



Belonging to Bundy

Why “Belonging to Bundy” and any talk of membership?

This is a helpful question because it reminds us that according to the New Testament to be a believer in Christ is already to be a member (or part) of the body of Christ. To be baptized by Jesus with His Spirit is to have been baptized into one body (1 Corinthians 12:12-13). We have an obligatory relationship with other believers because of this, and the health and growth of the whole depends upon each of us using what Christ has entrusted to us to build up the whole (Romans 12:4-5, 1 Corinthians 12:13-27, Ephesians 4:15-16). This membership of Christ’s body, which in Romans and 1 Corinthians is thought of as the local congregation that gathers together week by week, carries the obligation of loving service and speaking the truth to one another (Ephesians 4:25), and of godly living (Ephesians 5:30, 1 Corinthians 6:15).

Being a member is something a Christian is just by being a Christian, and we should already be expressing this membership by gathering week by week with other believers, serving them with our gifts, seeking to build them up in the faith. So perhaps a better question to ask is *why formal membership?* Why have a process where we publicly profess our faith before the congregation, commit ourselves to living our Christian lives in this particular congregation, and have our names entered into a members’ roll? This, after all, is not something we see either by command or example in the New Testament. It is a human practice in the sense that it has its origins in human structures and needs. That is true, but it is a useful human practice that can serve more fundamental, scriptural, purposes – the maintenance of the teaching of the truth of the gospel in the congregation, and the encouragement of all to keep persevering in the Christian life as a life of service and godliness – and has become necessary because of certain features of our society.

In the New Testament there was a public profession of faith – baptism. That took place at the beginning of a believer’s new life in Christ, and carried with it inclusion in the body of Christ and a commitment to discharge the responsibilities of being a follower of Christ. Those in the local Christian community in which the baptism took place knew the new person’s profession of faith, and knew they were committed to each other on the basis of a common confession of Jesus. Most people, barring persecution or tumult, would then live out their Christian lives in the community in which they were baptized, in which there was usually only one Christian community even if it might have had several

meeting places in the town. But our society is characterized by mobility, a confusing plurality of Christian communities, and increasingly by a diffidence about commitment.

It is these developments that formal membership addresses. We are mobile. That means that we might leave the congregation in which we have already professed our faith (by baptism or profession of faith) and move to another location for work or study. We are also mobile in the sense that we can travel outside our local area to find a church. As a result of this mobility we might be going to church with others whose understanding of and commitment to the faith we don't know, and who don't know ours. A formal membership process addresses that, giving opportunity to those we meet with to know that we are committed to the faith and share a common understanding of its content. This promotes trust, and it maintains our character as a confessing fellowship, that is people who meet together on the basis of a shared understanding of the gospel and a commitment to the Jesus of the gospel as our Lord.

Mobility also creates choice in a context of a confusing plurality of Christian denominations. This has at least two effects. Firstly, congregations need an opportunity to inform those interested in joining them of the core convictions that are the foundation of the congregation's life so that the choice of those new to the congregation can be clearly informed for not all congregations are the same as to either belief or practice. A membership course gives that opportunity. Secondly, and negatively, this reality of choice can contribute to a consumer mindset that can undermine the kind of commitment the New Testament expects believers who are members of one body to show to each other. As a consumer our focus can be on ourselves, our own satisfaction, what we can get out of the meeting and when it ceases to meet our needs or we find it too challenging we move on. In the face of consumer pressure the gathering then becomes a kind of performance catering to consumer preferences, and the common life a kind of service organization maintained by the committed but used by others. This is the exact opposite of the way the New Testament expects believers to relate to each other, can exhaust communities and can be powerfully corrupting of the faithful teaching of God's word. Believers are meant to serve one another in love, to seek the health and growth of the whole, to feel the pain and joy of others with whom they meet (1 Cor. 12:26), and to accept responsibility for each other's perseverance (Heb. 3:12-14). Consumerism is a mindset that defeats the love that Christ says should characterize His people. And consumerism can undermine the faithful teaching of God's word which we all need if we are to grow in faith and godliness and others are to be saved (2 Timothy 4:2-4). Formal membership is a means of addressing and rejecting this

mindset for it makes explicit both what is expected of believers in their relationships with each other and the member's commitment to living that way in his or her relating to the congregation.

Formal membership also addresses the diffidence that many feel about commitment to anything these days. Commitments carry obligations and many seek to minimize their obligations. This reluctance to commit is a powerful cultural force supported by other accepted ideas in our community. Freedom, which is seen as a good in itself, is understood as being unconstrained by external obligation, free from responsibilities. We fear being 'unfree' in the sense of tied up in commitments, but for the Christian the freedom that matters is freedom to choose and persevere in the good. Accepting the responsibility to love and serve our brothers and sisters is an expression of, not the enemy of, freedom (Galatians 5:13). Faith matters are also relegated to the sphere of the private and personal in our society, and the sphere of the private and personal is meant to be the sphere of our control, where we can make choices to realize our own preferences. So we are reluctant to make commitments in 'faith' that carry obligations to people who are unlike us and may drain us, and to any external authority like the leadership of a congregation, even though the Lord gives us shepherds for our good (Hebrews 13:17, Acts 20:28). Formal membership is countercultural, addressing this diffidence, this reluctance head on, insisting that the proper disposition of a believer is to be committed to other believers, and that commitment must be concrete, to a particular congregation made up of all sorts of people, chosen not by us but by God.

It is helpful to us and to the rest of the congregation we meet with to make this commitment explicit in membership. It clarifies the basis of our meeting together – a common understanding of the Christian faith, and of authority in the Christian faith (the Bible) to which we can turn when there are issues to address or differences to resolve. It clarifies that the Christian life is to be lived together where we are committed to serve one another in love, practicing the teaching on relating to each other given in the New Testament. It clarifies our relationship to the leaders of the congregation (the elders) and accepts their role to pastor us for our good as given by God. And it indicates our acceptance of responsibility to actively maintain our own faith so that we can be of help to others, to actively maintain the teaching of the truth in the congregation by teaching it ourselves and choosing when the necessity arises godly leadership, and to actively maintain the reputation of Christ in the community by encouraging godliness in each other. The articulated commitment of 'formal membership' helps to create a context in which we can keep on speaking the 'truth in love' to each other. A human practice, but a helpful one.

The Belonging to Bundy course

This course is not for someone who is seeking to find out more about Christianity. If that is your situation it is better to go to a 'Simply Christianity' group and read through the gospel of Luke together to find out more about Jesus.

This course is not for those who have grown up in the congregation and are preparing to profess their faith in Christ for the first time. There is a more extensive preparation course for those who are coming to the point where they commit themselves to accept adult responsibility for their own Christian faith and for their participation in the congregation.

This course is a course for those already Christian who have experienced something of BPC and are wondering whether this is the congregation to which the Lord would have them commit themselves to live the Christian life.

Over seven weeks we will share the core convictions we have about what Christians believe and how Christians behave. It is not a complete outline of Christian belief, but those aspects of belief and behavior we assume are accepted by all who participate in our common life, to which we make frequent reference in our gatherings and by which we measure what we say and do. In dealing with them here we aim to establish and maintain a common mind amongst us about what matters, and about what we can expect in our gatherings and from our interactions with each other.



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Session 1

Who is Jesus?



Read Acts 2:14-40

¹⁴ Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. ¹⁵ These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning! ¹⁶ No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ ““In the last days, God says,
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your young men will see visions,
your old men will dream dreams.

¹⁸ Even on my servants, both men and women,
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,
and they will prophesy.

¹⁹ I will show wonders in the heavens above
and signs on the earth below,
blood and fire and billows of smoke.

²⁰ The sun will be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood
before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.

²¹ And everyone who calls
on the name of the Lord will be saved.’ (Joel 2:28-32)

²² “Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. ²³ This man was handed over to you by God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. ²⁴ But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. ²⁵ David said about him:

““I saw the Lord always before me.
Because he is at my right hand,
I will not be shaken.

²⁶ Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices;
my body also will rest in hope,

²⁷ because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead,
you will not let your holy one see decay.

²⁸ You have made known to me the paths of life;
you will fill me with joy in your presence.’ (Psalm 16:8-11)

²⁹ “Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. ³⁰ But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. ³¹ Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay. ³² God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. ³³ Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. ³⁴ For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said,

“The Lord said to my Lord:

“Sit at my right hand

³⁵ until I make your enemies
a footstool for your feet.” (Psalm 110:1)

³⁶ “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”

³⁷ When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

³⁸ Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

⁴⁰ With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.”

1. According to this passage from Acts, who is Jesus?

v. 22

v. 23

v. 24

v. 33

v. 36

Jesus is _____ and _____ .

Read Philippians 2:5-11

⁵ In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

⁶ Who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

⁷ rather, he made himself nothing
by taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.

⁸ And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to death—
even death on a cross!

⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,

¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹ and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Read Hebrews 1:1 -14

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. ³ The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. ⁴ So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

⁵ For to which of the angels did God ever say,
“You are my Son;
today I have become your Father”? (Psalm 2:7)

Or again,

“I will be his Father,
and he will be my Son”? (2 Samuel 7:14, 1 Chronicles 17:13)

⁶ And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says,
“Let all God's angels worship him.” (Deut 32:43)

⁷ In speaking of the angels he says,
“He makes his angels spirits,
and his servants flames of fire.” (Psalm 104:4)

⁸ But about the Son he says,

“Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever;
a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom.
⁹ You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;
therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions
by anointing you with the oil of joy.” (Psalm 45:6,7)
¹⁰ He also says,
“In the beginning, Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth,
and the heavens are the work of your hands.
¹¹ They will perish, but you remain;
they will all wear out like a garment.
¹² You will roll them up like a robe;
like a garment they will be changed.
But you remain the same,
and your years will never end.” (Psalm 102:25-27)
¹³ To which of the angels did God ever say,
“Sit at my right hand
until I make your enemies
a footstool for your feet”? (Psalm 110:1)
¹⁴ Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit
salvation?

2. According to these bible passages, what is the Christian conviction about Jesus?

3. Who is God?

Acts 2:33

³³ Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.

John 14-16

Matthew 28:18-20

¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

4. How should we respond to Jesus?

Acts 2:38-40

³⁸ Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

⁴⁰ With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.”

What is repentance? (Luke 5:31-32, Acts 17:30-31)

What is Christian faith? (Romans 4:16-25)

What is promised to all who repent and believe?

How do we know we have the Spirit of God? (1 Corinthians 12:3, Romans 8:9-17, Galatians 5:16-26, 1 Thessalonians 1:4-6)

Summary

- This session we have looked at our conviction about who Jesus is: A real man who was crucified, buried and raised, the Lord and Christ, Son of God, Saviour.
- Who God is revealed in God's saving through Jesus is: one God, Father, Son and Spirit
- The universal Christian experience: The Christian life as one of repentance and faith
- The gift Christ gives to all Christians: The Holy Spirit, the source and power of our new life in Christ

But we have not yet spoken of why Jesus had to be crucified, nor of why God has acted to save us. We will cover that next session.

For next session

Read Romans 3:9-31 (if you have time you could read all of Romans chapters 1-3)



Session 2

Why the death of Jesus?



Questions from Session 1

- Why did Jesus have to be crucified?
- Why has God acted to save us?

Read Romans 3:9-20

What shall we conclude then? Do we have any advantage? Not at all! For we have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under the power of sin. ¹⁰ As it is written:

“There is no one righteous, not even one;

¹¹ there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God.

¹² All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.” (Psalms 14:1-3, 53:1-3, Ecclesiastes 7:20)

¹³ “Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit.” (Psalms 5:9)

“The poison of vipers is on their lips.” (Psalm 140:3)

¹⁴ “Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.” (Psalm 10:7)

¹⁵ “Their feet are swift to shed blood;

¹⁶ ruin and misery mark their ways,

¹⁷ and the way of peace they do not know.” (Isaiah 59:7,8)

¹⁸ “There is no fear of God before their eyes.” (Psalm 36:1)

¹⁹ Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. ²⁰ Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God’s sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin.

1. What is wrong with humanity? Why are we the way we are?

a. What is sin?

b. Who sins?

c. What are the consequences of sin?

d. Are we able to undo those consequences by ourselves?

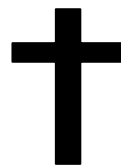
Read Romans 3:21-26

²¹ But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify.²² This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile,²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,²⁴ and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.²⁵ God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—²⁶ he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

2. What is it to be ‘justified’?**3. How does Jesus ‘redeem’ us?**

- a. What does it mean to say Jesus is a ‘sacrifice of atonement (propitiation) by His blood’ v. 25?
- b. Who provided that propitiation?

God



- c. Is there any other way to escape sin and its consequences besides Jesus’ death?

4. Why does God justify us?

Read Ephesians 2:1-10

¹ As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ² in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. ³ All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. ⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

a. What is grace?

b. What can we do to bring about God’s grace?

Read Romans 3:27-4:8

Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. Because of what law? The law that requires works? No, because of the law that requires faith. ²⁸ For we maintain that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law. ²⁹ Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles too? Yes, of Gentiles too, ³⁰ since there is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith. ³¹ Do we, then, nullify the law by this faith? Not at all! Rather, we uphold the law.

^{4:1} What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, discovered in this matter? ² If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about—but not before God. ³ What does Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”

⁴ Now to the one who works, wages are not credited as a gift but as an obligation. ⁵ However, to the one who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness. ⁶ David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the one to whom God credits righteousness apart from works:

⁷ “Blessed are those whose transgressions are forgiven,
whose sins are covered.

⁸ Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord will never count against them.”

c. What does Paul contrast with the way of grace and faith in Romans 3:27-4:8?

5. What do you think a church looks like that is “justified by works”?

6. How does a commitment to being “saved by grace through faith” affect the way we relate as a church:

a. To one another “inside” the church?

b. And those “outside” the church?

Summary

- **Sin:** We are all sinners, and this is the human problem. Our sin has alienated us from God, our sin means we are condemned in His just judgement and our sin has enslaved us to death. Because of our sin we cannot save ourselves.
- **Jesus’ death for our sin, in our place, is the sacrifice that turns God’s just anger away from us and sets us free from condemnation and death.** Through trusting Him in His death for us (i.e. through faith in Him) we are justified in God’s judgement. There is no other way for us to escape the consequences of our sin.
- **Grace:** God saves us because He freely chooses to do so. His grace is an expression of His love and mercy, not earned or deserved by us. Our works contribute nothing to our justification. The good works we are to do flow from being justified by grace through faith, and are not the cause of our justification. We cannot boast – all the glory is God’s.

For next session

We are basing all our teachings on the Scripture (The Bible). Are we right to treat the Scripture as the Word of God?

Research: What is Jesus' attitude to the Scriptures?

Consider the following:

- 1. His personal submission in daily patterns** (Luke 2:22, 4:16, 5:14), in temptation (Matthew 4:1-11, Luke 4:1-13).
- 2. His commitment to the fulfilment of Scripture** (Luke 4:18,21, Matthew. 8:16f, 11:4-6, 10. Especially in relation to his death Mark. 8:31 [dei], Luke. 18:31-33, 22:37, Matthew 26:24, 31, 56; Luke 24:25-27, 44, 46; Even from the cross – Matthew 27:46 – Psalm 22:1, Luke 23:46 – Psalm 31:5)
- 3. His use in speech and teaching.** Jesus' language is rich in Old Testament allusion (Mark 8:18 – Jeremiah 5:21, Mark 9:48 – Isaiah 66:24, the Beatitudes). He appeals to it for ethical instruction (Matthew 22:37-40, 19:18-19, 5:17-18, 7:12) and as authoritative in conflict (divorce Matthew 19, duty to parents Mark 7, resurrection Matthew 22:32, the Davidic Messiah - Matthew 22:41-45). Jesus lived and taught in an atmosphere of controversy where his opponents were keen bible students, and the basis of argument was differing interpretation of the Scriptures. He never rejected their appeal to Scripture. Rather he questioned both their understanding of and submission to it. He makes allusions to historical figures and events in the Old Testament – Abraham John 8:56, Isaac and Jacob Matthew 8:11, Luke 13:28, Lot's wife Luke 17:28-32, Noah Matthew 24:37-39, Luke 17:26-27, Manna John 6:31, Moses John 6:32, Matthew 8:4, events in the life of David Matthew 12:3-4, Matthew 22:43, the grandeur of Solomon Matthew 6:29, 12:42, Elijah and Elisha Luke 4:25-27, Jonah Matthew 12:39-41, Luke. 11:29-32, Sodom and Gomorrah Matthew 10:15, 11:23-24, Luke 10:12)
- 4. His teaching on His own significance.** See 2 above, his use of the Son of Man sayings, comparison to temple Jn. 2, Moses Jn.6
- 5. Jesus' direct statements concerning the Old Testament.** (Matthew 5:17-18, 19:4-8, Mark. 7:1-13, 12:24, Johnn. 10:35, 5:39-40, 45-47).

Jesus' Scripture was what we call the Old Testament of the Bible. Should we give the same status to the New Testament?



Session 3

Why the Bible?



1. How are we called into relationship with God?
2. How do we know as followers of Jesus what we ought to believe or do?
3. How do we settle differences and disputes between us?

The Christian Starting Point

God Speaks – Exodus 4:11, Psalm 115 (God has repeatedly made Himself known to particular people at particular times and places. God spoke to Adam in the garden (Genesis 2:16), He instructed Noah (Genesis 6:13), and spoke with Abraham (Gen. 12:1), Jacob (28:13), and Moses (Exodus 3). He spoke with Gideon (Judges 6:12, 7:4,9) and David (1 Samuel 23:2), and with the prophets, e.g. Samuel (1 Samuel 3), Elijah (1 Kings 17:2), Isaiah 1:2, Jeremiah 1:4 ff., Ezekiel 2, 12:1, Amos 3:1, Hosea 4:1. Thus scripture very clearly claims that God has made Himself known to both individuals and to the people of Israel e.g. Sinai Exodus 20:18-19, Deuteronomy 4:10-14).

God spoken to us by His Son – Hebrews 1:1-2, John 5:24, John 1:18, John 12:44-50

Read Hebrews 1:1 -2

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.

Read John 12:44-50

Then Jesus cried out, “Whoever believes in me does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me.”⁴⁵ The one who looks at me is seeing the one who sent me.⁴⁶ I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.⁴⁷ “If anyone hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge that person. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world.⁴⁸ There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; the very words I have spoken will condemn them at the last day.⁴⁹ For I did not speak on my own, but the Father who sent me commanded me to say all that I have spoken.⁵⁰ I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say.”

We hear the Son through the witness of the apostles Jesus sent into the world - Hebrews 2:3, John 14:23-26, 15:14-15, 16:12-15, 17:14-20, 20:21-23; Luke 24:44-49, 1:1-4

Read John 20:21-23

²¹ Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." ²² And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Read John 17: 14, 17-20

¹⁴ I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. ¹⁷ Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. ¹⁸ As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified. ²⁰ "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message,

Believing that their message, the gospel they preach, is the Word of God is what makes us Christians - 1 Thessalonians 2:13, Romans 10:5-17, 1 John 1:1-4

Read 1 Thessalonians 2:13

And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is indeed at work in you who believe.

Read 1 John 1:1-4

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. ² The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. ³ We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. ⁴ We write this to make our joy complete.

It is that word that gives us new birth and is the means by which God continues His work in our lives - 1 Peter 1:21-25, James 1:18, 2 Tim. 3:15-17

Read 1 Peter 1:22-25

Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for each other, love one another deeply, from the heart. ²³ For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. ²⁴ For,
"All people are like grass,
and all their glory is like the flowers of the field;

the grass withers and the flowers fall,
²⁵ but the word of the Lord endures forever.”
And this is the word that was preached to you.

The written word is God’s Word

Read 2 Timothy 3:14-17

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, ¹⁵ and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

‘God-breathed’

Read 2 Peter 1:19-21

We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. ²⁰ Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation of things. ²¹ For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Jesus’ attitude to the Scriptures

1. His personal submission in daily patterns (Luke 2:22, 4:16, 5:14), in temptation (Matthew 4:1-11, Luke 4:1-13).
2. His commitment to the fulfillment of Scripture (Luke 4:18,21, Matthew 8:16f, 11:4-6, 10. Especially in relation to his death Mark 8:31 [dei], Luke 18:31-33, 22:37, Matthew. 26:24, 31, 56; Luke 24:25-27, 44, 46; Even from the cross – Matthew 27:46 – Psalm 22:1, Luke 23:46 – Psalm.31:5)
3. His use in speech and teaching. Jesus’ language is rich in Old Testament allusion (Mark 8:18 – Jeremiah 5:21, Mark 9:48 – Isaiah 66:24, the Beatitudes). He appeals to it for ethical instruction (Matthew 22:37-40, 19:18-19, 5:17-18, 7:12) and as authoritative in conflict (divorce Matthew 19, duty

to parents Mark 7, resurrection Matthew 22:32, the Davidic Messiah Matthew 22:41-45). Jesus lived and taught in an atmosphere of controversy where his opponents were keen bible students, and the basis of argument was differing interpretation of the Scriptures. He never rejected their appeal to Scripture. Rather he questioned both their understanding of and submission to it. He makes allusions to historical figures and events in the Old Testament – Abraham John 8:56, Isaac and Jacob Matthew 8:11, Luke 13:28, Lot's wife Luke 17:28-32, Noah Matthew 24:37-39, Luke 17:26-27, Manna John 6:31, Moses John 6:32, Matthew 8:4, events in the life of David Matthew 12:3-4, Matthew 22:43, the grandeur of Solomon Matthew 6:29, 12:42, Elijah and Elisha Luke 4:25-27, Jonah Matthew 12:39-41, Luke 11:29-32, Sodom and Gomorrah Matthew 10:15, 11:23-24, Luke 10:12.

4. His teaching on His own significance. See 2 above, his use of the Son of Man sayings, comparison to temple Jn. 2, Moses John 6
5. Jesus' direct statements concerning the Old Testament. Matthew 5:17-18, 19:4-8, Mark 7:1-13, 12:24, John 10:35, 5:39-40, 45-47.

The Apostles' attitude to the Scriptures

1. Usage – history e.g. Abraham Hebrews 11, Romans 4, Galatians 3, cf. Galatians 3 & 4, Romans 9-11, Acts 7; Ethics Romans 13:8-10, 1 Corinthians 9:9, Ephesians 6:2, Romans 12:19-20; Establishing doctrine: Romans, Galatians, Hebrews, even in the matter of tongues 1 Corinthians 14:21
2. Method of quotation – Ascription and Authorship: Hebrews 1:1, 3:7; Acts 1:16, 2:30, 4:25, 1 Peter 1:11. Ascription to both human authors and to God: e.g. Moses Romans 10:5, 19, 1 Corinthians 9:9, Acts 26:22, 28:23; David Romans 4:6, Acts 1:16; Isaiah Romans 10:20, Acts 28:25.
3. The oracles of God – Romans 3:2
4. Two classes of passage - See B.B.Warfield - "It says, Scripture says, God says"
 - a) Galatians 3:8; Romans 9:17; b) Heb. 3:7, Acts 4:24-25, 13:34-35, Hebrews 1:6
5. A book for Christians – Romans 15:4, 1 Corinthians 10:11, 1 Peter 1:12, Romans 4:23f., 2 Corinthians 3:14ff.

The New Testament shares the character of the Word it fulfills.

1. Expect inscripturation because of the nature of revelation, the nature of the recipients of revelation and Jesus' expectation of the future.
2. Jesus prepared for and authorised the New Testament by commissioning and equipping the Apostles

"Apostle"

"Called" Mark 3:13-19, Luke 6:12ff

"Trained"

"Equipped" (John 14:25-26, 15:26-27, 16:12-14, 20:21-23)

3. Apostolic attitudes to their own authority

Acts 10:39-42, Galatians 1:1, 2 Corinthians 10:8, 13:10; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 2:13 (Romans 16:25, Ephesians 3:3-5, Galatians 1:12), 2 Thessalonians 3:4-14, 1 John 1:1-4

- a. To the authority of their writings (2 Peter 3:16, 1 Timothy 5:18, Revelation)
- b. To be read (1 Thessalonians 5:27, Colossians 4:16)
- c. To be conformed to (2 Thessalonians 2:15, 3:14, 1 Corinthians 14:36-37, 2 Corinthians 10:11, 13:10)

4. The reception of the Apostolic writings

Why labour the point?

What does this conviction mean for our life together?

What we do in our meeting

What we encourage

What we look for in our leadership

What we expect of each other

For next session

Why do some respond to the Word preached by Jesus, and some do not? Read John 3:16-21, John 6:25-71, John 10:22-31



Session 4

Why God's glory?



1. How will people respond to God's Word?

2. Why this varied response?

John 3:16-21 (John 12:37-48)

John 6:26-51, 65

John 10:1-30, especially vv. 3-6, 14-16, 26-27

3. Does God's Word ever fail to fulfill His purpose for it?

Romans 9:9-29

4. What impact should the Scripture's teaching on God's sovereignty in salvation (election) have on us?

Praise - Romans 11:33-36

Humility – 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

Titus 3:3-8

Ephesians 4:1-2

Ephesians 2:1-10

Comfort – Romans 8:28-30

Ephesians 1:3-14

John 10:25-29

Confidence – Romans 10:5-17. 11:25-32

Ephesians 2:1-10

2 Timothy 2:9-10

Commitment to godliness – Romans 12:1-2

Colossians 3:12-17

2 Peter 1:3-11

For next session

How does Jesus expect His people to behave?



Session 5

How do Christians live?



Christians live different lives

Read Ephesians 4:17-5:7

¹⁷ So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. ¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. ¹⁹ Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, and they are full of greed.

²⁰ That, however, is not the way of life you learned ²¹ when you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. ²² You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; ²³ to be made new in the attitude of your minds; ²⁴ and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

²⁵ Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. ²⁶ “In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, ²⁷ and do not give the devil a foothold. ²⁸ Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.

²⁹ Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. ³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. ³² Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. ^{5:1} Follow God’s example, therefore, as dearly loved children ² and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

³ But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God’s holy people.

⁴ Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. ⁵ For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a person is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. ⁶ Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God’s wrath comes on those who are disobedient.

⁷ Therefore do not be partners with them.

1. Paul says that God expects those who have come to trust the Lord Jesus by grace must now live different lives. How does He describe this different life? Who are they to be different from?
2. What is the heart of the difference? (vv. 17-24)
3. What should our talk with each other be like? (4:25, 29-31; 4:15-16)
4. What should we do with our anger? (vv. 26-27 (Psalm 4:4, Matthew 5:21-26, James 1:19-21))
5. What should be our attitude to our own possessions and the possessions of others? v. 28
6. What should characterize all our dealings with each other? Why? (4:32-5:2)

Give an example of kindness

Give an example of compassion
7. What must not be present amongst us? Why? (5:3-7)
8. Knowing and doing are two different things. What responsibility do we bear for helping each other live the Christian life?

Christians accept the responsibility to love one another

Read John 13:34-35

³⁴ “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

9. How has Jesus loved us? How should we love each other?
10. How important is loving one another for a Christian?

Read Galatians 5:13-15

¹³ You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. ¹⁴ For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁵ If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

11. What is Christian freedom? How should it be expressed?

12. What is the opposite to love, and what effect does it have on a congregation? (Romans 12:10, 13:8; James 2:1-13; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 4:7-21]

13. How is our love for one another expressed?

14. What do the following verses say about how we are to relate to one another?

Romans 15:7

Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.

Colossians 3:16

Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.

1 Thessalonians 4:18, 5:11

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

Romans 15:14

I myself am convinced, my brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with knowledge and competent to instruct one another.

Ephesians 6:18-20

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. ¹⁹ Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

Galatians 6:1-5

Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. ² Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. ³ If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves. ⁴ Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves alone, without comparing themselves to someone else, ⁵ for each one should carry their own load.

Hebrews 3:12-13

See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. ¹³ But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called "Today," so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

Philippians 2:3 [1 Peter 5:5]

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, ⁴ not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

Colossians 3:13-14

Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

1 Peter 4:9

Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.

Hebrews 10:24-25

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, ²⁵ not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Homework – Serving

Upon completion of the membership course, you might be wondering how you can start serving others at BPC. This survey is designed to help you begin this process so that you can find a way to serve. After completing the survey, please make a time with one of the pastors to discuss the survey so that we can best help you to find a way to serve Jesus and his people.

1. If someone asked you the question, “What do you want to do for Jesus?” how would you answer the question?
2. What do you think are some good and bad motivations to serve in church? Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-7. Why is it so important to have the right motivation to serve?
3. The word “gift” in the bible comes from the Greek word for “grace” – an undeserved kindness from God that He gives to each Christian to build up others. What “gifts” do you think God has given you to serve others? Are you willing for these gifts to be used and tested in the life of a church?
4. Have you been involved in a church previously? In what ways did you serve at that church? Are these ways that you would like to continue serving?
5. Do you have special training that you think might be useful in a church (eg. First aid, food preparation, project management, music/audio/PA, commercial vehicle licence, etc.). If you are unsure whether to list it or not, feel free to lean towards listing it as listing it does not mean that you will be obligated to use this training.
6. Are you prepared to sign the “statement of belief” (p.47) as part of your service in BPC should that be needed (eg. teaching ministry)?

Please email office@bpc.org.au to contact one of our pastors and to make a time to talk with them about serving.



Session 6

Why and How do we serve?



Christians gather together

Read Acts 2:46,47

⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Read Hebrews 10:24-25

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, ²⁵ not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

1. What are our gatherings at Bundy?

2. What is the purpose of our gathering?

Read 1 Corinthians 14:26

What then shall we say, brothers and sisters? When you come together, each of you has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. Everything must be done so that the church may be built up.

3. Why do our gatherings take the form they do?

4. How important is it to meet regularly?

5. How can I contribute?

6. What is the source of our service of each other (on Sunday and every day of the week)?

Read Romans 12:3-8

For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. ⁴ For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. ⁶ We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; ⁷ if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; ⁸ if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

1 Corinthians 12 and 13**Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-7, 11**

There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. ⁵ There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶ There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. ⁷ Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. ¹¹ All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.

What does this look like at BPC?

One of the important things that you need to do as a follower of Jesus is to keep meeting with your brothers and sisters and to not give up that important practice (Hebrews 10:25). This is expressed in a few different ways and having begun to follow Jesus, it is important that you develop the habit of meeting with other Christians in these ways:

Sunday Services

The main gatherings take place at our Sunday Services where we have public teaching of God's word through books of the bible. We also have age specific teaching for our kids in our Sunday School and during the service we sing, pray and once a month we celebrate the Lord's Supper together. All are welcome at our Sunday Services at 10am and 5pm.

Growth Groups

We have many growth groups that take meet weekly or fortnightly in people's homes. These are small gatherings of Christians for the purpose of mutual encouragement through the study of God's word, eating together,

prayer and service. As their name suggests, the goal of these groups is to grow people in their relationship with Jesus and with each other. Although these groups are designed for Christians, we welcome any friends or family members who are investigating Christianity.

Bible Reading

Reading the bible with one or two other people is a great way to mutually encourage growth in relationship with Jesus. These groups are of the same gender and meet with the simple purpose of reading a book of the bible together and praying for each other.

Christians deal with disappointment in and disagreement with each other

Read Luke 17:1-4

Jesus said to his disciples: “Things that cause people to stumble are bound to come, but woe to anyone through whom they come. ² It would be better for them to be thrown into the sea with a millstone tied around their neck than to cause one of these little ones to stumble. ³ So watch yourselves. “If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them. ⁴ Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying ‘I repent,’ you must forgive them.”

Matthew 18:10-35

Christian Congregations have Leadership (Acts 14:23, Titus 1:5, Philippians 1:1)

7. Why do congregations have leadership?

Read Acts 20:28, 29

Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. ²⁹ I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock.

8. What is its form?

9. What is its role?

10. What should be the character of those who exercise leadership in the congregation? (1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9)

11. What should be our attitude to them? (Hebrews 13:17)

What does this look like at BPC?

Elders (Session) (session@bpc.org.au)

The meeting of elders is referred to in the Presbyterian Church as the Session. You might from time to time hear the words “Elders” and “Session” used interchangeably. The elders are the men who the congregation has elected to oversee the life, direction and health of the congregation. The bible speaks of the character of elders and their ministry of teaching God’s word in the following bible passages (Acts 20:25-31; 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9). Currently, the elders of BPC consist of the following men:

Neil Chambers (Senior Pastor)

Andy May (Assistant Pastor)

Kevin Thorpe (Session Clerk)

Ben Kelada

David Bell

Andrew Harrison

Stephen Hanslow

Chris Craig

Vincent Chan

Chris Shaw

Theo Fishwick

Sam John

David Accadia

Deacons

The deacons are men and women who oversee a ministry of mercy that tends to the temporal welfare needs of those in the congregation and others whom our church encounters. The deacons ministry operates under the supervision of the elders of BPC. The bible speaks of the character and ministry of deacons (1 Timothy 3:8-13; Acts 6:1-6). Our current deacons are as follows:

David Crawford (Head Deacon)

Morning Congregation deacons

Chris LePage
Christine Lynch
Anne Hanslow

Evening Congregation deacons

Rebecca John
Ryan O'Connell
Hannah Landreth
Aaron Landreth
Michelle Nicholson

Board of Management (bom@bpc.org.au)

The Board of Management (BOM) is the group of men and women who have been entrusted with administering the financial affairs of the congregation and to care for and maintain the property of the church in good order and repair so it can be used in the service of Jesus. Currently at BPC, the BOM consists of:

Andrew Harrisson (Chair)
Todd Sprague (Secretary)
Josh Henderson
Helen Young
Kingsley Davidson
Kay Ellis
Gordon Mann
Mark Ryder
Paul Tresidder

Christians support gospel ministry

Matthew 6:19-21

Read Galatians 6:6

Nevertheless, the one who receives instruction in the word should share all good things with their instructor.

1 Corinthians 9:3-14, 1 Timothy 5:17

Read Philippians 4:14 -19

¹⁴ Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. ¹⁵ Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; ¹⁶ for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid more than once when I was in need. ¹⁷ Not that I desire your gifts; what I desire is that more be credited to your account. ¹⁸ I have received full payment and have more than enough. I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. ¹⁹ And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 1:4-6, Titus 3:13-14; Matthew 10:42

Giving

⁷ But since you excel in everything – in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you – see that you also excel in this grace of giving. ⁸ I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. ⁹ For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

2 Corinthians 8:7-9

Financial giving is an important way in which we can demonstrate our response to God for what He has done for us. The passage above shows us the following about giving:

- It is a grace from God to bless others
- It is just one of the ways we can excel for God
- It comes from our reflection on Jesus' generosity toward us
- It demonstrates a life changed by Jesus to think of others and not self

The money given to the church is used for ministry purposes in growing God's kingdom by making Jesus known. Much of this money is used locally in the gospel work we are directly involved in as a church. But we also support others connected to our church who do gospel work here and overseas. Each year a budget is set by the Board of Management (read on to find out more about this group) and then this budget is seen and approved by the church each year.

We welcome your partnership in the gospel through giving and in other ways. This can be done each week during the collection in the Sunday services or you can set up direct debit with your bank using the following bank details of BPC:

Account name: Bundoora Presbyterian Church

Bank: ANZ

BSB: 013333

Account no: 269783677



Expressing membership formally

While we are saved only by “calling on the name of Jesus” (Romans 10:13), we are commanded where possible, to express that commitment in baptism (Matthew 28:19, Acts 2:38). The public expression of this commitment to live for Jesus in repentance and faith is a great privilege of God’s people. It is for the benefit of the person getting baptized to remember with decisiveness the new life that they have committed to living with Christ. It is also encouraging for the rest of God’s people to witness the continuing work of His Holy Spirit in the lives of brothers and sisters. If baptism has already occurred in the life of a believer, the other ways of expressing that commitment is profession of faith and reception of membership.

Baptism

One of the expressions of being united to Jesus as Lord and his people has always been baptism. Jesus himself commanded baptism as a response to his teaching, as the beginning of a life as his disciple. Here are some bible passages relating to baptism for you to look at:

Matthew 28:19,20

Colossians 2:9

Acts 2:36-39

Romans 6:1-10

At BPC we baptize people who profess faith in Jesus Christ and understand what it means to be a disciple of Jesus. We also baptize children who have at least one parent who professes faith in Jesus Christ and is part of our church family. Baptism is an expression of belonging to God and his people and therefore takes place in front of the church family, as a public act that encourages both the person and the church. You may have come to the point where you have repented and put your faith in Jesus as Lord and Saviour. If you know that you belong to Jesus, and you haven’t yet been

baptised, you might consider this next step. If you would like to be baptised or you have any questions about baptism, we encourage you to speak to one of the elders of the church.

At baptism, we ask these questions:

1. Do you believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit?

I do

2. Do you trust that the Lord Jesus Christ died for your sins, that he was buried and that on the third day God raised him from the dead, and that he's alive now reigning in heaven able to forgive all those who call on him and to give them His Holy Spirit?

I do

3. Is your hope founded wholly on God's free grace and mercy given to you in the Lord Jesus Christ and not on anything you have done?

It is

4. Do you renounce the devil and all his works?

I do

5. Will you with the help of God's Spirit, turn away from doing what God says is wrong?

I will

6. Will you with the help of God's Spirit follow the Lord Jesus by believing his promises and obeying what he commands?

I will

7. Do you promise to keep nourishing the faith that you have confessed, by prayer, the private study of God's word and faithfully meeting together

with other Christians for the praise of God and the encouragement and building up of yourself and others in the faith?

I do

For the baptism of infants, we ask these questions of parents and the church:

1. Do you believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit?

I do

2. Do you trust in the righteousness of Christ alone for your salvation?

I do

3. Our Lord Jesus has commanded us to teach those whom we baptise in his name. Do you promise to teach (child's name) from the Scriptures how to trust in Christ as his/her Saviour, to pray for him/her, and to set him/her a godly example in your actions, that, by God's grace, he/she may be a faithful follower of our Lord Jesus Christ all his/her days?

I do

Addressing the church:

4. Will you be faithful in praying for Child, in modeling the Christian life before her/him, and in maintaining a congregational life in which her/his faith can be nurtured?

I will (whole congregation)

Profession of faith

We recognize that you may have been baptized previously as a child or an adult and may have previously belonged to another church that teaches the gospel of Jesus Christ. If this is the case, another expression of belonging to BPC is profession of faith. Profession of faith is an opportunity to confess your faith in Jesus publicly. It lets the rest of the congregation know that

you believe what they believe, and is a reminder that we fellowship together on the basis of our common faith. We see the power and the value of such a profession from a passage such as Romans 10:9, 10.

Although you may already have made a profession like this at a previous church, we believe that to make a profession like this in front of BPC is something that will encourage both you and the church in your ongoing discipleship. If you would like to make a profession of faith, please speak to one of the elders.

1. "Do you confess your faith in God as your heavenly Father; in Jesus Christ as your risen Saviour and Lord, and in the Holy Spirit as the one who sanctifies you?

I do

2. "Do you promise to strive to serve and love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind; and to love your neighbour as yourself?

I do

3. Do you promise to pray regularly and to meditate upon the Scriptures; and share in the worship and service of this congregation, submitting yourself to its authority and guidance in the Lord, and to give of your substance as the Lord prospers you for the advancement of the gospel?

I do

Reception of Membership

We recognize that you have been a member of another Presbyterian church or a church that believes the same things and would like to transfer that membership to BPC. To do this you will need the leaders of your previous church to provide a letter confirming your membership and their willingness to transfer your membership to our church. This letter will need to be provided to the elders of BPC.

Statement of Belief

At BPC we have a number of ministries where the bible is taught to adults or children. If you are involved in serving in these ministries, we require you to be able to affirm and commit to the following beliefs:

I believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I trust that the Lord Jesus died for my sins, that He was buried, and that on the third day God raised Him from the dead, and that He is alive now, reigning in heaven, able to forgive all those who call on Him and to give them the Holy Spirit.

My hope is founded wholly on God's free grace and mercy given to me in the Lord Jesus Christ, and not on anything I have done.

I will, with the help of God's Spirit, turn away from doing what God says is wrong.

I will, with the help of God's Spirit, follow the Lord Jesus by believing His promises and obeying what He commands.

I promise to keep on nourishing my faith by prayer, the private study of God's word, and faithfully meeting together with other Christians for the praise of God and encouragement and building up of myself and others in the faith.

I promise to pray regularly and to meditate upon the Scriptures; and share in the worship and service of this congregation, submitting myself to its authority and guidance in the Lord, and to give of my substance as the Lord prospers me for the advancement of the gospel.

Name : _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____



Gospel Partnership

The bible speaks of Christians being “co-workers” and “partners” in the gospel (Philippians 1:5). This partnership is directed towards the sharing of God’s gospel with others in love and good deeds. This partnership rightly finds its expression in support in prayer and financial giving. BPC is committed to doing both with our following gospel partners.

AFES (Christian Union and FOCUS)

www.afes.org.au

We are located between two major universities in Bundoora (RMIT and LaTrobe) and also have a number of students from other universities attending our church. From the very outset of BPC’s history, we have enjoyed a mutually encouraging and fruitful partnership with the Christian Union and FOCUS ministries. These are Christian ministries focused on university campuses with the aim of presenting Christ to uni students so that they may be saved by Christ and grow in Him. These are ministries that our church supports in prayer, financial giving and being a church family for some of the staff and student members of FOCUS and Christian Union.

Cross-Cultural Mission

We have a number of people from our church whom we have sent to share the gospel and make disciples of Jesus in other cultures here and around the world. We are committed to supporting our missionaries in prayer and financial giving. Here are the missionaries that we currently support:

The Short Family (Warwick, Natalie, Hudson, Sahara and Japheth)
Serving with SIM amongst the Fulani people in West Africa.

The Roediger Family (Matt, Shannon, Annalise and Zachary)
Serving with MAF amongst the Yolngu people in Arnhem land.

Bruce Cox and Kathy Cummins

Serving with Wycliffe-SIL amongst the Oliti people in Cameroon.

Ian and Dorcas Denness

Serving in the Middle East

The Denness Family (Paul, Janae, Abigail, Timothy, Kynan)

Serving with MAF in Australia.

Daniel and Tamami Arisawa

Serving with OMF amongst the Mien people in Thailand.

Useful links

Bundoora Presbyterian Church is part of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. As such we also share things in common with other Presbyterian Churches.

We regard the Scriptures (Old and New Testament) as the primary authority of God that all Christians in all ages hold to.

We also regard the Westminster Confession read in the light of the declaratory statement as a summary of what believe from the Scriptures.

We are also largely regulated by a code that all Presbyterian Churches of Victoria agree to. This document can change from time to time when the assembly (collective representation of all churches) agree upon changes.

To download a copy of the Westminster Confess, declaratory statement or the code please follow this link:

<http://pcvic.org/index.php/office-resources>



Staff

To help you orient and integrate in our church, you may want to contact or speak directly to one of our staff members who work either part-time or full-time at the church.

Neil Chambers (neil.chambers@bpc.org.au)

Neil is the senior pastor of BPC and along with the elders, is responsible for the oversight of the church. Neil is the main teacher of the congregation and preaches most Sundays.

Andy May (andrew.may@bpc.org.au)

Andy is the assistant pastor of BPC and is responsible for growth groups and helping people to integrate in the Connect-Grow-Serve process at church.

Cat Wort (cat.camilleri@bpc.org.au)

Cat is our church administrator and oversees the office function and other administrative processes within the church.

Amanda Crawford (office@bpc.org.au)

Amanda is our office manager who oversees office volunteers and is available in the church office on Mon to Wed (9.30-12.30pm).

Kate Cameron (kate.cameron@bpc.org.au)

Kate is our Children's Ministry co-ordinator and oversees the children's ministry on Sundays.

Andrew Wort (Andrew.wort@bpc.org.au)

Andrew is our Youth Co-ordinator and oversees the Youth ministry that takes place on Friday evenings and Sunday mornings.

Sam Eshtiaghi (sam.afesministry@gmail.com)

Sam is our part-time pastor working amongst the Iranian people associated with our church. Sam pastors on Friday evenings.



Sundays at BPC

BPC has two Sunday services at which anyone is welcome to attend.

10am Morning service

Consisting mostly of adults of all ages with a Sunday School program from pre-school to year 8.

5pm Evening Service

Consisting of older youth, uni-students and workers with a crèche and no Sunday School.

During the week at BPC

There are many different activities that take place during the week at the church building and in people's homes. For example, our pre-school ministries (Playgroup and Mainly Music) and Youth Group ministries take place during the week at the building and our Growth Groups take place in people's houses. For more information, please contact one of our staff or contact the office (office@bpc.org.au).

Church Office

The church office is staffed on Mon-Fri (9am-12 noon). Outside of those hours, the office can be contacted at office@bpc.org.au. The office can be reached as an initial contact to speak to leaders of various ministries in the church. If you have any questions regarding the use of the building and setting up access on our church database, please contact the office. The physical and postal address of the church is:

Bundoora Presbyterian Church
Graduate Business Park
3/19 Enterprise Drive
Bundoora VIC 3083
office@bpc.org.au
(03) 9017 9037

Website (www.bpc.org.au)

Please feel free to visit our website to find podcasts of the bible talks and information about the various ministries of our church.



If you have decided to become a member of the church, we invite you to establish your personal access to our online church database called Bundy Connect. Once you are set up with your log-in, this will allow you to access some or all of the following functions:

- A personalised calendar of the events that you are involved in
- Communication with the members of the groups that you are involved in at the church (depending on the nature of the group)
- Reminders of upcoming roster commitments as well as the ability to swap those commitments with others ahead of time
- Access to ministry resources that have been uploaded
- Ability to receive timely church-wide communication

For more information about Bundy Connect and assistance in setting up your access please contact the office (office@bpc.org.au).

To access Bundy Connect online go to **connect.bpc.org.au**