgroup and the outreach we are able to have through Suzie and her helpers. Thank You that they are able to meet together again; please keep them safe as they do so. We ask for opportunities that are not contrived for spiritual conversations, and we pray that Christianity Explored might be able to go ahead in term 3.

We think of those in our church family who have been unwell or are having treatment, and particularly pray for Lorraine, Valmai, Joan, Wayne, Jon's grandfather and others known to each of us. We ask that they would know Your comforting presence with them in a tangible way, and that we might be Your hands and feet to them.

We thank You for our ministers, Stephen and Jon, and their penetrating insights into Your Word each week; help us to not just be hearers of Your Word but doers also, as we apply the teaching we receive. We ask for Your help and guidance in all aspects of their work on our behalf, whether teaching, pastoral care, administration, being part of meetings and various other responsibilities. Please help us to support them in practical ways and in prayer; indeed, help us to be prayerful for all the leaders of our church.

Father, we ask that You would help each of us be able to live lives that honour You by keeping our work, family life and Christian service in the right balance. We specially think of our families today, that being our focus for this month, and ask that parents might consider carefully the various needs of their families in ways that honour You. We ask that the webinar this afternoon might assist us to do this in practical ways.

Lord, thank You that Your door is never closed to us when we approach You in prayer. Help us to take full advantage of that privilege every day. We pray all of these things in and through the name of Your Son Jesus, our refuge and redeemer, Amen.

Kids Spot!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uiWZXLsdE9w>

2. Watch the kids talk on You tube. Peter has a lesson to learn about God's kingdom:

Everyone is welcome in God's Kingdom! Using puppets, stories and a fun animation, this Kids' Talk from Acts 10 & 11 will help kids see that God wants all people to accept Jesus as their King and be part of his Kingdom forever.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7hO11HIN5Rs&feature=youtu.be>

Praise, My Soul, The King of Heaven [https://drive.google.com/file/d/](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HDWm_pADn_iE5UcbafSe4kT7JAqt4ttK/view)

[1HDWm_pADn_iE5UcbafSe4kT7JAqt4ttK/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HDWm_pADn_iE5UcbafSe4kT7JAqt4ttK/view)

Sermon - *Kiss the Son (Psalm 2)* by Jon Brown

Sermon Link - <https://youtu.be/7ZnRMGQ8-wE>

There was this little girl in pre-school and it was her birthday. Her mother decorated the room with balloons, streamers, food, and drinks. But there was one boy in her pre-school who felt really jealous because all the gifts and presents weren't his. So he started causing trouble. And he almost ruined the party. One of the mothers saw this and walked over and knelt beside the little lad. She looked straight into his eyes and said, "Johnny, it's not your party!"

Even though my name is Jon this story isn't about me. But it could be. It could be about any one of us. It's hard not to live like we are at the centre of the universe. It's hard to see beyond our own noses and interests.

Psalm 2 wants to give us perspective. It says, "you need a bigger view of things!" It gives us a reality check. Last week we got it from Psalm 1. Psalm 1 said there are only two paths and you need to know where you're going. Psalm 2 says you need to know where history is going. It gives us the whole show. It puts us in our place and God in his. So let's take a look. First of all let's look out.

1. Looking Out (vv. 1-3)

If you looked out into the world this week you're probably asking, "What's wrong with the world?" Wars, pandemics, inequality, riots? Who's behind all of this bad stuff? There are a lot of conspiracies out there. Is it the New World Order or the Freemasons? Is it Extraterrestrials or the Vatican? Is it Global warming or Lizard people? What's really going on? Notice what the Psalm says? It starts with a questions. Look at verse 1: Why do the nations rebel, and the people plot a vain thing. The kings of the earth and the rulers take counsel against the Lord and His Anointed One. Things haven't changed much have they? Nations raging, people plotting, kings and rulers conspiring. The world has gone mad. But notice there's method to the madness. There is a conspiracy happening. The world powers have united. But what for? World peace? To bring about equality for all people? Do you notice what it says in verse 2? They've come together against the Lord and his Anointed King. All this hostility is going one way, against God and against his Christ. The world hates God. There's a world wide rebellion.

How did this happen? What started this war? Notice in verse 3? The world sees God's reign as restraint. "Let us burst their bonds apart and cast their chords from us." We like to think we're in control of our lives. "I'm the master of my fate: I'm the captain of my soul." Isn't that the great cry of the human heart? "I did it my way" to quote Frank Sinatra. You've probably heard that song. Maybe at your grandparents house. It still gets plenty of air play. But mostly at funerals.

And now, the end is near;
And so I face the final curtain.
My friend, I'll say it clear,
I'll state my case, of which I'm certain.

I've lived a life that's full.
I've traveled each and every highway;
And more, much more than this,
I did it my way.

And off goes the coffin behind the final curtain. If they could they'd still be shaking a puny fist at God. Isn't that ironic? If anything should sober us up it should be our own death. But it doesn't. People are still trying burst the bonds even in the coffin. But why? Why do people shake their fists at God? He's our Creator? He's the one who made us. He wants to be our friend not our enemy. He cares for us. God is love and all of God's restraints are out of love. I remember one time in Brisbane's CBD seeing about twenty young children in a long line, all tied together, walking down the main street. It was so cute. But it was for a reason: to stop them from running out on the road and getting hit by a car. In the same way, God gives us cords of love to stop us from ruin. Like the child who's learning to walk and needs restraint. In Hosea 11, there's a picture of this. It's like the Lord is pulling out the photo album and he says. Look Israel when you were a child. I drew you with cords and with bands of love. But you didn't want them. Get rid of the bonds! Cast off these chains. "Let us be our own gods." "Let us be free from his restraint". That's what is wrong with the world. It's the universal human desire to make ourselves king rather than God. Augustine in his book *The City of God* sums up the whole of human history like this: There are only two kingdoms which are radically opposed. Because they were created by two kinds of love. The kingdom of the world was created by self-love and leads to hatred of God. The kingdom of the Son is founded upon love of God, and leads to contempt of self. The whole of history can be summed up like this: God showing his love for us, and us showing our contempt for God.

And it all came to a head when Jesus came into the world. You see it in the Gospels. Herod plotted to kill him. The Pharisees and the Sadducees plotted to kill him. You see it in Acts. In Acts 4, the Jewish rulers wanted to kill the apostles for preaching Christ. And so the apostles gave themselves to prayer. This was the earliest prayer meeting. And what did they pray? Psalm 2. They matched it up with their situation. They used Psalm 2 as a lens to understand what was happening. We can do the same thing. Psalm 2 is a window into the world. So when we look out into the world, we need to do it with Psalm 2. And we need to look up. But when we look up, what do we see?

2. Look Up (vv. 4-9)

Notice in verse 4. It's a sudden change of scene isn't it. We're shot up into heaven. And what's God's perspective on all this? He's laughing! Why? Because it's laughable. The creature against the Creator. The finite against the infinite? Have you seen those comparison of the universe compared to earth? To fly around the earth takes about 47 hours in a jet plane. To fly around the biggest known star would take 1100 years. Going nearly twice as fast. And that's just one planet in our milky way. Apparently they've discovered millions of solar systems. Man against God? The Creator of this massive universe? It's crazy!

It's Like the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11. The people banded together to build a tower as high as heaven. And they said "Let's make a name for ourselves." They wanted the glory to go to them and not God. And what's God's response to this? What does it say? He couldn't see the puny tower from heaven. So he came down to have a look. This tower is too small to see from heaven. So he came down and scattered them in a moment. All their work was in vain. It was undone in a moment.

I remember when I was little, I got up one morning and turned on the TV. And there were the World Trade Centres. The Twin Towers; powerful symbols of the West's economic power. And what happened? They collapsed like a stack of cards!

And hasn't it been the same all through history. It happened to Babylon. Rome, the greatest civilisation, was sacked in a day. The Third Reich, Hitler believed it would survive for 3000 years. It collapsed in 30! They all came crashing down suddenly. Finished. History. The saying is true. All the paths of glory lead but to the grave. So it is with all our mighty achievements. They can come crashing down in a moment. We've witnessed that recently with the pandemic haven't we. One microscopic virus has basically shut down the whole world. The global economy upended.

Jesus himself warned us of this. He told the parable of the rich man. He had a big crop and built a big barn to store his crop. And then he put he feet up and said to himself, "I've got plenty. I'll take it easy and eat drink and be merry." He thought he had made it.

But God said to him, "You fool! This night your soul is required of you! And the things you have, now whose will they be? Is this how you're living? Are you trying to build your own little kingdom without God? It can all come crashing

down in a moment. Isaiah says it like this: All flesh is like grass. And all its goodness like the flower of the field. The grass withers and the flower fades. But the word of the Lord stands forever.

And notice in verse 6? The Lord has spoken, "I've set my King. On my Holy Hill of Zion." And do you realise who that is? You probably know this. The word 'Anointed One' means Christ. When the people elect we get a leader like Donald Trump. But Jesus, he didn't hold a campaign. The votes weren't counted were they. We didn't choose him. God chose him. He's sanctioned by God. "You are my Son today I have become your Father." This verse was fulfilled at the start Jesus ministry when he was baptised, and a voice came from heaven saying these exact words (Mark 1:11). Jesus is the rightful King.

And notice he rules all the earth. All the nations belong to him. All the great leaders combined struggle to run a single country. Some of us struggle to rule our own lives. But Jesus rules the world. It all belongs to Jesus. And he's really powerful. If you pick up a Bible picture book, Jesus looks like someone you cuddle up to. Meek and mild with a white face and soft hair. But here look at him. He's the one who wields the iron rod that breaks the nations. He smashes them to pieces like a potter smashes a clay pot. He's dangerous! He's untameable! C. S Lewis got it right. He portrayed Jesus as Aslan the Lion. In Narnia, when one of the children asks Mr. Beaver, "Is Aslan safe?" The beaver replies, "Who said anything about safe. Course he's not safe! But he's good. He's the King!" How do we know he's good? How can we be sure this King is good? Because the one on the throne was the one on the cross. He could have stayed! But he stepped off his throne into the world. The world that hated him! He came to make his enemies his friends. Not by lopping off their heads, But by hanging on a cross! The one on the throne was the one on the cross. He stooped down low. He was equal with God. But he didn't count it as a thing to be grasped. He went down, down, down! And became a man! He humbled himself! To the point of death. Even death on a cross! Therefore God lifted him up to the highest place. And gave him the name above every name! That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord! To the glory of God. So what should we do?

3. Kiss the Son (vv. 10-12)

We don't have to wonder. The Psalm tells us. Look in verses 10-12. Jesus is Lord and nothing can change that. So the best decision you will ever make is to bow the knee before him. Kiss the Son. It's not sentimental kiss. It's the Kiss of loyalty. Like the subject would come into the king courts and bow down before the king. And take the hand of the king and they would embrace it and kiss it, all as a sign of loyalty. Jesus is your King. Kiss the Son. Bow the knee before him. Not out of terror. Not because you have too, but because he died for you. He could have smashed you to pieces. But instead he was broken for you. And see how the Psalm ends? "Blessed are all those who take refuge in him." There is a refuge. What's a refuge? It takes the hit. An umbrella is a refuge because it gets wet but underneath you're protected. Or a bomb shelter. The bomb goes off but the shelter takes the hit and you're safe. It's a refuge. There's a judgement coming. But there's a refuge in Jesus. He takes the hit for you. Paul says. "You turned from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus! Who delivers us from the wrath to come." There's a judgement coming, but Jesus took the hit for you. Do you know that old negro spiritual song, "O sinner man, where you gonna run to? Sinner man where you gonna run to on that day? Run to the moon "moon won't you hide me?" Run to the sea, "Sea won't you hide me?"" Do you know that's based on Revelation 6? They hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, calling to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?" Where you going to go on judgement day? God is everywhere! There's no refuge from him, except in him. Want to run from him? Run to him! Do you feel like you need to run? Does your sin convict you? Run to Jesus. He'll hide you. If you've never come to him come now. He's always ready to hide a sinner. He bids you to go to him. He invites you to come now.

Let's pray a prayer of commitment. God be merciful to me a sinner. And make me to know and believe in Jesus Christ. Thank you providing us a refuge, where sinners like me can run and find safety. Thank you that because Jesus was broken we can be forgiven. Help us to run to you always. Amen.

Rejoice the Lord is King - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oh0BYrdd-8o>

Benediction.

Kiss his son, or he will be angry
and your way will lead to your destruction,
for his wrath can flare up in a moment.
Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

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=aGVTcm1oOHp3VXMxYVg0bk5HSS9rZz09>
Meeting ID: 890 8195 2206 Password: 797654

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