

# Sunday September 19, 2021

## Service for Swansea & Charlestown Presbyterian Church

### Welcome & Prayer (Simon M)

Welcome to church today. My name's Simon Mulready. It's great to have you with us.

Over the last few weeks, Stephen has taken us through the book of Ezekiel, as we've heard God's words of comfort, encouragement and restoration for His people living in exile. Last week we read Ezekiel 34, and were reminded of God, as the shepherd for His people.

<sup>11</sup>“...this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I myself will search for my sheep and look after them.

<sup>12</sup>I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and darkness.

<sup>14</sup>I will tend them in a good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel will be their grazing land.

<sup>16</sup>I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak...”

Let's pray

Heavenly Father, we come to you lost, injured, tired and weak. We are lost in sin. We are injured by our own failing. We are tired in this fallen world. We are weak in our faith and weak in our trust in you. Forgive us, LORD. Restore us. Bind us up in your love. May we know you, as the good shepherd, who searches for His people, gathers them to himself, and tends for them with kindness and blessing. May we rest in your forgiveness. May we rest in your goodness. May we rest in your sovereign hand.

In Christ's name we pray. Amen

This morning we look forward to hearing from Genesis 3 and Colossians 2, as Paul Barnes helps us look at the Nature of Sin and the Conqueror of Sin. But first, we're going to sing together a wonderful old hymn.

### Song – Praise my Soul the King of Heaven

[Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven \(Lyric Video\)](#) // [Emu Music - YouTube](#)

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| <p>1. Praise, my soul, the King of heaven;<br/>to his feet thy tribute bring.<br/>Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,<br/>who like me his praise should sing.<br/>Praise him, praise him,<br/>praise him, praise him,<br/>praise the everlasting King!</p> | <p>3. Father-like he tends and spares us;<br/>well our feeble frame he knows.<br/>In his hand he gently bears us,<br/>rescues us from all our foes.<br/>Praise him, praise him,<br/>praise him, praise him,<br/>widely as his mercy flows!</p> |
| <p>2. Praise him for his grace and favour<br/>to his people in distress.<br/>Praise him, still the same as ever,<br/>slow to chide, and swift to bless.<br/>Praise him, praise him,<br/>praise him, praise him,<br/>praise him for his faithfulness!</p>     | <p>4. Angels, help us to adore him;<br/>ye behold him face to face.<br/>Sun and moon bow down before him,<br/>dwellers all in time and space.<br/>Praise him, praise him,<br/>praise him, praise him,<br/>Praise with us the God of grace</p>  |

### Bible Reading – Genesis 3:1-17 (NIV)

*Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’”<sup>2</sup> The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,<sup>3</sup> but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”*

<sup>4</sup> “You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. <sup>5</sup> “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” <sup>6</sup> When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. <sup>7</sup> Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

<sup>8</sup> Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. <sup>9</sup> But the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?” <sup>10</sup> He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.” <sup>11</sup> And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?” <sup>12</sup> The man said, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.” <sup>13</sup> Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

<sup>14</sup> So the LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, “Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. <sup>15</sup> And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”

<sup>16</sup> To the woman he said, “I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labour you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.” <sup>17</sup> To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat from it,’ “Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life. <sup>18</sup> It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. <sup>19</sup> By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.”

## Announcements for 19<sup>th</sup> September

**NSW School Holidays.** Many of our regular activities in the Church will go into recess over the next two weeks. Activities like SPARKLERS, IMPACT and Home Groups will start back again in early October. The Church would like to thank all those who are keeping these ministries going under difficult conditions – we really appreciate all your hard work. Please pray that a two-week break will recharge all our batteries so we can minister to one another effectively when term 4 begins.

**Focus for the month – Family Prayer.** Through September, we are encouraging families or couples to pray together on a regular basis. Why would we do that? Because kids need to learn about prayer and the prayer is often best caught rather than taught! And couples deepen their relationship with each other and with the Lord when they pray together. So why not have an aim to pray together one or two times a week to begin with. Set a time, a place and begin. And once a routine has been established maybe over time you could increase its frequency.

**COVID Regulations.** There is great excitement and trepidation about our lockdown ending in the middle of October. Excitement because most of us are sick of COVID and want to find a way forward. And trepidation because the NSW Government has said that only fully vaccinated people will be able to return to their normal activities (such as restaurants, movies, hairdressers and churches) As a church we are working through how we might respond to these changes. On the one hand we want to keep people safe. And on the other we don't want to exclude anyone from worship. This will be a highly divisive issue for our Church (and every Church) and we need to work hard to be unified as we approach a solution. The denomination has called for a special meeting in early October to discuss it. And our elders are currently discussing our options. So please pray that we might may make wise decisions.

**Keeping in Touch.** How are you going with keeping in touch with others from our Church? Some people are really well connected and will have plenty of contact while others haven't established good links with in the Church as yet. It would be great to make sure that everyone gets at least some contact each week. See Stephen if you would like to reach out to at least one other.

### **Christmas Boxes for Operation Christmas Child**

It looks like our two options have become one option because of the extended lockdown in the Hunter! So, if you would like to be involved this year through the Church then the only way is to pay money to OCC for the box and its contents. If you would like to do this then please transfer \$20 per box to church account. (\$10 for postage and \$10 to have box filled) BSB 062 829, Number 1019 4850 Reference: OCC and you name (name is optional). Leila Fells from OCC will fill boxes on your behalf. There may be other ways to collect and fill a box but if you want to go down that path then you will need to do this independently.

**Facebook/Video Services.** If you have enjoyed a sermon or service why not post a response? Or tell us what you liked about it. The more we interact in this way, the more we encourage those who are working hard for each other and the way the Facebook algorithm works, the wider the video is distributed to others.

**Taylors are on holidays** until next Saturday. If you need pastoral help, please contact Jon or one of the elders.

## **Song – I will wait for you**

[I Will Wait for You \(Psalm 130\) \(Official Lyric Video\) - Keith & Kristyn Getty - YouTube](#)

*INTRO Lord, from the depths I call to You*

*Lord, hear me from on high*

*And give attention to my voice*

*When I for mercy cry*

1. Out of the depths I cry to You  
In darkest places I will call  
Incline Your ear to me anew  
And hear my cry for mercy, Lord

2. Were You to count my sinful ways  
How could I come before Your throne  
Yet full forgiveness meets my gaze  
I stand redeemed by grace alone

3. So put your hope in God alone  
Take courage in His power to save  
Completely and forever won  
By Christ emerging from the grave

4. Now He has come to make a way  
And God Himself has paid the price  
That all who trust in Him today  
Find healing in His sacrifice

### **CHORUS**

**I will wait for You**

**I will wait for You**

**On Your word, I will rely**

**I will wait for You**

**Surely wait for You**

**Till my soul is satisfied**

### *OUTRO*

*I pray my soul waits for the Lord*

*My hope is in His word*

*More than the watchman waits for dawn*

*My soul waits for the Lord*

## Family Matters (Suzie C).

Hi everyone, as you know, our focus for the month of September is family prayer. I love the verse from 1 Thessalonians 5:17 that says "Pray continually." This is a great challenge for me and all of us in our personal prayer lives and also for prayer in our families.

Last week, Stephen talked about starting out our family prayers with a one sentence prayer each. How did you go with that? He then suggested a way to extend this for each person in our families to say 4 one sentence prayers based on the word ACTS (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication). I have another idea to add to this for this week. It is for you and your family to make lots of times and places in your day to say your one sentence family prayers or your 4 one sentence family prayers.

Let's be honest, our days are busy and have lots of challenges, but being able to pray often as a family as we walk through each day with God is a very special gift he has given to us. Here are 10 tips of how I say lots of prayers throughout my day with my family. You can adapt it to your situation in life as a single, couple, family with young kids, a family with older kids or as grandparents with grandchildren.

### 10 Tips:

1. Start each day praying with your spouse. This is a wonderful way to bond together. Aaron and I have grown in this area over the last year and it is a true blessing to start each day together focusing on God in prayer.
2. At breakfast, say grace together, but also use this time with the kids to say a prayer for the day ahead and commit each person in your family to God as they head into their day.
3. If the kids have something that is difficult or important on that day, pray with them before they leave home or in the car going to school asking God to be with them.
4. Then pray for your kids while at school. Leave a note in their lunchbox saying you will be praying for them or text them to let them know you are praying for them.
5. If you are struggling with something throughout the day, ask your family to stop and pray together asking for God's help.
6. If you don't have certain family members living with you, e.g., your parents or a child who has left home, ring them to share with them and ask how you can be praying for them. Then pray together over the phone.
7. Family devotions is a great time to have family prayer together. It is always great having each person in the family pray, even when they are super young. Over the years, the kids gradually grow in their own prayer life as they learn from family members how to pray.
8. Pray with your kids before they go to sleep.
9. Pray with your spouse before you go to sleep.
10. Finally, remember to thank God for answered prayer with your family. A suggestion is to write down your prayer points and then tick them when they have been answered so you can all see how God answers prayers. When your child says something went well in their day, praise God in prayer with them then and there.

So, these are 10 ways I thought of how to pray in more times and places as a family. Think through your day in your family and see where you could add prayer to your family routine. It's going to look different for each family, but being intentional about it means it is more likely to happen. The best way to pass your faith on to your kids is to let them see you live your faith out in action. Letting them see prayer be a part of your walk with God and including them in this often throughout your day is such a beautiful gift you can give to your kids.

## Pastoral Prayer (Steve McA)

*Our Heavenly Father, as we come together today in fellowship, we praise you with all of our hearts, and are indebted to you for all of your tremendous blessings. You have shown your great love for us, you care for us, and you have provided for all of our needs. For this, we are forever grateful, and we delight in the fact that you listen to and answer our prayers.*

*For our world Lord, we pray for the country of Afghanistan. We pray that the Taliban will be moderate with their decisions, and they will continue to allow the citizens the freedoms that they have enjoyed in recent years. We pray for safety for the citizens, and we think especially of our fellow Christian brothers and sisters in Afghanistan that you will protect them and help them to hold firm to their faith in these difficult times.*

*And Lord, we pray for those who seek to spread your word throughout the world. We pray for our missionary families, that you will continue to support them in their work and help to sustain them as they face lengthy periods away from their families. We also pray that you will encourage them in their work, help them to build relationships with their communities, and that you will give them the opportunity to tell those that they meet, about your great love for them.*

*For our nation Lord, we pray for the growing number of people who are struggling because of the Covid pandemic. Whether it's those who have lost income or their businesses, those who are facing homelessness, those who are feeling isolated and lonely or apart from their family, or those who are suffering mentally, we ask that you give them the strength that they need to get through these challenges. And we pray that freedoms may soon be restored, so that we can reconnect with each other and support each other. And we pray for the leaders throughout our nation that you will give them wisdom as they make the difficult decisions regarding the lockdowns, and balancing the competing priorities of keeping people safe and opening up. And for those leaders who know you Lord, we pray that you will help them to keep firm to their faith, that they will continue to put you first, rather than the desires of their political party, and that they will be effective witnesses amongst their colleagues.*

*And Lord we pray that you will continue to strengthen our Church, and other churches throughout our nation. With churches unable to meet face-to-face, it has been difficult sustaining the regular worship during these times. We pray that you will be with the ministers, continue to encourage them in the work that they do, and help the churches to adjust to the changing public health requirements. We thank you for the tireless work that Stephen and John undertake at our Church, and pray that they will feel supported and see the fruits of their labours.*

*And finally, Lord, we ask that you will be with us and help us to continue to focus on you, even though we are not able to all come together to worship you. We pray that we will spend time reading your Word and speaking to you in prayer, that we will encourage each other, and that we will use opportunities to tell those who don't know you, about your saving grace, in order to bring you the glory that you deserve. And we ask all of this in your Son's glorious name. Amen*

## Bible Reading – Colossians 2:13-15 (NIV)

*<sup>13</sup> When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, <sup>14</sup> having cancelled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. <sup>15</sup> And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.”*

## Sermon – The Marks of Evil (Paul B) <https://youtu.be/ux0L-TCzs08>

In May 1942 the Nazis opened 1 of their 6 death camps at a place called Sobibor in Poland and over the next 18 months killed an estimated ¼ million people, mainly Jews and mainly in gas chambers. However, by October of 1943 the camp was ordered to be destroyed as the Nazis didn't want it to be discovered. They wanted the horror of the gas chambers to be a story never told.

Nowadays, a forest has grown over the camp, just like forests all over Poland. Yet, there is one unique thing about the area - there are no birds living in the area of the camp. In the trees where the camp is, you will not hear birds and the curators from the memorial at Sobibor have no idea why, it's just unnaturally quiet. They suspect it may have something to do with the gas and sense of death. But they don't know. And this is not a unique case, it is repeated at several death sites worldwide. Evil leaves a mark, particularly great acts of evil.

Now at first calling the sin of Adam and Eve as a 'great evil' may seem a bit extreme. We've moved on from that. "Sin" is now some religious term from a past era when people cared a little too much about that God stuff. But not us in modern society. There's a new Stan series called "It's a Sin", and the whole angle of the show is to mock the Christian belief that homosexuality is a sin. ABC radio had a segment where people called in and told their favourite little sins. However, if you don't understand the nature of sin, then none of the rest of the Bible is that relevant.

Today we're going to examine the Fall in Genesis 3, focusing on the nature of sin, the consequences of sin, and finally the conqueror of sin.

### 1. The Nature of Sin

There are several key features of the nature of sin that we learn from verses 1-6. Firstly, sin is an attack on God's Word. Verses 1-3: *Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"* <sup>2</sup> *The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,* <sup>3</sup> *but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"*

Notice Satan doesn't come out with a full-blown attack on God, he starts slowly. Satan's first attack is on God's Word and it appears innocent enough. Maybe he just wants clarification. But behind Satan's question is a trick to figure out just how devoted Adam and Eve are to following God's Word. And it is very interesting that Eve adds something to God's command. God never said they couldn't touch the tree. If you look at chapter 2:17 there is no mention of not touching. Many commentators say this indicates that already Eve considers God's Word as something that can be added to with our human wisdom. And this something repeatedly condemned throughout the Bible.

For example, in Deuteronomy 4:2 *"You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you."* And again, in Revelation 22:18-19 *"I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book."*

But how often do we find ourselves or the church thinking they are wiser than God in His Word. The issues of hell, homosexuality, the inerrancy of the Bible, abortion, sexual immorality – all these issues which are addressed in God's Word (and I think pretty clearly) but there is anything but clarity when we look to the church for guidance. Why? God's Word is good for us when we want it to be, when we like what it says but when we don't, we'll just add a little bit of our wisdom to help God out. God clearly didn't anticipate our

21<sup>st</sup> century values, so I'll help him out. And this is what Eve appears to be doing – she is losing her obedience to God's Word.

Secondly, it is in sin's nature to attack God's goodness <sup>4</sup>“*You will not certainly die,*” *the serpent said to the woman.* <sup>5</sup>“*For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.*”

Satan is casting doubt on God's goodness, that God is holding joy and happiness from you by not letting you have what you want. How many today both in and out of the church think that is what following God is about? God is just a kill-joy. Following the God of the Bible leads to a boring, restrictive, rule-following, slavish life. God's way isn't good because God doesn't get you. God is holding out on you. Brad Pitt reject Christianity because he found following God “stifling” – who wants to follow rules?

Lastly, sin always presents itself as more enjoyable or at least convenient than Godliness. When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

Notice the fruit, the sin, is rationalised. It's “good for food”. It's just food, nothing wrong with that. We need food. It's food. What's the big deal. We rationalise sin all the time. That guy is annoying so he deserves it. I didn't sleep well so I was a little testy. And the fruit is also presented as pleasurable. This is the root of sin, God isn't as good as sex, or porn, or getting drunk, or bullying, or being popular, whatever. Sin is better, more desirable. Ironically, there is no indication that the fruit on this tree is any better, it's just Eve thinks it looks better in that moment.

John Piper: “The Fall has left us deeply dysfunctional emotionally. We're excited by trivia and bored by grandeur.”

So, what are the consequences? If the idea of sin is mocked today, then the idea that sin has consequences in real life is just flat out rejected. That's not how our world works. This is not some cure Sunday School story, with sinister looking snakes and conveniently place branches and leaves. The consequences of the Fall are still with us today.

## 2. The Consequences of Sin

Firstly, for all its promises of joy and great knowledge, for Adam and Eve their first experience is guilt and shame. <sup>7</sup>“*Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.*” <sup>8</sup>“*Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden.*” <sup>9</sup>“*But the Lord God called to the man, “Where are you?”*”

Their first reaction to sin is not joy but shame. Shame is the universal feeling for sin and it is an indicator that there is a break between us and God and that we're guilty.

**There is a Jewish tradition** that after they're expelled from the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve were so consumed by their guilt and their broken relationship with God that they hid themselves in a dark cave, so consumed by their shame that they couldn't even look at each other. Most likely the story isn't historically true, but that's not the point of the story anyway, the story shows the way humans often deal with their feelings of shame and guilt – they hide away from it, hide away from the consequences and anyone involved in it.

Charles Spurgeon: *“Nothing can be more horrible, out of hell, than to have an awakened conscience but not a reconciled God—to see sin, yet not see the Saviour—to behold the deadly disease in all its loathsomeness, but not trust the good Physician, and so to have no hope of ever being healed of our malady. I would bear any affliction rather than be burdened with a guilty conscience.”* Guilt is our first reward for sinning.

Secondly, the destruction of relationships. *“He answered I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.”* <sup>11</sup> *And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?”* <sup>12</sup> *The man said, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.”*

First thing Adam does when confronted is blame Eve. Having broken their relationship with God, now their relationship with each other is broken. We avoid taking the blame for something like the plague. And it’s one thing we naturally do. If you’re a parent you’ll know this, but I have never taught my kids how to sin or blame someone else. But they do it.

But he’s actually doing more than this. Adam is actually blaming God. *“The women YOU put here with me”*. Whose idea was it to make Eve? Not Adam’s, God’s. And now Adam is essentially saying *“Great idea champ, that’s worked out well.”* I was fine by myself but you had to make her and look what happened. Notice the idea that God isn’t good has immediately reared its head in how Adam interacts with God. God mustn’t be good, because you gave me Eve and look how well that turned out.

Thirdly, we live in a cursed world. We often talk about a broken world, but it’s more than that. If things are broken, we can fix it. But if the world is cursed, only God can fix it. We’ll come back to verses 14-15 at the end. *“To the woman he said, “I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labour you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.”*

<sup>17</sup> *To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat from it,’ “Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life. <sup>18</sup> It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. <sup>19</sup> By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.”*

The point of the curses on Eve and Adam is not that only mothers and farmers have hard times but the rest of us get off scot-free. Part of what it means I think it links in to God commission to Adam and Eve in chapter 1:28 *“God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”*

So just after creating mankind, God commissions them to be fruitful and subdue the earth. Now in chapter 3 you have curses which make the being fruitful part more difficult, as women will have pain in childbirth. So, every birth is a reminder of the curse. And subduing the earth will now be a constant reminder of the curse, as God promises that *“Cursed is the ground because of you, through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life. <sup>18</sup> It will produce thorns and thistles for you and you will eat the plants of the field.”*

Now the earth itself will resist mankind’s subduing. Paul makes this clear in Romans 8:20 *“For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it”*. The earth is working against us. So, the first great commission to fill the earth and subdue it now becomes a constantly reminder of our break from God.

But not only that. I'd also add that there is now a futility to life and work. In and of itself it's pointless. You work all your life to then die. There are real life consequences for our rejection of God. But there is one section we skipped over, the only glimmer of hope in this chapter.

### 3. The Conqueror of Sin

*“So, the Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, “Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. <sup>15</sup> And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”*

This isn't about the natural conflict between humans and snakes. I hate snakes, probably the only phobia I have. If someone came in here with a gun I'd protect you, but if a snake came in, I would sacrifice you all. But it's not about that. The key verse is 15: *“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”*

Here we have a promise, a promise someday a man will come who will conquer the snake, who will defeat Satan and all that Satan offers to us. And whilst the figure in Genesis is ambiguous, we know just who and how this has been done.

1 John 3:8 *“The one who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.”*

So, the 'seed', Christ, has come to destroy the work of the devil. What does that mean? So, if the 'seed' is going to crush Satan, then the seed is going to restore what Satan and sin have destroyed. What I mean is, if sin questions God's Word, the seed obeys God's Word. If sin doubts God's goodness, then the seed trusts God's goodness. And if sin offers more pleasure than God, the seed knows God is more pleasurable.

And in Colossians 2:15 we see the mean which Christ has done this: <sup>15</sup>*“And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.”*

This is why we are a cross-centred church. That's why we need to be cross-centred people. The cross is everything. This is why Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:18 *“For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God”. The world still finds the Christian message of the cross foolish. They call it child-abuse and archaic. But not us. Because the cross dealt with our greatest problem.”*

Jews in the 1<sup>st</sup> century thought Roman occupation was the greatest problem and people in the 21<sup>st</sup> century think its racism or climate change or social media. JFK, in typical modern gibberish and arrogance, once said *“Our problems are manmade--therefore, they can be solved by man. And man can be as big as he wants. No problem of human destiny is beyond human beings.”*

But this is a misdiagnosis. Our love of sin over God is our problem, in all its various manifestations. But God doesn't abandon us in our sin. Notice even in Genesis 3 that it's God who looks for Adam and Eve. He says “Where are you?” not because he doesn't know where they are but because He's showing them and us that He's coming for them. So, God sends Jesus, the snake crushing seed of Genesis 3, who has come to destroy the power of sin and the devil through the power of the cross. As it is on the cross that Jesus bears consequence of our sin and once and for all breaks the power and appeal of sin for all who believe.

## Song – The power of the Cross

[The Power of the Cross \(Official Lyric Video\) - Keith & Kristyn Getty - YouTube](#)

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| <p>1. Oh to see the dawn of the darkest day<br/>Christ on the road to Calvary<br/>Tried by sinful men, torn and beaten then<br/>Nailed to the cross of wood</p>       | <p>3. Now the day light flees, now the ground beneath<br/>Quakes as its maker bows his head<br/>Curtain torn in two, dead are raised to life<br/>Finished, the victory cry</p>    |
| <p>2. Oh to see the pain written on your face<br/>Bearing the awesome weight of sin<br/>Every bitter thought every evil deed<br/>Crowning your blood-stained brow</p> | <p>4. Oh to see my name written in the wounds<br/>For through your suffering I am free<br/>Death is crushed to death, life is mine to live<br/>Won through your selfless love</p> |

*Chorus: This the power of the cross  
Christ became sin for us, took the blame,  
bore the wrath  
We stand forgiven at the cross*

## Benediction

*This, the power of the cross:  
Son of God, slain for us.  
What a love! What a cost!  
We stand forgiven at the cross.*

Thank you for joining us at church today. It's great to hear from God's word gathered together from our lounge rooms and studies across Newcastle and Lake Macquarie.

Let's finish our time in prayer.

Heavenly Father,  
We see the depths of our sin  
We see the consequences of our sin  
We thank you, for your risen son, our Lord Jesus, the conqueror of sin.  
In his name we pray  
Amen.

## Morning Tea

There is no physical morning tea allowed at the moment but why not give someone a call instead? Who might your ring now? Maybe the person you are hoping to keep in touch with?