

ONLINE SERVICE

Sunday 3 May 2020

Welcome

Prayer of Invocation

Psalm 121

From the Scottish Psalter

Bible Reading: Matthew 6:16-34

Christine Bradbeer

Sermon

Your Life is More

Matthew 6:25

Prayers of Intercession

and

The Lord's Prayer

Benediction



NOTICES

3 May 2020

Wednesday 6 May

1.30 pm Covenanted Prayer Time

Sunday 10 May

11 am Sermon on the Mount contd.



Streaming online during the
COVID-19 lockdown.

To join us online...

Go to blackburnpc.org.au and click the Facebook button or to
<https://www.facebook.com/blackburnpresbyterian/>

For your prayers this week:

Congregational members: Jim EVANS

also

Aaron and Katie RIGG work in

Arnhem Land with MAF and
minister to the Nhulunbuy people.



MEMBERS who wish to

continue their freewill offerings may use the banking
details at the bottom of this page or post to our
Treasurer. Vic Ansell,

GARDENIA ST

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

53 Gardenia Street,

Blackburn 3130



Minister: Rev Graham Bradbeer

tel. 9041 7911 mobile. 0409 978 690

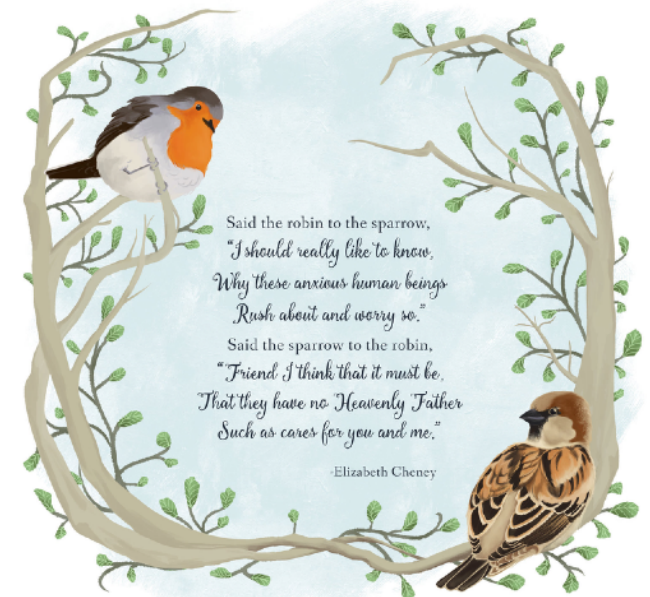
Session Clerk: Mr Keith Ferres 98305466

Treasurer: Mr Vic Ansell 5447 7118

Electronic Banking Details: ANZ Forest Hill,
Account name: Blackburn Presbyterian Church
BSB: 013-328. Account number: 2970 40694

GARDENIA ST. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BLACKBURN

3 May 2020



Said the robin to the sparrow,
"I should really like to know,
Why these anxious human beings
Rush about and worry so."
Said the sparrow to the robin,
"Friend I think that it must be,
That they have no Heavenly Father
Such as cares for you and me."

Elizabeth Cheney

Rachel Tress

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Look at the birds: they do not sow seeds, gather
a harvest and put it in barns; yet your Father in
heaven takes care of them.

Matthew 6:26

WELCOME



Various armed groups committed serious human rights abuses including unlawful killings, sexual violence and illegal taxation. Armed groups continued to profit from the illegal exploitation of natural resources. Impunity persisted despite important efforts made at the national and international levels.

Amnesty International

Christian communities in the Central African Republic (CAR) continue to be the target of violent attacks, despite a ceasefire between the government and 14 rival rebel groups that was signed in Rome in June 2017.

Islamist armed groups such as the Seleka and Fulani militias have attacked Christian communities and their leaders, and burned down churches. They have also destroyed Christian homes, killed many, and forced thousands to flee. Christians face regular threats of violence and kidnapping from militant Muslim Fulani herdsmen. On Christmas Day 2019, two pastors were shot dead by Muslim militants.

The UN declared it "highly worrying" that attacks on Christians have continued, despite the presence of the UN's own peacekeeping force (MINUSCA). The CAR is a majority Christian country. Most of the 15% Muslim population are in the north-eastern part of the country bordering Chad and Sudan.

The Seleka are a powerful force which held power from 2013-14. The regime committed many abuses including pillage, execution-style murders, rape and torture. The country remains susceptible to outbreaks of violence. This is mostly between the Seleka and the "anti balaka" militia - who misleadingly call themselves Christians, despite their actions being condemned by church leaders.

Barnabas Fund

Locked down detecting more to life.

Sermon Notes

Locked down and experiencing social isolation and personal distancing we seek to slow the spread of COVID 19, a killer virus for which there is no cure. We want to protect ourselves our family and our community.

Our experience of diminished mobility and social activity is providing most of us with an opportunity to review and reassess 'normal' life.

We have seen this in many areas. I have heard reports of increased drinking, reading, talking, music making, creativity, walking and gardening but less fitness, employment, sport, spending, crime, traffic... We are constrained to ask "What is my life really all about?"

At such a time today's reading from the Sermon on the Mount invites us to **rethink materialism** and realise **your life is more!**

1. Rethink Materialism

- (a) **Lasting treasure** S&P 500 is down with the rise of the virus. Super funds have diminished and some have been accessed early. Income is down, and in some cases lost altogether!

Jesus talks about 'lasting treasure', something that doesn't rot or rust and can't be stolen. Recession proof resources? What did he mean?

The whole chapter with its themes of an inner life of generosity, prayer and fasting is our clue. The treasure that will not rust, rot or get stolen is the possession the person who lives in the presence of a loving heavenly father. That person is rich indeed.

- (b) **Light up your life.** The eye is used as a metaphor for a life lived in light. Jesus assumes we need purpose. We are not meant to 'drift aimlessly through life like plankton'.

This clear eyed person has clarity and direction. Jesus calls us to intentional living. The alternative is clouded vision or even darkness. These make moving uncertain and dangerous. One may have values distorted by selfishness or other idolatries, such as materialism.

- (c) **Loyalties sorted.** No one can serve two masters. Sure you can have two jobs and work for two people. But Jesus is talking about being a slave. You can't have two owners. It's God or wealth. Money makes a great servant, but is a very vicious master.

Only when we have grasped with our minds the comparative durability of the two treasures (corruptible and incorruptible), the comparative usefulness of the two eye conditions (light and darkness) and the comparative worth of the two masters (God and mammon), are we ready to make our choice. **And only when we have made our choice - for heavenly treasure, for light, for God - this is how you must go on to behave: do not be anxious about your life... nor about your body... But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness (25, 33).** In other words, our basic choice of which of two masters we intend to serve will radically affect our attitude to both. We shall not be anxious about the one (for we have rejected it), but concentrate our mind and energy on the other (for we have chosen him); we shall refuse to become engrossed in our own concerns, but instead seek first the concerns of God.

John Stott

The Sermon on the Mount

2. Your Life is More

- (a) **The menu!** What we will eat? What will we drink? These questions echo in homes across the nation. How much do we invest time and energy in resolving them and assuring ourselves that we have made provision for the future? God, your Father, knows you need food and drink! Look at the birds.
- (b) **The wardrobe!** How do I look? What will I wear today? What clothing should I buy? It's hard to avoid fashion but does it drive us? What directs our choices? Consider the flowers.
- (c) **The worry!** Anxious? Phone such and such a number. Isolation can exacerbate many harmful issues. More of us suffer anxiety in the lockdown. Worry achieves nothing. Make one thing the top priority, God's kingdom.
- (d) **Your Father knows!** We all need food, drink and clothing. God provides. Usually through work, by miracles rarely, at times through caring others, on occasion through great difficulties. But why is your life more?

Because God has given his Son, nothing will be withheld. (Romans 8:32). Let our ambition be to see ("seek") his reign and righteousness in our own lives and community.