

ONLINE SERVICE

during COVID-19

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18 October 2020

Welcome and Notices

Amanda Fairs
viola

Call to Worship

Prayer of Invocation

Young at Heart
Christine Bradbeer

Bible Reading: John 17

Great Texts of the Bible #11
Jesus High Priestly Prayer

Prayers of Intercession
and
The Lord's Prayer

Benediction



NOTICES

18 October 2020

Wednesday 21 October 1.30 pm Sweet Hour of Prayer
Sunday 25 October 11 am Great Texts of the Bible #12.

For your prayers this week:

Congregational member: **Alison THOMAS**



and
Aaron & Katie RIGG Please pray for the family as they recently stepped down from MAF and transitioned to WA seeking new directions.

Members who wish to continue their freewill offerings during the COVID 19 restrictions may post to our Treasurer. Vic Ansell, 59 Queen St Kangaroo Flat, Vic 3555 or use the electronic banking details below.

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

BLACKBURN
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GARDENIA ST.
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
BLACKBURN

18 October 2020



Christ the Redeemer
Art Deco statue on Mount Corcovado
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

WELCOME



The year [2019] was marked by a deepening economic crisis, excessive use of force and unlawful killings by Sudanese security forces against peaceful protesters which resulted in at least 177 people killed and thousands injured. Security forces used live ammunition against demonstrators, beat them on the streets and in hospitals and arbitrarily detained thousands who faced torture and other ill-treatment in detention. These violations mainly remain under investigation. Government forces and allied militias continued to carry out war crimes and other serious human rights abuses in Darfur with full impunity.

Amnesty International 2019

Sudan is a staunchly Islamic country, often accused of supporting extremist groups. Without a sitting president, the country is in an increased state of political instability. The former President, Omar al-Bashir, sought to establish an Islamic state which enforced strict Sharia (Islamic) law. In this environment, Sudanese Christians face persecution daily.

The law punishes conversion from Islam to another religion by death. Converts must hide their faith and cannot share the gospel. There is a high level of violence against Christians.

Open Doors June 2020

Sudan's transitional government has signed a historic peace agreement with the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF), a coalition of rebel groups from the regions of Darfur, Southern Kordofan, and the Blue Nile. The ceremony took place in South Sudan's capital, Juba.

VOA, 31 August 2020

Great Texts of the Bible #11 John 17

Sermon
Notes

This beautiful and poignant chapter brings to together the themes of John's whole gospel. One gets the impression that it was sacred to the disciples and John knowing it by heart, shared it for use by believers - this is suggested by the insertion of "Jesus the Messiah" in verse 3.)

The prayer opens to us the heart of the Lord Jesus as his teaching ministry came to its climax. I have structured our reflection into five sections. Consider:

1 FATHER THE HOUR HAS COME [v.1-5] Notice the following related themes converging as Jesus comes to pray:

- The Father** - in this prayer the intimacy of Jesus' union with the Father (noted last week in Philippians 2) is replete.
- The hour** - this time signal reminds us that Jesus' entire life was orchestrated by the Father. (See also John 2:4; 7:30; 8:20). The teaching was done, his arrest is immanent! [See 18:1].
- The glory** - In the era of celebrity we are inundated with fashionista tinsel and sporting glitterati. "Glory" takes us into another realm altogether. See CS Lewis sermon "The Weight of Glory" 1942. <http://www.wheelersburg.net/Downloads/Lewis%20Glory.pdf>
- The work** - this reminds us of Jesus' mission. He left the Father's presence to reveal His glory on earth. The passion and the cross are before him. What kind of work is redemption?
- The life** - what kind of *life* is "eternal life"? [John 3:16] It is the quality of "life of the age to come" when God reigns over all.

2 I HAVE MADE KNOWN [v.6-8] Not everyone received or believed the message of Jesus. John mentions this in the very first chapter of his Gospel.

However, those present as he prayed, they had! This was evidence of their new relationship with the Father. They belonged to him. They believed the message. What Jesus revealed, they received and believed; it was God's truth.

3 I PRAY FOR THEM [v.9-19] The disciples were about to be terrified by what befell Jesus. How vulnerable would they feel without him and in view of his horrific execution?

Judas had already left. Jesus prays specifically for their safety.

He does not pray for "the world" which in John's Gospel is not the beautiful and entrancing natural creation, but the world of organised human structures which promote greed, oppression and injustice. To this "world" his disciples are strangers and enemies.

Armed with the truth as they have seen it in Jesus' life ministry they are to embark on the same mission into the world.

Dedicated they are to give themselves to God. [v.17-19]

4 I PRAY NOT ONLY FOR THEM [v.20-23] Here Jesus sees further ahead. Through the disciples' mission he sees the work of God continuing into the future as generations

Psalms 22 speaks of this following the crucifixion. [Psalm 22:31]. Jesus embraced it and prayed in faith.

He prayed that future generations will be one with those disciples who knew him, just as he is one with the Father. Sharing the apostolic DNA generates organic unity; not necessarily organisational unity.

Working with other Christians has been one of the most encouraging features of pandemic lockdown.

Why is it important that the world believes the Father sent the Son?

5 THAT THE LOVE YOU HAVE [v.24-26] It is important for two reasons.

- Because, as God's wayward creatures, we need to know our idolatry is deadly. The human systems and structures of this world tend to decay and become corrupted. They easily advance human misery and sorrow. Does this ring true?
- It is also important because the Father is the Lord of life and years for his human family to know and experience his love, just as the disciples entered into this wonderful truth.

This is the Good News: "That the love you have for me may be in them, and so that I also may be in them" [v.26] Ask yourself, "How needed is sacrificial love in the 21st century?"