

ONLINE SERVICE

28 June 2020

Welcome and Notices

Amanda Fairs
viola

Call to Worship

Prayer of Invocation

Young at Heart
Christine Bradbeer

Bible Reading: Matthew 23:1-12
Sonya Rutherford

Gospel of Matthew: Marker #5

The terrible danger
of straining a fly and swallowing a camel.

Matthew 23

Prayers of Intercession
and
The Lord's Prayer

Amanda Fairs
viola

Benediction



NOTICES

28 June 2020

Wednesday 1 July

1.30 pm Covenanted Prayer Time

Sunday 5 July

11 am Way Markers in Matthew #5.



Contd. Online during COVID-19
blackburnpc.org.au or

www.facebook.com/blackburnpresbyterian/

For your prayers this week:

Congregational member: **Alison KIDMAN**
who resides at Faversham House.



and

Chris and Naomi who are working with Interserve in SE Asia.

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.

GARDENIA ST
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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Account name: Blackburn Presbyterian Church
BSB: 013-328. Account number: 2970 40694

GARDENIA ST. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BLACKBURN

28 June 2020



Contemporary
Roadside Marker
(above)

Uniquely
Melbourne
(inset)

Roman Wayside
Marker
(right)



WELCOME



From October onwards, security forces, including factions of the Popular Mobilisation Units (PMU), used excessive force against protesters involved in nationwide demonstrations, killing over 500 and injuring thousands; many of those killed were shot with live ammunition or hit with previously unseen tear gas canisters. Activists, as well as lawyers representing protesters, medics treating injured ones and journalists covering the protests, were subjected to arrest, enforced disappearance and other forms of intimidation by intelligence and security forces. Authorities blocked access to the internet, apparently to prevent the circulation of images of abuses by security forces. Approximately 1.55 million people remained internally displaced; many faced severe restrictions on their freedom of movement.

Amnesty International, 2019

Christians are confronted by hostile communities and pressured to conform to an Islamic way of life. They are targeted by violent religious groups, often facing threats, physical abuse or kidnapping. Radical Islamic groups desire a religious cleansing of Iraq and aim to make the country purely Islamic. They view even talking about the Christian faith as an act of treason. Christian converts face the threat of physical harm, detention, disownment or torture if their faith is discovered. Properties owned by Christians, who fled the country for safety, have been illegally seized by organised criminal groups, politicians and religious leaders.

Open Doors Australia

The terrible danger...

Route Marker #5

Sermon Notes

We are following Matthew's five "wayside markers". Each marks a block of the Lord's teaching; a new kind of 'five books'. The markers are listed below. Today we look at the fifth which corresponds to the Sermon on the Mount (in chapters 5, 6 and 7) and is found in r Jesus' words in chapter 23, 24 and 25. We will consider these chapters over three weeks; today chapter 23.

7:28 When Jesus had finished these words...

11:1 When Jesus had finished teaching his disciples...

13:53 When Jesus had finished these parables...

19:1 When Jesus had finished these words...

26:1 When Jesus had finished all these words...

In this section Jesus very explicitly warns about the terrible dangers of play acting, hypocrisy and fake faith.

1 Fashion shows (verses 1-12)

Beware of those who, instead of feeding you God's Law as food and drink by which you can banquet on God, they package it in bundles of rules, loading you down like pack animals! (MSG)

The way they dress, the titles they expect and the positions they seek make it plain that they are in pursuit of prestige. They want to be highly visible to others.

We have One Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ who teaches us as we serve one another.

2 Horrible hypocrisy (verses 13-31)

The horror of hypocrisy is underscored by seven "Woe" statements. (see verses 13,15,16,23, 25,27,29) Translated "You're hopeless!" in the MSG.

Having so misjudged the nature of God's kingdom the hypocrite goes to great lengths to teach others to align with his errors, making the deceived person "twice a child of hell".

The question of oaths of varied degrees of veracity arises once again, when what is called for is straightforward honesty (Matthew 5:33-37).

They attended to detail, but failed on the absolute basics" (v.23)

Nobody that I have ever met started going to church with the intention of cultivating hypocrisy, but when we realise how simple a matter it is to escape detection, before we know it, there we are. Neither have I ever met anyone who is self-aware of hypocrisy. Like high blood pressure, it is a "silent killer", but in these matters it is the interior life of faith and prayer, not the circulatory system, that is damaged. Frequenting a religious place and engaging in a religious practice can get us into a lot of trouble that we aren't even aware we are in... Jesus uses [the word hypocrisy] at other times and places to expose religious play acting, most famously in Matthew 23.

Eugene Peterson
The Word Made Flesh, 2008

They are like whitewashed tombs, full of dead mens bones. They are the successors of those who killed the prophets. And they will incur more ...

3 Blood guilt (verses 29-36) Jesus mentions the first and last murders of the Hebrew Bible - Abel to Zachariah, son of Berachiah (Zechariah 1:1).

Like their predecessors, this generation too rejected and stoned the prophets, and will incur the consequences of rejecting Jesus' way of peace. Terrible consequences as Jesus laments over Jerusalem. Strongly suggesting that the destruction of the temple in AD 70.

4 An ache to embrace (verses 37-39)

Jesus' laments without vindictiveness. He aches to embrace the sinful and rebellious.

Hens have been known to protect their chicks at the cost of their own lives. Like the mother hen protectively gathering her chicks Jesus would embrace the rebellious generation.

But they would not.