



BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF W.A.

For the Testimony and Glory of Jesus Christ

2 May 2021

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

1 The Lord Is in His Holy Temple

The Lord is in His holy temple, The Lord is in His holy temple: Let all the earth keep silence, Let all the earth keep silence before Him Keep silence, keep silence before Him. Amen.

Preparatory Hymn

RHC 226 The Lord Is King!

The Lord Is in His Holy Temple 1

Call to Worship

Deacon Eugene Leong

*Hymn

RHC 27 Now Thank We All Our God

*Invocation/The Lord's Prayer & Gloria Patri 2

Responsive Reading

Psalm 22:1-11

Holy Communion

Hymn

RHC 178 At the Cross

*Doxology 3/Offertory Prayer

Scripture Reading

Joshua 23:6-11

Hymn

RHC 429 We Have Not Known Thee as We Ought

Pastoral Prayer/Message

Pastor Joseph Poon

How To Make Your Life Not Count

*Hymn

RHC 401 Yield Not to Temptation

*Benediction/Threefold Amen

Announcements

*The Lord Bless You and Keep You 4

*Congregation Standing

4 The Lord Bless You and Keep You

The Lord bless you and keep you; The Lord lift His countenance upon you, and give you peace, and give you peace; The Lord make His face to shine upon you, And be gracious unto you, be gracious, The Lord be gracious, gracious unto you. Amen.



THEME FOR 2021: GROW IN GRACE AND THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST

"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen". (2 Peter 3:18)

Pastor: Rev Joseph Poon

M: 0406 241 032

E: josephpoonemail@gmail.com

Associate Pastor: Rev Paul Cheng

M: 0447 174 206

E: paulcheng@bethelbpc.com.au

Deacon: Adrian Cheng

M: 0402 036 430

E: ajcheng@iinet.net.au

Deacon: Eugene Leong

M: 0401 155 386

E: euge.leong@gmail.com

Deacon: Joel Wong

M: 0423 862 392

E: yiing_yw@yahoo.com

27 Ullapool Road, Mt Pleasant, WA 6153

P: (08) 9364 9898

W: www.bpcwa.org.au

E: bpcwa@bpcwa.org.au

PASTORAL LETTER

Lessons from our 35 years of church history - Part 2

Dear BPCWA worshipper, In last week's pastoral, I explained how church membership can affect the faith and unity of the church. Peace in a church is something that we must treasure. But membership is not the only thing that can affect how the church will be effective in furthering God's work.

Lessons about the church session and elections. It is easy to put someone into a leadership position but removing the person may not be so easy. 1) Everyone who is considered for leadership positions must hold on to the doctrines that we stand for. If they are not eligible or if they know that they are disqualified from a leadership position, they should decline to take up these positions. Someone who is biblically disqualified or does not hold on to our doctrines should honourably turn down even if he is nominated or persuaded to stand for elections. Anyone who denigrates things as "a BP thing" should never stand for session elections or even be a leader in any other role in BPCWA. This is because if one does not uphold the BP faith, how can he serve effectively with the session in a BP church? 2) Members must answer to God for their vote. While every vote is secret to man, God sees and knows our vote. With fewer communicant members, it does not take many people to swing the course of the church in voting outcomes. A few votes can make the difference as, unique to BPCWA only and in our constitution, elders (which includes the pastor), require 2/3 votes. Every member should also scrutinise the nominees to not only ensure that they meet the Biblical qualifications, but also that their beliefs and practices are consistent with our faith. Either way, members cannot shrug away their responsibility if their hands had a role in voting the wrong leaders in or voting unbiblically, hence turning the church upside down. Yet, at the same time, we should not vote blindly simply because we want to have officeholders to form the semblance of a Session. 3) Don't vote with your emotions or for "your party". As Christians, we must not view church session elections in the same way that the world views parliamentary elections. At the recent WA state elections, I walked past a banner that urged voters not to vote "party L" in. The political system's thinking is that there should be an opposition just so that there is opposition. The church session is not a "House of Representatives" to voice your dissension. As Christians, we must think and vote for our session as Christians, based on whether the candidate meets

the criteria stated firstly in God's Word and our Constitution. Don't let emotional bonds cloud sound and objective biblical judgement. We must assess based on what is biblical and right, not based upon our own thinking of what is "loving" or "unloving", "grateful" or "ungrateful". "Feeling bad" for not voting for someone even if it was the wrong person will eventually result in a bad situation for the church. 4) Church polity is important. The church is not to be run by "whosoever is willing". God sets roles for each officeholder in church, and each leader must know their role. Biblically, deacons are not overseers of the church, and should not be seen or get used to running the church and making decisions (Acts 6:2). Ruling elders and others must not contend to be the teaching elder (which is the pastor according to Eph 4:11). Envy and strife can occur when others begin to look at the pastor and vie for a similar place for themselves. 5) Have a biblically united session, not a session for "show". A small session unitedly serving according to God's Word and for the sake of God's church is far better than a large session with diverging doctrinal convictions, where each tries to further his own or his family's agenda. Something that I yearned and prayed for early in my ministry years was a united session that does all things for God's sake and His sheep's spiritual growth. And I thank God for the peaceful session meetings we now have where our aim is only that of doing what is best for God's church as a whole.

Lessons about the church's pulpit and teaching ministry. The church is the pillar and ground of God's truth. What the worshippers learn in church tends to become the "gospel truth" to them. As such, the church bears the heavy responsibility of what is taught to the worshippers. We must: 1) Guard the pulpit ministry, as it is the central teaching platform of the church when worshippers are all gathered together. What they hear over the pulpit is what will shape their understanding of the Christian faith, beliefs, and practices, as well as what the church ought to be. When God calls a man into the full-time ministry, He gifts them with the gift of preaching and teaching (Eph 4:11). The pulpit is primarily the responsibility of the pastor (2 Tim 4:2). Unless there are justifiable reasons otherwise, the pastor should not sit in the pews and have lay people preach in his stead. 2) Be careful who is invited in to preach or teach at BPCWA. One's beliefs will be naturally come forth and be reflected in his preaching and teaching. It is through teaching that indoctrination takes place. Likewise, it is through teaching that infiltration takes place (Jude 4). Preachers who are invited in can subtly introduce contrary doctrines and practices and dissensions can arise after that. This is a particular concern if these preachers have been trained in Bible colleges or are in churches that promote beliefs opposed to ours.

We must practice Biblical separation against such likes as those who are affiliated with Bob Jones University or those who are against the perfect preservation of God's Word. No matter how seemingly "interesting" or "knowledgeable" the person may be, we must remember Christ's warning, "He that is not with me is against me" (Lk 11:23). So, we must be clear where a preacher stands on key doctrines before they can be invited in to feed our church family spiritually. Worshippers trust the leaders to bring in trustworthy preachers, and we cannot betray that trust for them and their children. Considering also our church history and that we have worshippers from diverse backgrounds, it is wisest that we focus our teaching engagements with those of like BP faith so that there is no confusion about our doctrines and practices. 3) Scrutinize the materials and music used at fellowships and meetings. It is important for all our preaching and teaching to be from sound sources that are consistent with the BP faith which we stand and declare. I can never forget Sunday School materials that printed that infant baptism is a heresy. We were not just allowing it to be taught to our children, we were teaching that to the teachers too, as they prepared for their lessons. We must scrutinize the materials used. The Far Eastern Bible College was raised by God and we continue to uphold it in our prayers. We are not saying that it is the only true Bible College in the world, but because it is an institution that stands for the Bible and our BP faith, it makes the most sense and causes the least confusion when we use their materials and attend their courses. And we thank God for much good material that is available through them. Should there be a need to use other materials, it must be used carefully and we must biblically refute any material that propounds different doctrines and practices from what we hold on to. Unsound materials with the social gospel were introduced onto our bookshelves by non-members who were given leadership roles. Moreover, pop-styled contemporary songbooks were also brought in and used at fellowship meetings.

These must not ever be allowed again as they will change the church in time. We must remember that while we are in the church, it is "the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." (1Tim 3:15).

Yours in our Lord's service,
Pastor

Lessons from our 35 years of church history - Part 3

Dear BPCWA worshipper, In this pastoral, I will continue with the final summary of the lessons that we covered in our recent church study series on our 35-year church history.

Understand what a pastor must be. God intended His local churches to be pastored by men that He would raise and call to His church. 1) *Be called by God to BPCWA.* For one that is called to serve Him in the pastoral role in a church, he must not only be called to the fulltime ministry by God, but also called by Him to a particular church. Hence, it is not normal for a church to have pastors that “come and go” and even willing to come back after they have left BPCWA to pastor another church, leaving that church’s sheep in the lurch. Christ warned of hirelings who are ready to run away and leave the sheep to fulfill their own aims and benefits. One who is truly called is called for life. Not only that, he does not switch churches for personal reasons and preferences, as and when he chooses to. Pastoring is not a job, but a calling. BPCWA should never just engage someone to be a pastor based only on the fact that we need a pastor and they happen to want to be a pastor, or want to stay in Australia, or because they happen to be available at a time when we need a pastor. These by themselves are not compelling reasons why BPCWA should have them be a pastor at BPCWA. Pastoring is not a “marriage of convenience”, but a specific calling from God. Unless the church is unrepentantly disobedient to God’s word, the pastor should not leave his flock for another. 2) *Meet biblical qualifications and be of BP convictions.* God has laid down qualifications for pastors in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 2, and these are also referred to in our Constitution. In terms of convictions, a pastor does not merely agree to preach what the church stands for. The pastor must personally believe in what the church stands for – without which, he will not and cannot preach all that the church upholds in her faith. When this happens Satan, the church’s enemy, will craftily use these differences in convictions to undermine the steadfastness of the church. Also, a pastor must be able to rule his household, “For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?” (1 Tim 3:5). A wife who wilfully pursues her own goals and does as she wishes in insubmission to her husband disqualifies that husband from being a pastor, no matter how sympathetic or warm we may feel toward him personally, or how “nice” a man he seems to be. This is God’s required qualification and the church does not have the liberty to overlook and overrule them. Moreover, a man who is wishy-washy, keeps changing his mind in his decisions,

and whose choices lack a clarity of thought guided firmly by Biblical principles does not meet the qualification of soberness (1 Tim 3:2). Such a man will make bungled decisions that will adversely affect the church. 3) *Not seek to be liked or serve for personal recognition.* As Ezekiel was warned early in his ministry (Ezek 2), the prophets in the Old Testament were hardly ever popular with God's people. I am not saying that a pastor should be obnoxious. But today, we should not expect the pastor to be everybody's best friend by speaking only what people like to hear and never correcting anyone's sin. Since most people will not be happy when they are corrected, some pastors may choose never to "reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim 4:2) so that they will be everybody's friend. While the pastor loves God's sheep, he cannot be "menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart" (Eph 6:6). Fear of losing votes can make some pastors back down on speaking the whole counsel of God and making needed decisions that may displease some, or even to exercise needed discipline in the church. Pastors who want to be liked will back down from saying or doing what God intends them to do, out of fear of offending the congregation and the backlash on his votes. Their sermons address only the "positives" and they do not teach the "negatives". They will be careful to speak in such a way that no one is offended by leaving things "open" to interpretation ie, not making a clear stand based on the Bible. This way, everyone can be left to believe, think, or do as they wish. For such pastors, even when biblical church discipline is required, it will not be practiced because it can displease others. These are menpleasers and hirelings. If a pastor serves God and is called by God, he must only seek to please his Lord and Master. "For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." (Gal 1:10) Pastors (and every church leader) must be willing to consistently speak the truth regardless of who they are with, even if the people are displeased with the message. He does so because he loves God, and so loves God's sheep.

4) *Must be duly tested, examined, and ordained.* Paul instructs Timothy in the pastoral epistle to "Lay hands suddenly on no man" (1 Tim 5:22). One who says he is called to the ministry must first be tested as a full-time worker for sufficient years, after having undergone proper theological training. This assessment is conducted by those in the full-time pastoral ministry through reviews of his sermons and a proper council examination of his doctrines and practices, and proven character before he is ordained. No church should appoint a man as their pastor and chair of the church Session *until* he has been ordained as a Reverend. An unqualified and unproven person, no matter how affable and nice, will eventually bring chaos and unbiblical

ways. We must not compromise on God's qualification. We do so to our own detriment. However anxious we may be about having a pastor, the due process must be followed, as is required biblically, and for the safety of the church. A man should never be ordained only months or just a year after he starts serving in the full-time ministry. Conversely, ordination does not automatically make the man a pastor, as the appointment to a pastorage is done through the church's election process. Yet at the same time, a church should not stop a man's ordination without proper reason, as ordination is an affirmation by those in the pastoral ministry of a man's call to God's full-time pastoral service. Our constitution also affirms this, requiring the pastor of BPCWA to have first been ordained by Bible-Presbyterian ministers. This is important because we want to ensure that the man we elect and appoint as the pastor of BPCWA is truly called of God, as evidenced in his preaching, and examined that the BP faith is that of his personal conviction which he will practice. Only when we do this can we fulfill our human responsibility to help BPCWA remain true to the faith that we uphold and stand for. 5) Will feed, feed, feed God's sheep. This is what Christ called Peter to do if he loved Him. And this is what every pastor must do if he loves Christ. Such a pastor will not leave the pulpit to lay leaders or members, or regularly invite outsiders to preach in his stead. As long as he is able to, a pastor should "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season" (2 Tim 4:2) and "speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority" (Tit 2:15). A pastor who cuts corners in preaching – skimping on his preparation, or not giving the whole counsel of God for fear of offending the congregation – will be left with little to preach other than stories on moral living, worldly concepts of love, and soul-winning without building up saved souls. The duty of the pastor is to "present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Col 1:28), "speaking the truth in love" (Eph 4:15) so that the church will be "holy and without blemish" (Eph 5:27). The pastor must do this at the Sunday pulpit and be active in teaching at other meetings where possible. The pastor of a church must have a burning zeal to have God's sheep live a sanctified life because that is what glorifies God. And he must deeply desire for God's sheep not to fall into ways that will cause them to regret later on.

What we must do moving forward. BPCWA's history is an unfinished story. 1) Learn from the good of the past and avoid repeating the mistakes. 2) Give glory to God's providence in His works. In His lovingkindness, He has steered us back to His paths when we wandered from Him. He allows us today to continue to be a testimony for Him by His keeping of us. 3) Ensure that

BPCWA doesn't fail Him. We must not throw away all that God has done for us in His mercy and longsuffering by repeating mistakes we have become aware of. We worship a sovereign God – who holds man accountable when they choose to sin. The balance of God's sovereignty vs man's responsibility is a just scale. God has been merciful in the past, but His hand of chastisement will be harder on those who know but yet choose to sin. Let us choose to keep on keeping His commandments. "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding." (Prov 3:5) 4) Pray that BPCWA and her workers will be faithful. See the weakness of man and the greatness of God. 5) Continue the Great Commission to lead men to Christ and build them up for Him. This is what we were established for while we await His soon return!

My brethren, as we are now into our 36th year, may we be stirred to follow Him afresh, that BPCWA may SOAR to greater heights of usefulness for His kingdom's work:

S – Sound in the Word

O – Obedient in practices

A – Agreement of Biblical convictions as defined our Constitution

R – Remember not to repeat past mistakes

2Tim 2:2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

Yours in our Lord's service,

Pastor

ANNOUNCEMENTS, PRAISE & PETITION

- 1. Husbands and Fathers Fellowship (Today, 3:30 pm):** In this session, Pastor will continue to teach about covenantal parenting. All husbands are encouraged to attend and learn how to fulfil their covenantal duties to God. Please arrive only after 3:15 pm to allow sufficient time for the earlier Worship Service to conclude.

2. Thanksgiving and Prayer Items:

- Thank God for His help and preparing the needed resources to livestream the services during the lockdown last weekend.
- Thank God for His Hand in limiting the outbreak of COVID-19.
- Thank God for those that came to help maintain the church's grounds yesterday.
- Thank God for seeing the faculty and students of Far Eastern Bible College through another semester.
- Pray that there will be no further community spread of COVID-19 and that all cases will be detected and appropriately quarantined so that we can fully resume worship together.
- Pray for united minds and God's guidance in the Session meeting this Saturday.

APPOINTMENTS FOR TODAY AND THE WEEK

Sunday	2/5	3:30 pm	Husbands and Fathers Fellowship
Tuesday	4/5	7:30 pm	Prayer Meeting
Friday	7/5	10:00 am	Mothers Fellowship: Genesis
		7:30 pm	Fellowships Meeting: Regen/Youth 180°
Sunday	9/5	8:30 am	Pre-Service Prayer Meeting
		9:00 am	Basic Bible Knowledge Class
			Children Sunday School
		10:00 am	Sunday Worship Service
		12:00 pm	Teens Q and A

LAST WEEK'S ATTENDANCES & OFFERINGS

Tithes and Offerings – Sunday Worship: \$9,118.00; Designated Love Gift (Yew Jinn Chieng: \$100.00)

Building Fund – Last Week: \$2,360.00; To Date: \$611,878.31; Gap: \$688,121.69

Worshippers can continue to return to the Lord by making bank transfers to the following accounts:

- a) Tithes and Offerings BSB: 016-268, Account: 4784-38319
- b) Building Fund BSB: 016-268, Account: 5313-03414

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH – CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT: OF BAPTISM

2. The outward element to be used in this sacrament is water, wherewith the party is to be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, by a minister of the gospel, lawfully called thereunto.

