

Glen Park Gospel Church: Sunday 13th 2020.

This service incorporates a Lord's Supper memorial. Before we begin, please provide for each person a small piece of fresh bread and a small glass of fruit juice.

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Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. Hebrews 13:15

This is the day that the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it. Praise the Lord in His sanctuary: Praise Him for His mighty acts. Praise Him according to His excellent greatness. Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord.

Let us join together in Individual Worship.

Invocation:

To you I lift up my eyes, O you who are enthroned in the heavens! Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maidservant to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the LORD our God, till he has mercy upon us. Psalm 123:1&2.

Let us bring Him our praise in song

Praise My Soul the King of Heaven B17

1 Praise, my soul, the King of heaven;
to his feet your tribute bring.

Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
evermore his praises sing.

Alleluia, alleluia!

Praise the everlasting King!

2 Praise him for his grace and favour
to his people in distress.

Praise him, still the same as ever,
slow to chide, and swift to bless.

Alleluia, alleluia!

Glorious in his faithfulness!

3 Fatherlike he tends and spares us;
well our feeble frame he knows.

In his hand he gently bears us,
rescues us from all our foes.

Alleluia, alleluia!

Widely yet his mercy flows!

4 Angels, help us to adore him;

you behold him face to face.

Sun and moon, bow down before him,
dwellers all in time and space.

Alleluia, alleluia!

Praise with us the God of grace!

Henry Lyte 1834

Let us come before God in prayer, lifting our hearts to Him.

Dear Lord and father please cleanse our hearts of all that would stand between us and you. Please quieten our minds of all contrary thoughts as we honour you today, that we may thank and praise and Worship your Holy Name and remember what you have done in Jesus Christ for each one of us so that we could be redeemed and made perfect in your sight, Please, help us to continually keep you foremost in our minds thoughts and actions. Help us to Hear your Word, understand, respect and obey what you have for us today, open our hearts to receive your blessings and instruction.

We now ask this of You, dear Lord, as we bring you our praise and express our thankfulness. In Jesus name, Amen.

A reading that enjoins our praise to the Lord for His great provision in Jesus Christ. But first we introduce it with a devotional from Spurgeon's *Treasury of David*.

"O sing unto the Lord a new song." New joys are filling the hearts of men, for the glad tidings of blessing to all people are proclaimed, therefore let them sing a new song. Angels inaugurated the new dispensation with new songs, and shall not we take up the strain? The song is for Jehovah alone, the hymns which chanted the praises of Jupiter and Neptune, Vishnoo and Siva are hushed for ever; Bacchanalian shouts are silenced, lascivious sonnets are no more. Unto the one only God all music is to be dedicated. Mourning is over, and the time of the singing of hearts has come. No dismal rites are celebrated, no bloody sacrifices of human beings are presented, no cutting with knives, and outcries of lamentation are presented by deluded rotaries. Joy is in the ascendant, and singing has become the universal expression of love, the fitting voice of reverent adoration. Men are made new creatures, and

their song is new also. The names of Baalim are no more on their lips, the wanton music of Ashtaroth ceaseth; the foolish ditty and the cruel war-song are alike forgotten; the song is holy, heavenly, pure, and pleasant. The Psalmist speaks as if he would lead the strain and be the chief musician, he invites, he incites, he persuades to sacred worship, and cries with all his heart, "O sing unto Jehovah a new song."

Worship in the Splendour of Holiness.

This psalm may be read responsively.

Psalm 96:1 Oh sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth!

:2 Sing to the LORD, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day.

:3 Declare his glory among the nations, his marvellous works among all the peoples!

:4 For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; he is to be feared above all gods.

:5 For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols, but the LORD made the heavens.

:6 Splendour and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

:7 Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength!

:8 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts!

:9 Worship the LORD in the splendour of holiness; tremble before him, all the earth!

:10 Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns! Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved; he will judge the peoples with equity."

Together:

:11 - 13 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all that fills it; let the field exult, and everything in it! Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy before the LORD, for he comes, for he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness, and the peoples in his faithfulness.

Communal Prayer.

Please add your family and situation needs and anything we have missed.

We give thanks to you O Lord God for all your goodness in these difficult times, for the ability to meet financial and care responsibilities, for our neighbours, for our church neighbours.

At this time we pray for one another, for our older members in care, Muriel Smith, June Ashley, Rae & Georgina, for Betty with Doug, and Sue, for our singles living alone, Joan, Ann Hutchinson, Coralie, and Eirene with Ashlen but distanced from home, for Arthur & Jeanette, Darrell and Wendy for ongoing healing and sustaining care for Wendy, also for Laurie, Valmai and family, for David and Erin, Chris, Doreen and Philip. Please add to this schedule any that may have been missed. We pray for our wider families.

We remember our responsibility to reach out to others, both with a kind word or a greeting that will tell them that in these days of isolation, and for some the quietness of loneliness, we have missed them. Help us to be outgoing and caring. We pray too for those serving overseas or in mission here in Australia.

We remember our governments, the Prime Minister and the Premier and those carrying responsibility. We pray for those in care homes, the staff and residents. In this regard please protect Eirene from infection and missed income from continued isolating. We remember Joan's friendship group and those who have responsibility to contact others.

We bring to you our failures and limitations. We confess our sin, as we hear often said, for doing those things we ought not to have done and not doing those things we ought to have done. We do give thanks that in Jesus there is abundant salvation. Fill us with love for you and care for others. In this we would be like Jesus. Now bless to us the message that awaits us. Aid our understanding. Give us something to meet our need and some precious thought to pass on to others. For these things we pray in Jesus name, Amen.

The Communion Service

Read this from Luke 22:7-13. Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat it."

They said to him, "Where will you have us prepare it?"

He said to them, "Behold, when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him into the house that he enters and tell the master of the house, 'The Teacher says to you, Where

is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' And he will show you a large upper room furnished; prepare it there."

:13 And they went and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

Place on the table in your house those things you have been asked to prepare, and sit around the table in your home.

Read this from Luke 22:14 - 20. And when the hour came, he reclined at table, and the apostles with him. And he said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

:17 And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves. For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

It is time to eat the portion of bread you have prepared, thankfully remembering the suffering of Jesus for us and all mankind.

:20 And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.

It is time to drink the juice that you have prepared thankfully remembering that the blood of Jesus is the price paid to validate the desire of Almighty God, our heavenly Father to bring you along with all mankind into fellowship with Himself. We here in this simple ceremony participate in that Divine provision.

We conclude our Communion service by repeating the Lord's prayer:

Our Father who is in Heaven. Hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who have trespassed against us. And lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Hymn. Love Divine, all Loves Excelling.
B 497, R 180

1 Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heav'n to earth come down:
fix in us thy humble dwelling,
all thy faithful mercies crown:
Jesus, thou art all compassion,
pure, unbounded love thou art;
visit us with thy salvation,
enter ev'ry trembling heart.

2 Breathe, O breathe thy loving Spirit
into ev'ry troubled breast;
let us all in thee inherit,
let us find the promised rest:
take away the love of sinning;
Alpha and Omega be;
End of faith, as its Beginning,
set our hearts at liberty.

3 Come, Almighty to deliver,
let us all thy life receive;
suddenly return, and never,
nevermore thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
serve thee as thy hosts above,
pray and praise thee without ceasing,
glory in thy perfect love.

4 Finish, then, thy new creation;
pure and spotless let us be:
let us see thy great salvation
perfectly restored in thee;
changed from glory into glory,
'til in heav'n we take our place,
'til we cast our crowns before thee,
lost in wonder, love, and praise. Charles Wesley 1788

(Laurie)

Thank you Chris for leading us through this first part of our service.

I have taken the liberty of using the hymn that Chris chose as a closing hymn as a transition between the communion and the message. Without that I believe the transition would have been too abrupt, even jarring. (My topic commences on the next page.)

You are PREJUDICED!

Huh!.....Who...ME?

Yes! Me too. In fact I believe that we all need some measure of prejudice. It helps us to remain firm through the rough patches. We usually call it "Faith". Opponents call it prejudice.

First; a little of definitions.

Assumption, Presumption and Prejudice are not quite the same as each other but they are in the same camp in that they can lead to the same mistakes.

A **Belief** is our understanding of what is true about the nature of something. It does not have to be true to be a belief, but it is certainly a lot better for us if it is.

A belief becomes an **Assumption** when we use that belief to decide our actions or to evaluate something new. An assumption may affect our behaviour without us being conscious of that assumption. We are so "fearfully and wonderfully made" that our brains are constantly checking our assumptions for us. Example; While walking along a firm surface at ground level I pay little attention to the strength of the surface I am walking along. I assume that the surface will hold my full weight at every step. But if the surface unexpectedly yields even a little bit, then I will consciously check that assumption. And, unless I am rather pre-occupied with something else, I will not walk even one more step before doing so. Even those basic assumptions can sometimes be proven to be wrong. A few months ago water from a leaking pipe began coming to the surface in a gravel car park at Kangaroo ground. I found that it was coming from an underground pipe which was about 35 cm below the surface six metres up the hill from where the water was appearing. It had eroded a cavity about 40cm across and 30cm deep to within 5cm of the surface there. Any person stepping on that would have been surprised.

Presumption is to assume that everybody else has the same belief and make decisions which adversely affect others who do not share the same belief.

Prejudice is to show bias toward continuing to believe your assumption when confronted with opposing views and especially when evidence can be shown which at least at first encounter appears to support those opposing views.

Because assumptions are what we use when we interpret new data they are why different people can look at the same data and draw different, even sometimes opposite conclusions.

As an example, I was taught very early that the first chapters of Genesis were the true stories of how this world began. Over many years now I have not encountered plausible data which might cause me to change that view. There are a lot of claims made against my interpretation of the evidence I see but those claims generally assume events which are so improbable that they would not even be considered as possibilities except that the only alternative is to believe that God exists.

As I look around me I see things running down. Recently, I read of researchers expressing surprise at finding relatively advanced musical instruments as they excavated in an area dated as being very old. That finding was no surprise to me. Why did it surprise them? Most archaeologists start with very different assumptions about time. If you start with the assumption of an evolutionary history where everything is supposedly getting better as we move forward in time then yes, such a finding is a surprise. But if we have read Genesis Chapter 4 and taken it to be a true account then such findings fit fine with this Genesis-is-history assumption.

Gen:4:19_22 "Lamech took two wives. The name of the one was Adah and of the other, Zillah. Adar bore Jabal. He was the father of those who dwell in tents and have cattle. His brother's name was Jubal. He was the father of all those who play the lyre and the pipe. Zillah bore Tubal-Cain. He was the forger of all cutting instruments of bronze and iron. The sister of Tubal-Cain was Naamah."

This example highlights the need to have our assumptions firmly based on facts. Wrong assumptions used to interpret new data is likely to lead to wrong conclusions and that means further wrong assumptions which we bring to the next new data and on and on we go in our incorrect understandings.

Do we have our assumptions straight? How long since we checked that they remain valid? Are we prepared to take even a somewhat critical look at opposing data occasionally? I believe that we need to do that from time to time. There are two main reasons for this. One is that I find that I am usually encouraged as I find that what has been claimed to be

opposing data is actually better explained within my own relatively short time frame views. The other is so that we can anticipate at least some of the objections that others may raise when we challenge their views.

There are many examples in our Bibles of wrong assumptions leading to serious mistakes. Let's look at just a few examples.

A story which I have shared with you several times now is in Genesis Chapter 3:1_6.

Up to this time God has been their best friend. First, Adam had all the good food he could want. Then he had a sort of companionship with the animals, but God saw that that was not good enough for the man and He made the woman to be a true companion for him. Then the serpent tells them that there is even more good to be obtained simply by eating from that tree, and would God really want to withhold it from them. (By forbidding them from eating of it.) Why did they decide that the serpent was right and either they were mistaken about the prohibition or perhaps the serpent was a better friend than the God with whom they had fellowship as they walked together in the garden? Was their admiration kindled because the serpent spoke to them but the other creatures did not? God had given them so much already. A little "prejudice" toward the God Who had already freely given them so much could have saved a lot of trouble. But they moved their perception of the truth.

It seems to be a characteristic of human nature that we always want something more, or better than what we already have. And few can resist when it appears that we have the opportunity to have it right now. Especially if it appears to be free. Whatever the reason, they ate; and the world has been under a curse ever since.

Not so consequential, but I have often wondered about Abram's behaviour as recorded in Genesis 12:1_9 In summary: while in Haran Abram is told to move away from his relatives to a land that HE will show him. Under God's direction (V 4) he obeys. In V 7 Abram is told "This is the land..." but in V8 and 9 he moves on further South. We are not told if he continues to move as the famine strikes or if the famine strikes because he continues to move. But the Lord continues to protect him and everything that he has, even adds to it.

After the quarrel with Lot, God renews HIS promise

to Abram. Gen 13:14ff.

Gen 14:18_20 Melchizedek confirms the blessing.

Gen 15 God again confirms HIS promise and tells him of the future of his descendants.

How long could **you** wait for a promise? How long would I wait? For me it would depend upon how convinced I was that God had promised whatever it was to me. My own experience has been more in the consistent provision of needs. I have no hesitation in singing the lines "All I have needed the Lord has provided..." Not that I have not at times, maybe more times than I care to admit, wished for more. But we have always had what was needed, and there have been times when we had no idea how the needed provision could arrive in time, but it did.

Back to Abram and Sarai. An event with more serious consequences. Eleven years after leaving Haran their patience runs out. In Geneses 16 we have the record of Abram and Sarai deciding on their own strategy to start things moving now instead of continuing to wait upon the Lord to do for them precisely as HE has promised repeatedly to do. The promised child was born 14 years later. Enmity remains to this day between the two lines of descendants and has cost and continues to cost many lives.

A different case. This time one where the person stood firmly on what they had been given although not much has been recorded of that. Joseph. Genesis 37 and 39_45 . What promise was made to Joseph? As Jacob's favourite son he had likely heard many stories which laid a foundation. And he had some dreams. Dreams which would appear to be very unlikely to come true. His father had rebuked him over them (37:10) but he also wondered about what Joseph had told him.

Some of his brothers scoffed (37:20). Did they also scoff in Joseph's hearing as they manhandled him?

Joseph did not allow his dramatic change of fortune to poison his mind with self-pity. He took up his new position with diligence. The simple phrase "The Lord was with him" suggests also something of how Joseph related to God. Joseph did not reject the God of his father because of his downturns of fortune.

Perhaps even more remarkable is that Joseph keeps his integrity after his fortunes have been reversed. When we are not sure where the next meal is coming

from we are very aware of our dependence upon God to supply our needs. When rich, that dependence is all too easily forgotten. In his new position of power Joseph could have sent a detachment of troops back to deal vengeance to his brothers. But he waited for God to work out HIS plan. He later explains this to his frightened brothers. (Gen 45:3_11) Waiting upon God is always the better way.

Prejudice can of course work the other way too. In Exodus it appears that the Israelites had been conditioned, perhaps by their long stay in Egypt, toward "other gods". In Exodus 24:9_11 we read that Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy of the elders of the Israelites met with God and ate and drank in His presence. But 40 days later in Exodus 32 we read of them gathering to make themselves a god in the form of a calf. Perhaps they felt safer with their "tame" gods than with the real One.

Is that also the main reason that many people prefer to believe the evolutionary story instead of the Genesis account? I do not believe that all who reject the Genesis account think that way. For many, it is simply that they have not been made aware of the mass of geological and other evidence which supports it.

Gideon, after his initial hesitations fully obeys regardless of the outward appearance of the unlikely plan and gains a great victory. Judges 6:11 to the end of Chapter 7.

There is a stark contrast between this and the disastrous account in 1 Samuel 4. (The chapter break between Chapters 3 and four is unfortunate. Part of verse one concludes the account about Samuel and the second part begins the historical account of the disastrous battles.) There appears to have been no consultation with the Lord in the entire episode of Chapter 4. They treated God and the symbol of His presence as if it were a common object of wood or stone. They had totally lost their bearings. A little "prejudice" toward the God of their fathers, the GOD Who made heaven and earth could have made a lot of difference for them and for their children.

Do You have the right "prejudices"?

As the closing hymn I have chosen the hymn generally known under the title Count your Blessings.

It can be found in our Blue book #723

When upon life's billows you are tempest tossed.
When you are discouraged thinking all is lost.
Count your many blessings name them one by one
and it will surprise you what the Lord has done.

Chorus

Count your blessings, name them one by one.
Count your blessings, see what God has done.
Count your blessings, name them one by one.
Count your many blessings, see what God has done.

Are you ever burdened with a load of care?
Does the cross seem heavy you are called to bear?
Count your many blessings, every doubt will fly
and you will be singing as the days go by.

(Chorus)

When you look at others with their lands and gold
think that Christ has promised you His wealth untold.
Count your many blessings money cannot buy
your reward in heaven nor your home on high

(Chorus)

So, amid the conflict, whether great or small
do not be discouraged, God is over all.
Count your many blessings, angels will attend
help and comfort give you to your journey's end.

(Chorus)

Benediction:

May The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of
God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you
all both now and for all eternity. Amen.