



Welcome to Blackburn Baptist Church, on November 12th 2023 at 10:45, meeting at Bethesda Chapel.

Whilst some are able to meet in person, others we know are still at home. We hope and pray that you will find this outline of our service helpful, as we seek to worship God as a Church family, wherever we are.

Our Remembrance Service today is being led by Alec.

Welcome : 'Good morning everybody. Its a real joy and encouragement to be together on this Remembrance Sunday here at Blackburn Baptist Church. A who very warm welcome to each one of you, some of you have been coming more recently for the first time. We come together at a very important time on this date and we will be remembering at 11 o'clock I hope exactly, a two minute silence which will be remembered live across the country today . I am going to begin by praying the Lord will guide us and lead us in this time together.

Our loving Heavenly Father, for so you are, we thank you that we can come to you from our hearts, asking you to lead and guide us in this service, in this worship gathering this morning, in this service of remembrance which is of so much importance to each one of us and to all of us, to us as a church and right across the country at this time. We pray that you will lead us and guide us, be in the centre of our thoughts, be at the centre of our hearts, be very much at the centre of all our lives and the lives of this church, which is your church, at this time, and may our time together be honourable and worthy also of those who gave their lives that we might live, as you gave your son that we might be forgiven of our sins and have eternal life. We pray in the name of Jesus and for his sake, Amen.'

Alec continued as he read Psalm 33:20-22

We wait in hope for the Lord; he is our help and our shield.
In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name.
May your unfailing love be with us, Lord, even as we put our hope in you.

We joined in singing our Opening hymn:played by Trevor, Paul W and Judith

Our God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home.

Beneath the shadow of Thy throne still may we dwell secure;
sufficient is Thine arm alone, and our defence is sure.

Before the hills in order stood, or earth received her frame,
from everlasting Thou art God, to endless years the same.

A thousand ages in Thy sight are like an evening gone;
short as the watch that ends the night before the rising sun.

Time, like an ever rolling stream, bears all its sons away;
they fly, forgotten, as a dream dies at the opening day.

Our God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
be Thou our guard while troubles last, and our eternal home.

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Alec led a Prayer of confession (responsive), shown on the screen:

God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him, yet walk in the darkness, we lie and so do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from sin. If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. (John 1:5b-8)

Congregational response:

Most holy and merciful Father, we confess to you and to one another, that we have sinned against you by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.

We have not loved you with our whole heart and mind and strength. We have not fully loved our neighbours as ourselves. We have not always had in us the mind of Christ. You alone know how often we have grieved you by wasting your gifts, by wandering from your ways.

Forgive us, we pray you, most merciful Father and free us from our sin. Renew in us the grace and strength of your Holy Spirit, for the sake of Jesus Christ your Son our Saviour. Amen.

Lord's Prayer (said together)

Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

As we approached 11 am and the Act of Remembrance, Trevor quietly played "Peace, perfect peace", before Alec continued:

We unite our hearts to remember, after the Last Post, all those of all peoples and all nations who have given their lives for others serving in conflicts throughout human history and throughout the world. So after the Last Post we will remain in silence for two minutes to remember them together in the presence of the living God.

"The Last Post" was played over the loudspeakers whilst the screen showed a field of Poppies.

The congregation stood in Silence

Alec: Age shall not weary them nor the years condemn; at the going down of the sun and in the morning we will remember them.

Response: We will remember them.

We joined in a hymn of commitment:

Dear Lord and Father of mankind, forgive our foolish ways!
Reclothe us in our rightful mind, in purer lives Thy service find,
in deeper reverence, praise, in deeper reverence, praise.

In simple trust like theirs who heard, beside the Syrian sea
the gracious calling of the Lord, let us, like them, without a word
rise up and follow Thee, rise up and follow Thee.

O Sabbath rest by Galilee! O calm of hills above,
where Jesus knelt to share with Thee the silence of eternity
interpreted by love! Interpreted by love!

With that deep hush subduing all our words and works that drown
the tender whisper of Thy call, as noiseless let Thy blessing fall
as fell Thy manna down, as fell Thy manna down.

Drop Thy still dews of quietness, till all our strivings cease;
take from our souls the strain and stress, and let our ordered lives confess
the beauty of Thy peace, the beauty of Thy peace.

Breathe through the heats of our desire Thy coolness and Thy balm;
let sense be dumb, let flesh retire; speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,
O still, small voice of calm, O still, small voice of calm.

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Notices were shared by Tony: a busy week for the church leadership team, after their meeting on Monday evening, Alec is away with other church leaders on Wednesday in Croydon, and he and Jane are joining with Myriad in Sheffield on Friday and Saturday prior to the Church members meeting next Sunday, which is also India Sunday when Alec will be sharing more about his forthcoming visit to India. Other activities will be the Ladies Bibles study on Tuesday morning, and Tiddlywinks on Wednesday morning.

Our Bible reading, Psalm 96, was read by Janet.

Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth.
Sing to the Lord, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day.
Declare his glory among the nations, his marvellous deeds among all peoples.
For great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; he is to be feared above all gods.
For all the gods of the nations are idols, but the Lord made the heavens.
Splendour and majesty are before him; strength and glory are in his sanctuary.
Ascribe to the Lord, all you families of nations, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.
Ascribe to the Lord the glory due to his name; bring an offering and come into his courts.
Worship the Lord in the splendour of his holiness; tremble before him, all the earth.
Say among the nations, 'The Lord reigns.'
The world is firmly established, it cannot be moved;
he will judge the peoples with equity.
Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; let the sea resound, and all that is in it.

Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them; let all the trees of the forest sing for joy. Let all creation rejoice before the Lord, for he comes, he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in his faithfulness.

Our Prayers were led by Brenda

“On this Sunday of Remembrance, let us bring before God our prayers of remembrance and our prayers for the world, its people and ourselves.

O Lord God, our Heavenly Father, first of all we pray for peace - peace in our hearts and homes, in our nations and our world, the peace which is Your will, the peace which we so badly need.

We continue to remember before You, O Lord, the many, many victims of the two world wars and other past conflicts, giving thanks to them for their sacrifice. We think first of those who were known to our families. Then we remember all who have died in the violence of war, and are still dying in any kind of war throughout Your world - soldiers, sailors and airmen who have perished in the horror of battle, innocent people buried beneath the rubble from bomb attacks, men, women and children brutally attacked and murdered in their homes when towns and villages have been destroyed. We also remember and pray for those who have come home with terrible injuries, both physical and psychological and those whose loved ones never returned.

Remembering the conflicts of the past and the sacrifices which were made, we also bring before You this world, where war is still a grim reality and very many are suffering so much. At this time we bring before You especially Israel, Gaza and Ukraine, asking that peace and reconciliation overcome conflict. We pray for comfort for those bereaved, losing their family members and even little children, and protection and freedom for the abducted. Heavenly Father, may more essential supplies reach those in need and the necessary medical care be available for the injured. May there be support and shelter for those whose homes and hospitals have been destroyed, We also ask for many of the same things for other places in the world where there is war, persecution and terrible suffering.

Heavenly Father, as we remember those who have lost their lives, help us to oppose cruelty and injustice, prejudice, tyranny and oppression and Lord, hear our prayer for the many in every country who do not want war and are ready to walk the path of peace. May their voice be heard and may they not lose heart.

Lord God, we pray for the many leaders of the nations at this time, asking You to give them a longing to bring freedom from fear and want for all peoples. Give strength, courage and integrity to those who bear heavy responsibilities for the peace and the future of the world.

We pray also for the Christian Church, called to witness to Your love in this generation. May Christians work with all of goodwill to break down the barriers which divide people and may those who profess one faith respect those who sincerely hold another faith, building a community where there is peace, harmony and understanding. May any further protests be peaceful ones.

On this day we remember also many we have loved. and lost. When we lose someone close, we feel that part of us dies as well, but part of them lives on in us. Lord God, give us strength and understanding to honour and cherish that gift.

Our Heavenly Father, we pray for all of us here and others we know who at present face difficulties in our personal lives - problems in families or friendships, in neighbourhoods or

workplaces, or who have physical and mental health problems of different kinds. Many are not well at this time, maybe in hospital or needing care and in a moment of quiet we bring them before You now.....

O Lord, You know we are often filled with fear and foreboding. Help us to be calm in times of uncertainty and patient with those around us. Show us when we can help and give support to others. Today as we honour the past, help us to put our faith for the future in You, the only source of life and hope. You are a rock which nothing can shatter.

We pray for Your continued guidance for the outreach and strengthening of our church here at Blackburn Baptist, asking that as Christmas approaches we may be able to shine a light for You in this area. We ask that You will be close to and uphold our Pastor and Deacons and we give thanks for them and all who serve here in whatever way. Please be present with us and guide us at our Church Meeting next week.

As we close, we give You our thanks for Your love for us and for all You have given us and for Your presence with us this morning and we pray that we may all put our confidence in You. Lord, give us courage and deepen our trust, so we can go through our daily lives knowing that You are beside us.

We ask all these prayers in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Saviour. Amen"

We sang once more:

How deep the Father's love for us, how vast beyond all measure,
that He should give His only Son to make a wretch His treasure.
How great the pain of searing loss - the Father turns His face away,
as wounds which mar the Chosen One bring many sons to glory.

Behold the man upon a cross, my sin upon His shoulders;
ashamed, I hear my mocking voice call out among the scoffers.
It was my sin that held Him there until it was accomplished;
His dying breath has brought me life - I know that it is finished.

I will not boast in anything, no gifts, no power, no wisdom;
but I will boast in Jesus Christ, His death and resurrection.
Why should I gain from His reward? I cannot give an answer;
but this I know with all my heart - His wounds have paid my ransom.

Author: Stuart Townend CCLI SONG # 1558110 Copyright © 1995 Thankyou Music (Adm. by CapitolCMGPublishing.com excl. UK & Europe, adm. by Integrity Music, part of the David C Cook family, songs@integritymusic.com) CCL No 5664

Alec shared his Message "Our citizenship is in heaven"

'It is a very significant and very important day for us all.
It is also a God-given opportunity to look together at His Word and to ask God humbly to speak to us, to challenge us and to encourage us. So before we go any further let`s pray together.

What is our perception of the world around us?

How do we see the world around us?

How do we come to terms with the conflicts and wars in the world in which we live about which we are becoming better and more rapidly informed than even a probably brilliant

wartime journalist like Churchill could have dreamed of?

How do we see ourselves?

How do we perceive and relate to the realities of our own personal lives, of our families and friends and neighbours?

What is our view of God?

The real question is, "What is God's view of us?"

To begin to answer this question we look at the account written by the Apostle Paul to the believers at Philippi during one of his prison terms this time in Rome. I am reading from Philippians 3: 4-14 (TLB)

Let me make it clear that I personally do not deify or glorify Paul or even overrate him. He was an amazingly gifted man yes. Before he became a believer he could boast of having been and being so many things yes. And let us not forget that he had a unique experience on the road to Damascus yes. You will probably well remember that he was going down to Damascus to persecute and massacre the Christians in that city. But on the way; on the way he was given a view of the risen Lord Jesus Himself which was to qualify him as an Apostle.

But you see we do not need to see the risen Lord in the way Paul did in order to become and remain believers in Jesus. Paul is not telling us that he is a class apart, that he is first in the Premier League, and that he would win the gold medal in each and any events in which he might participate. No, no, no!

He says in direct contrast to that that he is the greatest of all sinners that the world has ever known. Paul says he is a sinner saved by the grace of God in Christ in exactly the same way as every other believer in the Lord Jesus. We are all in the same position. We are all sinners in need of a Saviour. We do not place Paul or anybody else in a separate compartment; not one of us has anything to boast about before God.

What does Paul teach us about life and experience as a believer?

First of all he teaches us that it is something or rather someone that takes hold of us and masters us and holds us. We read in Phil. 3:12," Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me." (NIV)

Paul is basically saying, "Look. Here was I, a proud, self-righteous, boastful religious person going down to Damascus believing I was serving God, when suddenly like this great light began to shine such as I have never seen before. I saw the Lord Jesus!

What really happened to me was that God, the living God, took hold of me. He grasped me. He held me; and he has held me ever since."

And then he says, "Well you see my position now is that I am trying to grasp that or rather the One who grasped me."

In other words a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is not someone who has taken up something as an interest but rather someone who has been taken up by Jesus as Lord. New

Testament believers know that God has been dealing with them, that God is moving in their lives even if they don't always understand how and why.

You see becoming a believer means experiencing a turning point in our lives, a 180 degree turnaround, away from disobeying God towards following Him in faith and repentance. It leads to a complete change of heart, to a complete change of outlook and values.

Paul speaks of his religious past like this: "At one time all these things were important to me. But now I think those things are worth nothing because of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ." (Phil. 3: 7-8).

You see Paul was climbing upwards when suddenly he found himself looking at an entirely different landscape.

Do we understand what he is getting at?

He is saying being a believer in Jesus is never an "addition" to our lives; it is not an add-on that we can download and delete whenever convenient to us. It is not a device that we can put on mute when we don't like what God is saying and perhaps don't want to hear or even do what He says.

Either our faith is central in or to our lives or it is nowhere. Sangster said that "if Jesus Christ is not Lord of all He is not Lord at all."

Believers are not people of whom it can be said that their lives are identical with everybody else's and they have an extra something in addition. To be a believer in the Lord Jesus says Paul means that at the very centre, at the very core of your being and existence, this new someone has come in and controls everything.

All previous things have become rubbish in comparison with the joy of knowing Christ.

If we have been deeply affected at the very centre, at the very heart of our being, if the centre of our personality has been affected, then everything else must have changed. My thinking must be changed; my feeling, my willing and wanting must be changed. That is exactly what Paul is saying here.

In 2 Cor. 5:17 he makes it even clearer when he writes, "When someone becomes a Christian, he becomes a brand new person inside. He is not the same anymore. A new life has begun!" (TLB)

Old things have passed away, all things have become new.

Paul writes (Phil. 3:7) "But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ."

Those things that we thought were gains are in fact losses. That's amazing isn't it. The balance sheet looks completely different when Christ is Lord of our lives.

But let`s be practical. In what respects is it right to say that life is entirely changed?

Well you see this goes back to the questions we asked ourselves at the beginning about our view of ourselves, others, the world and even God Himself.

Like Paul we will have a completely new view of who we are. We always thought we were better than everybody else, now we realise our status as sinners in need of a Saviour. Paul writes in Romans 7:24: "I`ve tried everything and nothing helps. I`m at the end of my rope. Is there no one who can do anything for me? Isn`t that the real question?" (MSG) or again "Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?" (NASB)

The more we grow as believers in the Lord Jesus the more we will become aware of the true nature of our natural hearts.

Like Paul too we will have a new understanding, a new view of who God is. We will have a new view of religion. We may have been content with external, formal religion; now we become aware of the realities of the spiritual world. We approach God now not on the basis of our own good lives and achievements but come humbly and quietly to Jesus our Lord on the basis of His death for us.

Like Paul we will also have a new understanding of life and of death. We will say with Paul, for me to live is Christ, to die is gain. Our true citizenship is in heaven now.

Paul gave up everything he had and was and became a believer. He gave his life back to the Lord Jesus Christ His Maker and Sustainer who now became his Saviour and Lord. For doing that he was denounced by his own people and suffered endless persecution as we read in 2 Corinthians 2. What had taken control of Paul was what he describes as "the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord."

That is what changed his outlook; that is what took control of him; that is the reason why he was prepared to give up everything, "God in him, the hope of glory."

What makes up this excellent knowledge, what is the content of this knowledge, why is it so excellent?

First may I suggest it is knowledge that gives us access into an immediate, direct, personal contact with the most glorious person that this world has ever seen or ever will see; the King of Kings. He is the King whom we serve. This knowledge enables us to meet God; to meet the Lord Jesus Christ and to have fellowship with him, to get to know him intimately. The excellence of the knowledge is because of the greatness of the person.

Secondly may I suggest that this knowledge gives us understanding of God`s wonderful way of rescuing us from the mess we have made of our lives, from sin and death. Is there any knowledge better than knowing you are not going to live forever without God, knowing that you are forgiven and accepted for who you are because you belong to Jesus and God accepts his sacrifice for your wrongs.

This knowledge brings peace and joy through the Spirit who lives in us, tranquility of heart and a truly peaceful mind in the face of all of the challenges of our daily lives on this earth. We have new life in Jesus.

But in closing let us ask ourselves just one or two important questions.

Have we given our lives back over to Jesus as Lord and Saviour? Do we know that God has dealt with us and is dealing with us, working on us? Do we feel God's hand upon and in our lives? Is our outlook on life entirely different from that of non-believers around us? Have we seen something that makes us feel that we would sooner give up everything else than lose this relationship to Jesus as Saviour and Lord?

Is Jesus Christ your Lord this morning? From my heart I hope so.

He makes Himself your Lord and my Lord; He has bought us, he has purchased us; He has paid the price for the mess which we have made of our lives; He has taken hold of us and He holds us in His mighty grasp. Hallelujah! Amen!

We closed as we sang our offering hymn:

Thy hand, O God, has guided thy flock, from age to age;
the wondrous tale is written full clear on every page;
our fathers owned thy goodness, and we their deeds record;
and both of this bear witness: one Church, one Faith, one Lord.

Thy heralds brought glad tidings to greatest as to least;
they bade men rise and hasten to share the great King's feast;
and this was all their teaching in every deed and word;
to all alike proclaiming: one Church, one Faith, one Lord.

Through many a day of darkness, through many a scene of strife,
the faithful few fought bravely to guard the nation's life.
Their gospel of redemption, sin pardoned, man restored,
was all in this enfolded: one Church, one Faith, one Lord.

Thy mercy will not fail us, nor leave thy work undone;
with thy right hand to help us, the victory shall be won;
and then, by men and angels, thy name shall be adored,
and this shall be their anthem: one Church, one Faith, one Lord.

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Or if you prefer:

Your hand, O God, has guided your flock from age to age;
the wondrous tale is written full clear on every page;
our forebears knew your goodness, and we their deeds record,
and both of this bear witness, 'One church, one faith, one Lord.'

Your heralds brought glad tidings to greatest, as to least;
they summoned all to hasten to share the great King's feast,
and this was all their teaching, in every deed and word,
to all alike proclaiming, 'One church, one faith, one Lord.'

Your mercy will not fail us, nor leave your work undone;
with your right hand to help us, the victory shall be won,
and then by earth and heaven your name shall be adored,
and this shall be their anthem, 'One church, one faith, one Lord.'

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Alec closed in prayer as the congregation remained standing:

'Loving heavenly Father, we thank you and praise you that we have the freedom here to remember those who gave their lives that we might live. We thank you that in this hour today we have been able particularly to respect and to be thankful for those who gave their lives for us. Even more than that, we thank you that you gave your life for us that we might be set free from sin, that we might be forgiven and given eternal life through the resurrection of your same son the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, and we pray that you would use the gifts physical and digital, that we give to you at this time, for the extension of your kingdom, that more and more people will know of the truth that you are the only living God, you are the only God who died to forgive us from sin, we did not deserve it but you gave your life for us. May we go from this place after praying and after our lunch together, rejoicing in the new life you have given us, may we have peace and joy and freedom in our hearts, may we know tranquility in our lives day and night that we have not known before, because we are sure that you are living in our hearts and we will be forever with the Lord. We pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen'

We all joined together saying:

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, evermore, Amen.