

# ONLINE SERVICE

Sunday 10 May 2020

Welcome  
Notices  
Call to Worship

Prayer of Invocation

Young at Heart

Don't cast your pearls before swine

Bible Reading: Matthew 7:1-12  
Christine Bradbeer

Sermon

The Whole Picture

Matthew 7:12

Prayers of Intercession  
and

The Lord's Prayer

Benediction



## NOTICES

10 May 2020

Wednesday 13 May

1.30 pm Covenanted Prayer Time

Sunday 17 May

11 am Sermon on the Mount contd.



Streaming online during the  
COVID-19 lockdown.

**Online** at [blackburnpc.org.au](http://blackburnpc.org.au) and click the Facebook button or  
<https://www.facebook.com/blackburnpresbyterian/>

For your prayers this week:

Congregational member:  
Amanda FAIRS



also

Warwick and Natalie SHORT

who are with SIM in Niger establishing a new  
base among the Fulani 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, 59 Queen St Kangaroo Flat Vic 3555.

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GARDENIA ST.  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
BLACKBURN

10 May 2020

"When it comes to behaviour in the world, and with other people, the whole law can be put into one sentence: do to others what you'd like them to do to you".

Tom Wright  
Matthew 7:12

Illustration: The Melbourne Map (detail)  
a 1000 piece Jig Saw Puzzle

WELCOME





**C**had, a large landlocked country in the heart of the Sahel region of Africa, is scarred by civil war and corruption. Jihadi activity has increased regionally in recent years and, in June 2019, the UN warned that the Sahel countries were entering a humanitarian crisis due to surging extremist violence, forced displacement, drought and famine.

The Christian population (around 35 %) of this Muslim-majority nation faces increasing pressures from officials as well as violence from the Islamist group Boko Haram and militant Fulani herdsmen. Since 2009, Boko Haram has violently attacked Christian farming communities in the Lake Chad area. The region has become the epicentre of one of the world's most complex humanitarian disasters .

Societal divisions over land in the south, where most Christians live, are worsening and leading to outbreaks of violence. Farms and churches have been destroyed and herds stolen or killed, causing many Christians to flee for their lives. In March 2019, violent conflicts erupted in the Tandjilé Region , with many deaths, villages torched and markets closed.

Constitutionally, Islam is prioritised and most government workers and military personnel are Muslim. Discrimination occurs in the context of diya (blood money) - compensation for injury or damage under sharia (Islamic law) this is payable to the victim, their family or their community Diya is unconstitutional in Chad, yet widely followed, unregulated, and open to abuse. According to sharia, non Muslims are granted less compensation than Muslims for the same injury.

Christians also face persecution from followers of traditional African religions. Animists account for around one - fifth of the population. In 2018 , a "Yondo" initiation year, hundreds of young Christian men and boys fled from their villages to avoid being abducted to undergo brutal, and sometimes fatal, initiation rites. Barnabas Fund.

## Jesus puts the pieces together.

Sermon Notes

**T**he absence of sport, theatre, gyms, clubs and churches has driven us all to explore the media in new and interesting ways. The creative genius of human beings is amazing and it has been interesting to discover how, despite the need for social isolation and quarantine, choirs, orchestras and performances of various kinds have come together as internet offerings.

Of course not everybody has the internet. In our church about a third are not online. These notes, along with the telephone, are part of our 'keeping in touch'.

In today's reading from the Sermon on the Mount Jesus offers his hearers guidelines for putting together relationships in their lives.

### (a) **You're not the judge, don't condemn**

When Jesus says "Judge not that ye be not judged" he is not opposing the judicial system, but speaking of personal relationships. Neither does he mean that his disciples are not to form opinions, even critical opinions of others. That would be to contradict what he says elsewhere, even elsewhere in this sermon.

Jesus is warning us against assuming the role of judge, and becoming known for a carping and condemnatory attitude. Finding fault and condemning others.

### (b) **Don't be hypocritical either.**

The role is easily assumed because we are used to referencing things to ourselves, we are at the centre of our world, but often blind to our own faults. With a log in one's own eye seeking a speck in another's eye is a tragicomic image.

Shakespeare has a whole play on verse 2 - *Measure for Measure*. Technically a 'comedy' it explores Jesus' dark theme of being judged by the standards we apply to others.

As disciples of the kingdom, God is to be central. To assume his part is the ultimate hypocrisy. None of us can afford this.

### (c) **Be the brother/sister.**

The text says the other is your 'neighbour', the actual word is 'brother'. Our neighbour should be important to us; a brother or sister whom we are to respect, to serve and to love as ourselves.

**T**he reason God's giving depends on our asking is neither because he is ignorant until we inform him nor because he is reluctant until we persuade him. The reason has to do with us, not with him; the question is not whether he is ready to give, but whether we are ready to receive. So in prayer we do not 'prevail on' God, but rather prevail on ourselves to submit to God. True, the language of 'prevailing on God' is often used in regard to prayer, but it is an accommodation to human weakness. Even when Jacob 'prevailed on God', what really happened is that God prevailed over him, bringing him to the point of surrender when he was able to receive the blessing which God had all the time been longing to give him. The truth is that the heavenly Father never spoils his children. He does not shower us with gifts whether we want them or not, whether we are ready for them or not. Instead he waits until we recognise our need and turn to him in humility.

John Stott, *The Sermon on the Mount*

We are caught up in a whole new creation emerging from the old. God is drawing people to his Son. We need to live with that reality every day, in every relationship .

### (d) **Some things ARE sacred**

We are familiar with the expression 'pearls before swine' but Jesus' use of 'dogs' and 'pigs' is jarring. The terms were common to his day to describe non-Jews, to whom Jesus kingdom message, God reigns, would not be intelligible. Compare Matthew 10:5,6; mission of the 12.

Post-resurrection the *Message*, a treasure - something sacred and beautiful - entrusted to 'earthen vessels' (2 Corinthians 4:7) is for all. The good news goes global.

### (e) **Persist in prayer!** (see also John Stott above)

Tom Wright says "it would be a shame to tone down one of the most sparkling and generous sets of promises anywhere in the Bible." The crux is that we have a Father with "time, space and love to spare for us." (Wright) By prayer we co-operate in piecing together the City of God.

### (f) **The pieces and the Picture**

Jesus sums up the whole of the law and the prophets in the golden rule; a love for others that mirrors the Father's love for us. A love seen in the gift of His Son (John 3:16).