



COVENANT

Bible-Presbyterian Church

Preaching Christ for His Glory and His Kingdom

Order of Worship – 29 September 2019

Theme for the Year: "Strength in Weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9)

Prelude	<i>The Lord Is in His Holy Temple</i>
Call to Worship	
*Opening Hymn	19 - <i>I Sing the Mighty Power of God</i>
*Invocation & † <i>Gloria Patri</i>	
Scripture Reading	Romans 12:1-21
Hymn	22 - <i>Great Is Thy Faithfulness</i>
Tithes & Offering	
*†† <i>Doxology</i> & Offertory Prayer	
Scripture Reading	2 Corinthians 13:11-14
Hymn	392 - <i>The Solid Rock</i>
Confession of Faith & Pastoral Prayer	
Sermon	"Receiving God's Benediction and Going in Peace"
*Closing Hymn	624 - <i>My Hope Is in Thee</i>
*Benediction & <i>Threefold Amen</i>	
Announcements	* <i>Congregation standing</i>

†Glory be to the Father, and to the Son:
And to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning,
Is now and ever shall be:
World without end. Amen.

††Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
Amen.

Covenant Bible-Presbyterian Church meets every Sunday at 10:00 am
at 47 Davis Road, Attadale, Western Australia

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The Various Views of Burial and Cremation

For many Christians, the issue of cremation is very controversial. For others, it is not an issue at all. In other words, some insist on burial, while others are ambivalent. This is not so in some of the other monotheistic religions. For the orthodox Jews and Muslims, they only bury as cremation is taboo

There are 3 main views among evangelical Christians - some insist on burial, others believe cremation and burial are equally acceptable, and yet others prefer burial over cremation while not being dogmatic. What does the Bible say?

The Bible On Burial and Burning

Firstly, there are 5 reasons that positively support the practice of burial.

1. Believers were buried. The patriarchs were buried. Even Stephen, who was sentenced to death, was buried. And Ananias and Sapphira, who were judged by God, were also buried.

2. Burial was the only indicated means to manage the remains in OT Law. Even those executed were buried. Deuteronomy 21:23a says, "His body shall not remain all night upon a tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day."

3. Christ was buried after the custom of the Jews (John 19:40). He resurrected in the same body in which he died; which resurrection gives hope to the believer (Philippians 3:20-21). Burial symbolically anticipates the future resurrection of the believer.

4. Burial is used as a symbol to illustrate the Christian life. In Romans 6:4 Paul speaks of the Christian being

buried with Christ in death and raised up from the dead unto new life.

5. Burial respects the sanctity of the body. The body houses the soul of man, which was created in God's image. As such, the burial practices of the Bible illustrate respect for the body. Bodies were washed (Acts 9:37), embalmed (John 12:7), wrapped in cloth (Matthew 27:59), respected (Leviticus 19:27-28), carried to the tomb (2 Samuel 3:31), and thereafter placed in a grave (Luke 23:53).

But secondly, the Bible seems to be against the burning of the body. There are those who would extrapolate this to include cremation.

1. Burning was a pagan practice tied to human sacrifices. The Israelites were forbidden from following this practice (Deuteronomy 12:31).

Historically and culturally, it was the pagans who practiced cremation - like the Hindus and ancient Romans.

2. Burning of the body was seen to be a mark of divine judgment. When Achan sinned, he and his family were stoned and then burned with fire. This is seen also in the case of Nadab and Abihu, Sodom and Gomorrah, and even the Last Judgment with the lake of fire.

3. Burning of the body was a mark of execution. Early Christians were buried because cremation was associated with martyrdom. Furthermore, fire was used as execution for heretics.

Why Some Insist on Burial Only

Because of the above reasons in favor of burial, some evangelical Christians insist on burial. They especially believe that burial reserves the body for resurrection. They are uncomfortable

with cremation because of the negative light in which the Scripture speaks about the burning of the body.

Cremation and Burial Are Equally Acceptable

There are others who hold that both forms of remains management are allowed in Scripture.

Firstly, they say that Scripture does not insist on burial alone. While Scripture describes burial alone, it reflected only the culture and custom of the Jews.

Secondly, while burial is used as a metaphor of the gospel - to describe death of sin and new life in Christ - it is not a prescription for burial.

Thirdly, burial is not the only means that shows respect for the sanctity of the body. Today, cremation no longer has a negative connotation - it is not seen as judgment.

Fourthly, while the Bible condemns the burning of the body in relation to human sacrifice, it says nothing about burning of the body for the purpose of managing remains.

There are only two places in Scripture that tenuously speak of cremation. Firstly, in 1 Samuel 31, the bodies of Saul and his sons were partially cremated after they were reclaimed. Their bones were subsequently buried. Why was this done? It was perhaps an act to conceal the identity of the bodies so they would not be desecrated by their enemies.

Secondly, in Amos 2, Moab is prophesied to be judged because they burned the bones of the king of Edom. This may be the only unambiguous reference to cremation in the Bible. But it is impossible to develop an ethics of cremation from only a few verses.

Fifthly, the bodies of saints that have been burned, or disintegrated by any other means, will still receive the resurrection of the body. All our bodies turn to dust and ashes anyway.

Burial Preferred

There are others who admit that there are no direct commands promoting burial and prohibiting cremation. But since burial is the general pattern in the Scriptures and burning of bodies is looked upon negatively, they believe that Christians, if possible, should practice burial. This is the reason why the Bible-Presbyterian Church buries.

God is the Lord of the Conscience

But this is not a matter to fight over. It is good to be buried. I believe that most evangelical Christians would bury if they could.

However, there is the constraint of cost. Today in Australia, the cost of burial is exorbitant - averaging \$19,000. Much of the total cost is made up by cemetery fees which are being driven upwards by the fact that cemetery land supply is rapidly shrinking. But a cremation can cost a third of a burial - and the savings are significant!

Let each be convinced in his heart as to what pleases the Lord. ~ *Pastor*



Catechism for Younger Children

31. What is meant by transgression? Doing what God forbids.

32. What does every sin deserve? The wrath and curse of God.

Worship Service Roster

<i>Service</i>	<i>This Week (29.9.19)</i>	<i>Next Week (6.10.19)</i>
Speaker	Mark Chen	Glen Lock
Worship Leader	Chris Budiman	Chris Budiman
Pianist	Eugene Lim	Ian Tay
Welcomers	Danny & Susie Tan	John & Adeline Ng
Offering Stewards	Micah Chiang, Vincent Chiu Xin Yi Hong, Rex Sriharan	Vincent Chiu, Ken Hong John Tan, Rex Sriharan
Ushers	Josephine Austin & Nicole Tan	Wendy Gong, Josephine Austin
Kitchen Duties	Angela Yap, Alison Wong Lydia Orchard	August Ng, Siew Kim Chandran Grace Wang, Carmel Sriharan
PA Duty	Ken Hong	Raymond Woo
<i>Prayer Meeting</i>	<i>4 October 2019</i>	<i>11 October 2019</i>
Chairman	In Recess	In Recess
Pianist		

Announcements

1. A warm welcome to all worshipers. May God richly bless you. Please stay behind after the service for fellowship and tea.
2. We will be celebrating Lord's Supper next Lord's Day. Please bring a dish to share at the fellowship lunch.
3. The messenger next Lord's Day is Pastor Glen Lock. He will be speaking on "The Four Looks" (Psalm 73:1-28).
4. Ministry reports for ACM 2019. Please submit by 1 October 2019 - email Jacob Woo (jacob.woo[at]gmail.com).
5. Ladies Fellowship. Today at 12:30 pm. Lunch and continuation of DVD "How People Change". Ladies of all ages welcome!
6. Daily Manna and Daily Manna Junior (October-December 2019) are available in the foyer.

Appointments for the Week	Last Lord's Day Tithes & Offering, & Attendance
WED 10:00 am Craft Group	General Fund - \$2,109.50 (ET - \$200.00, #886 - \$20.00, #887 - \$157.50). Missions Fund - \$210.00 (ET - \$100.00). Building Fund - \$300.00 (ET - \$300.00). Total Tithes & Offering - \$2,719.50. Attendance - 107. *ET: electronic transfer
SAT 4:30 pm JF and TF	
SUN 9:00 am Sunday School	
10:00 am Worship Service	

Elders: **Mark Chen (Pastor)** 6114 4242, 0415 932 373. **Jimmy Orchard** 0413 274 407.

Johnson Lim 0402 145 682. Deacons: **Jacob Woo** 0421 212 206. **Vincent Chiu** 0417 929 149.