

Notices

Good morning and a very warm welcome to our worship here at Tyndale. If you are watching from home or indeed here with us, a regular attendee, or a visitor, we hope you will feel at home with us as we worship together.

This morning our service is being taken by Michael Docker our Minister, and we thank him for leading our worship and look forward to sharing this time together.

On Tuesday at 11am, our usual zoom coffee shop will take place. Do join us if you are free, to catch up with one another, the joining details can be found on the website.

On Wednesday evening at 7.30, we have our last Discussion Evening, before a summer break. Michael will lead a discussion on the topic, 'Staycations'. Cilla Jones, a long-time Tyndale member and friend, who now lives on the Dorset coast, will be joining us to share some of her recent experiences'. So do join us, again the joining details can be found on Tyndale's website.

Also, as usual, we have our zoom coffee shop after this morning's service at 11.30 for those that are able to make it. Thank you.

Welcome

Welcome to the worship of Tyndale Baptist Church whether you're here in the church, joining in Zoom, accessing the recording later or following the script. We meet as individuals called together to seek after the ways of God in the world and to worship.

CG26 'Come to me and I shall give you rest'

Call to Worship

We who are restless come to the source of our rest; we who have been in the depths call out to the One who lifts us up. We who are weak and frail trust in the One who is our strength and shield. He has promised to be here; He has shown us love and mercy; He leads us to a new day.

We come in the name of His son Jesus, and we worship

CG 111 'Sing for God's glory'

Opening Prayer

Lord God in the midst of the ordinary, everyday world we come together into your presence – and we come out of our ordinary everyday lives; not just for a nice time together, but in the hope of encountering you – and so we worship – Lord God this is the world you have made, ringing with beauty, filled with good things, surrounded by the unending majesty of space – we worship you for all you have made and for making us the crowning glory of your creation; and we worship you for pouring out your grace upon us through Jesus Christ, who comes from you and brings us love beyond our deserving and dies to save us and lives for ever; and we worship you for your Holy Spirit filling us and guiding us and praying for us with sighs too deep for words – all this leads us to worship as we come to this place;

Lord, accept our praise, and our thanks and lead us on we pray,

Lord's Prayer

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

BPW 98 'Break now the bread of life'

Old Testament Reading : 2 Samuel 5.1-5,9-10

New Testament Reading : 2 Corinthians 12.2-10

'From the breaking of the dawn' (Every promise)

Sermon

One of the great Christian paradoxes: Paul: 'whenever I am weak, then I am strong.'

It goes against every human instinct. In the BBC drama 'Time' Mark, a teacher, is imprisoned for four years for causing death by dangerous driving. He gets bullied in prison.

A younger, stronger prisoner picks on him, punches him, steals his food etc etc,

Mark is told by another prisoner that if he doesn't fight back his life won't be worth living; you can see the fear in his face – he's a teacher; he's never been in a fight.

Weakness in the face of overwhelming strength. (He does fight, by the way – not very brilliantly, but it's enough to stop the bullying)

The superhero movies - Superman; the 'Man of Steel', stronger than anyone – the only way to defeat him is with Kryptonite (rock from his home planet) which renders him as weak as anyone else in the face of overwhelming strength.

Or the Westerns – Clint Eastwood, the 'man with no name'. He always wins, by dint of his gunslinging & his steely gaze; weakness shot to pieces by his overwhelming strength

Or Sergio Leone's 'Once Upon a Time in the West' - a puny boy now grown into the mysterious 'Harmonica' (Charles Bronson) who stalks Henry Fonda's evil-incarnate Frank then shoots him – weakness grown into overwhelming strength..

Batman, Wyatt Earp, the Equaliser; James Bond, Bruce Lee; the Avengers, – !!! It's been my whole life long: 'you only have to hit the bully once; you only have to get the strength of a martial art, or a sharp-shooter, or a superpower – and you'll overcome.

And the nation - you only have to get more nuclear weapons or sign more trade deals or build back better – and you won't be weak; you'll be strong

All a bit *male* though. Not many *cowgirls*, as I recall; not many *superheroines* – there was Supergirl & Catwoman (they were the exception that proved the rule..

Anyway, 'don't be weak, be strong'. says our world. The gospel, though, says, 'when I am weak, then I am strong'

Boy David, the puny shepherd-boy, besting the overwhelming strength of Goliath

Jesus, dying on a cross in weakness and overcoming the overwhelming strength of death

Paul – the not-very-accepted apostle - physically or mentally challenged (his 'thorn in the flesh' – no one's quite sure what it was (some physical or psychological ailment)); whatever, it was enough for him to *embody* the gospel paradox: 'when I am weak, then I am strong'

Which brings us to David again – David, who, in this part of the story, is crowned King of Israel and, 'became greater and greater, for the LORD, the God of hosts, was with him'

That's the key – *the Lord of hosts was with him*; that's how it is all the way through – not glorying in weakness for its own sake; not despising strength as such – David was a mighty king, by all accounts, skilful and successful in battle But – how does the hymn put it? 'Strong in the strength that God supplies' - only strong insofar as we rely on God – no matter how weak we are, *if we rely on God*'

That gives the lie to the 'man with no name' philosophy; that undermines the 'build back better' outlook of the nation. I think our greatest enemy is hubris, arrogance, self-aggrandisement. At least Mark Cobden in Time was humble in the face of strength & even when he *became* strong; Clint Eastwood, Charles Bronson; Henry Fonda – all the rest; they were never humble, as far as I can see -

Their world – *our* world – of independent nation states and 'superpowers' with our love of missiles and money and market-forces – a world that sets some free to prosper and become strong and condemns others to work for poverty wages and moulder in weakness –

That world is never humble, always hubristic, always full of arrogance & self-aggrandisement

Gareth Southgate was quick, after England defeated Germany, to warn his team not to get carried away with their win – no time for hubris, arrogance, self-aggrandisement (a choice of sentences here, depending on how things go on Saturday: *just as well as it turned out against Ukraine yesterday. Even more so now that the team is through to the semi-final.*

The gospel – 'when I am weak, then I am strong' *because of God*...or 'however strong I am, it's all because of God' - It's the greatest challenge, in our hubristic, arrogant, self-aggrandising world, to call for greater reliance on God; People are understandably scornful of a religion that claims to believe in God yet, in report after report, fosters racism, covers up child abuse, claims special privilege over such things as conversion therapy for gay people, holds on to present certainties & resists new truths –

Belief in God rings hollow, then, if it's not combined with trust – trust in God whatever happens, rely on God's power – his upside down, counter-intuitive, cross-shaped power – the power not of might or force, but *love*- 'by my Spirit' says the Lord.

Only *then* the Christian paradox '*when I am weak, then I am strong*'

Imagine a world like that, in which the strong protect the weak, the powerful use their power for others; the rich spend their riches for the good of all: swords are made into ploughshares

That's the gospel world – it's not this world, it's the world of God's Kingdom – and it is as much a challenge to the Church *in this world* as to this world – not just to *believe* in God, but to *trust God that this world will be like His Kingdom*

And the life of faith that results will be a life of service, sacrifice, going the extra mile, giving before receiving, dying to live -

Whatever thorns in the flesh come our way...whatever weaknesses or strengths mark our way...whatever the cost..ask any Christian who has paid a price for their faith.

And – not just David, but the world, the church; the more grow to be like God's Kingdom, the more they will grow 'greater and greater, because the Lord is with us – and embody (the table) the gospel paradox – when I am weak, then I am strong"

Offering prayer

Lord, we come before you as weak, frail human beings. We confess that sometimes we have been seduced by power, though it often oppresses or destroys others. So we turn to you again in our weakness, and offer ourselves in these and all our gifts, so that we might not only believe, but trust in you once more whose weakness is stronger than our strength.

Grace

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

BPW 444 'Lord Jesus Christ, you have come to us'

Communion

The table of the Lord is spread, it is for those who will come & see in broken bread & poured out wine – not mere symbols, but the very substance of his life shed for us on the Cross & raised again the third day. The risen Christ is present among his people & it is here that we meet him. The invitation is for all those who are seeking him & who are weary of their sin & doubt to come & share the feast.

Confession

Lord God, here at this table we confess our part in a divided world, where people huddle together for security, and look for their salvation only among the things they already know.

We confess the church's fear and its inward-looking spirit, rarely ready to let the Word of life go in a needy world. We confess our own limited vision, that sees the world only according to our own understanding. Father forgive us and set us free once more in the spirit of this day to go where you call, and to love and suffer in Jesus' name, who is Lord & Saviour of all.

Listen to the good news, 'Do not be afraid, for I have overcome the World'

Thanks be to God, Amen.

Institution

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you; the Lord Jesus on the night he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and said, take, eat, this is my body which is for you, do this in remembrance of me. In the same way after supper he took the cup saying this cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this whenever you drink it in memory of me – for whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Thanksgiving

Thank you our Father for what you have made and given to us: thank you for who you have given and what He has done for us, thank you for His spirit and for what, by that spirit, we may see done in the world – and thank you for this sign and reality, where the good news is once again to be set free in a needy world.

We rejoice in your presence and we ask you to infuse all that we do and say and witness here with your Holy Spirit, so that we might find that our faith, hope and love are strengthened, deepened and assured

Responses

Leader Here is bread
All **For us the bread of life**
Leader Here is wine
All **For us the new wine of the Kingdom**
Leader How shall we eat?
All **Gladly, in the presence of the God who made us:**
Leader How shall we drink
All **Thankfully, in the presence of the Son who saves us.**
Leader How shall we come here?
All **Hopefully, in the presence of the Spirit who prays for us**
Leader In the presence of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit
All **We eat and drink in faith**

'Broken for me'

Bread & wine

Prayer after communion

May ears that have heard your word listen for every whisper of peace– we pray for the peace-makers of the world

Lord, hear our prayer

May tongues that have sung your praise speak only the truth in love – we pray for the truth-tellers of the world

Lord, hear our prayer

May eyes that have witnessed the drama of salvation in broken bread and poured out wine shine look for signs of your Kingdom – we pray for the sight-givers of the world.

Lord, hear our prayer

May bodies that have been fed with your body work for wholeness – we pray for those who heal in the world

Lord, hear our prayer

So may lives that have been refreshed by your life rise to meet the day with love – we pray for the strength-bringers of the world.

Lord, hear our prayer

As sinners called to the way of Christ, leads us with these for whom we have prayed in the way of sacrificial love, which is to be the way of your Church in all the world. amen

Lord, hear our prayer

BPW 448 'Sent forth by God's blessing'

Benediction

The blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be with us and remain with us always.

Thanks to everyone who has made today's service possible – Bruce making Zoom happen this morning; Nick & Tina printing and posting; Mike & Mavis reading; Rachel sorting music and playing with Ali and Dave, Tyndale singers singing 'live' and virtually; Martin playing the organ; the Stewarding Team preparing, watching over us, and cleaning up after – thanks everyone for taking part.

As we continue to live by faith in a fractured, frail world we will do so in the hope of wholeness and as witnesses to new life in Christ - 'till we meet again'