

EZEKIEL 22, A STUNNING PARALLEL TO PRESENT DAY AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY

The Lord's Day 2022.02.27

Scripture Readings: Genesis 1:1-3, John 1:1-3, Hebrews 1:1-3, 2 Timothy 4:1-5, 2 Corinthians 13:1, 1 Corinthians 2:5, Ezekiel 22, Jeremiah 5:30-31, 2 Corinthians 11:4.

INTRODUCTION – PREACH THE WORD PT 1

WE LIKE TO BEGIN ALL THINGS WITH THE WORD OF GOD:

For many years this Church has been associated with the Trinitarian Bible Society. I can't remember exactly how it first occurred, but it began with our first introduction to Christopher Tuck, who was the Australian National Secretary and Deputation Speaker. It must be well over 20 years ago, and in that time, we have had a very fruitful fellowship with Christopher and his family & TBS – e.g., many of the Scripture posters we have used at the markets are TBS posters, and the Bibles we purchase, are all from TBS – in fact we don't trust any other Bible Society to be faithful, as TBS is, in maintaining "protestant or uncorrupted" editions of the Scriptures.

Likewise, Christopher Tuck is one of the few men I know in this country, who could be trusted with the pulpit, a man who is truly "apt to teach" (that is, according to the scriptural term, not according to every man's personal idea, in this wishy-washy world of, 'nobody-is-wrong' & 'everybody-is-entitled-to-his-opinion' kind of preaching).

Let me briefly qualify what "apt to teach" means, in the context of Scripture and of the present world: If a man is apt to teach,

- ***He is not going to teach any error or heresy – and if he ever has, he will repent of it – he certainly won't try to justify it, or lie about it when challenged, as most do;***
- ***He is not going to go along with any perversions introduced by the Roman Catholicism – because he will teach unashamedly that the Pope of Rome is the very Antichrist, as did all the Reformers and the Churches established by them:***
- ***Such as Futurist ideas about a fictitious 'rapture' of the Church, a future Tribulation and a future Antichrist, and a future Millennium where Christ reigns literally on earth at Jerusalem, which is Zionism, and Zionism denies the transition from Old Testament to New – Zionism is effectively a denial of the Gospel of Christ, because it makes unbelieving Jews more important to God than born again believers;***
- ***Nor will he defend the Pagan traditions & festivals of Rome, with their graven images;***
- ***Nor will he teach the Roman heresies of Textual Criticism and New Bible Versions which are all approved by Popery, and depart from the preserved Scriptures recognised as such by the Protestant Reformers, who first gave the world the Bible in print – the Protestants recognised, according to Scripture, that all Scripture is inspired by God, preserved by God, and is forbidden by God to be changed in any degree, whereas Rome's idea is that the Scriptures are ever-changing, and that the Scriptures are subject to the Church rather than the Church being subject to the***

Scriptures. This is gross heresy, yet most churches today go along with it – they all follow the “beast”;

- *Nor will he teach any shades of Rome’s heresy of Arminianism, which allows some part for man to play in his own salvation, rather than the Scriptures’ Truth, that salvation is all of God, and all of God’s sovereign grace, and that all who end up in hell under God’s wrath, have always been under God’s wrath, because of their own sins, and because God sovereignly chose not to pardon them but rather to exercise His justice upon them) – just to clarify, **Roman Catholicism and every degree of Arminianism stand together as ‘salvation by works’ (this encompasses most churches of the world), whereas only Calvinism or Reformed doctrine teaches salvation by grace alone. True Calvinists repudiate all Rome’s heresies, including Rome’s false doctrine of Scripture and any degree of works added to grace – Paul makes it clear that works and grace are opposites, and they cannot be mingled: Romans 11,***

5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

6 And if by grace, then *is it* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. (By the way, the Papists and their Modernist friends have taken the second half of Verse 6 out of their Greek Text! – Papists and their friends hate the doctrines of grace!)

*There are widely renowned preachers in the world today, considered to be very correct and orthodox in doctrine, who openly preach that you must repent of your sins in order to be saved – this is a subtle version of salvation by works! The Bible teaches plainly that salvation is **by grace, and that not of ourselves (Ephesians 2:8-9), and that it is God Who grants repentance (Acts 11:18). This is reinforced by a number of occasions where it is said that to simply believe and be saved: “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house” (Acts 16:31). And John 3:36, He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.***

In keeping with this requirement of sound doctrine, we have for many years, supported both TBS & the Protestant Alliance, both of which are soundly Protestant, both are soundly Reformed (or Calvinistic), & both maintain the Authorised English Bible as God’s Word preserved.

You’ll be aware that, for many years now, we have always made a deliberate practice of beginning meetings with the reading of Scripture. This is a habit I picked up from TBS, as it is one of their decided practices, and it sits well with me, as it’s all too common for Church meetings to begin with emotive stories and music, which condition the people to believe that all things ‘spiritual’ are about titillating influences on the senses or the

soul, rather than rational influences on the mind and spirit. This is why, immediately after the greeting and announcements, we begin our worship, and all our meetings, with the reading of the Word of God. Our meetings should always begin and end with the Word of God, and everything in between ought to be so anchored in the Word of God, that the Word itself is the constant focus, and I give credit to the brethren of TBS for teaching me this.

BEGINNING WITH THE WORD OF GOD IS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE. *There are many professing believers and preachers, who think that the Written Word of God is not really powerful in itself, so they work hard to find clever words of their own, or clever words of other men, to say, and then tack on a little reference to Scripture, to give their own clever words a bit of direction and vain respectability. But why should men try so hard to promote their own words at the expense of the primacy of God's Words (the Scriptures)? Do they never stop to think how priceless these Divine Words are, and at what enormous cost to our forefathers they've been bequeathed to us?*

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE WORD OF GOD IS PARAMOUNT – IT CANNOT BE OVERESTIMATED!

- **ALL THINGS LITERALLY BEGAN WITH THE WORD OF GOD:** *Nothing exists that did not come into being by divine decree: **Genesis 1:1-3**, In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth..... 3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And on each successive day of the six days of creation, God "said"! and it was!*
- **THE WORD IS ALSO A PERSON:** ***John 1:1-3**, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God..... 3 All things were made by him... **Hebrews 1:1-3**, God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days, spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.*
- **ALL THINGS, NOT ONLY BEGAN WITH THE WORD OF GOD, BUT THEY ARE SUSTAINED BY THE WORD OF GOD:** ***Hebrews 1:3**,upholding all things by the word of his power..... & **Colossians 1:17**,by him all things consist. So, if you hear the empty propaganda word, "sustainability", just remember, that it is Jesus Christ, the **Maker** of all things, Who also is the **Sustainer (Upholder)** of all things! **Man cannot sustain anything!** And as it is true, without him was not anything made that was made, likewise, without Him, nothing is sustained that is sustained! **Here is a great point for discussion:** When people try to air their knowledge about 'sustainability' (as per the Satanic wisdom of the United Nations), you can tell them that nothing is sustained but by Jesus Christ, and nothing can be 'sustainable', unless Jesus Christ sustains it, because He created it all in the first place!*

Nevertheless, sometimes it is helpful to begin a sermon with a story, albeit not just a fascinating or feel-good story, preferably a story that is historical and real, so that it serves as an important application of the Word being taught. So, today, I want to begin with a brief historical story, although I just can't help myself – I have already begun with Scripture – by the way, never forget, that there is no better place to begin any story, than with Genesis 1, John 1, Hebrews 1, & Colossians 1.

SO, HERE IS A STORY FROM OUR OWN RECENT HISTORY:

*Recently, we've looked at the significance of Jacob's call of God at a place he called Beth-el, where God gave him a vision, and promises to uphold him, and a purpose for him to fulfil (Genesis 28). We saw that Jacob named the place where he met God 'Beth-el' (The House of God), and he also named the stone of that place, which he took for a pillow, by the same name, 'Beth-el', and there Jacob dedicated himself to God's service – so **Jacob made the pillow a pillar**, to mark and remember that great event. I mentioned as we studied this, that it is appropriate for us to follow Jacob's example, of the remembrance of God's call, and His promises, and our dedication to His purposes, as God's people sometimes do, when building a new place of worship, or establishing some particular ministry or mission, or marking some other striking providence.*

HENCE, I ASK YOU TO BEAR WITH ME TODAY, AS I RELATE JUST A LITTLE BIT OF MY OWN CALL TO THE MINISTRY, WHICH OF COURSE, HAS BECOME AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE EXPERIENCE OF THIS CHURCH FOR OVER 33 YEARS: *My call to the ministry became evident over a period of years, but as the time approached, the Lord provided some wonderful confirming signs, after which, there could be no doubt of the reality of that call, that it was definitely of God. While the normal, rational preparations of the Lord (in understanding sound doctrine and Scriptural qualifications) were evidently ingrained over a period of time, the confirming providence of God on top of this, as the time drew near, was nothing short of miraculous, and the points of confirmation far too many to relate. But I do want to share with you, just a tiny bit of that story:*

On the 10th June 1988, this building, as a place of worship, was completed.

Just ten days later, on the 20th June 1988, I received a letter from a sister in Christ, who was a prayerful and dedicated member of the congregation at the time, and a faithful wife and mother, whose true spirituality was well-known and respected throughout the Church. In her letter, she related that, on the evening of the Lord's Day, she was awake very late, and couldn't sleep because of a burden of prayer the Lord had placed on her, about my call to the ministry, which she related, quoting various Scriptures, and asking me to prayerfully consider and test what she was saying, as to whether it was from the Lord. This lady has since departed and is in the presence of the

Lord, but at that time, her prayerful word of exhortation was wonderfully confirmed – just to mention briefly, some of that immediate confirmation:

The same day I received Vera’s letter (20th June 1988), the first & second confirmations came,

*1. I received in the mail an **Open Doors missionary newsletter**, containing an exhortation based on **Ezekiel 22**. This Scripture, along with other similar Words of Scripture, had been a great burden on my heart for the ministry, and for the great need of repentance in our present society. (God willing, next week, we’ll look into Ezekiel 22).*

*2. **The same morning**, I was reading from a **devotional book from Keswick**, and the lesson I was up to, was on **2 Timothy 4**, headed “Preach the word!”*

I CHARGE thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

***3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine;** but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;*

*4 And they shall turn away **their** ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.*

5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

This passage of Scripture had already been ingrained into my whole life and being for some years, obviously, as an integral part of my call.

*3. **The next morning (21st June)**, reading a different devotional, **Daily Bread**, by the grace of God, again **2 Timothy 4** was the theme!*

*4. **Then, on the evening of the 23rd June, a fellow-elder of the Church rang me, ‘out of the blue’ at 10 pm, to encourage me to step out and, as he put it, “Go for the ministry!” I think you’ll agree that 10 pm is not the time of day you ring somebody unless it is very important! This in itself was striking, and he was also unaware of the other confirming providences of God! He had no idea that, in God’s providence, he was the fifth confirming voice of God to me in the space of just four days.***

*The faithful lady, who penned the letter, felt that I might need to be encouraged, and like Moses, acutely aware of my own weakness, and hesitant to step forward. She also specifically asked, and I quote, “**Please ask God to confirm through His Word and by the mouth of 2 or 3 witnesses, as we are told in 2 Corinthians 13:1**”.*

*She could never have guessed how wonderfully her prayers were to be answered, with not 2 or 3, but 4 additional witnesses in 4 days – so, altogether, that particular call of God to me was by a **fivefold witness**, including two respected members of the Church!*

As I mentioned, there were many more, equally miraculous points of confirmation of my call, even for a period of a few years before this and afterwards, but most of those (not

all of them, but most) were given to me personally (including some to my wife as well), whereas Vera's letter spearheaded the Church's confirmation of my call, which of course, was more thoroughly confirmed later in an official way, through various events, culminating in my appointment to the ministry about 2 ½ years later.

You will be well aware, that I normally don't like to talk too much about me and my experiences, because, as Paul put it (1 Corinthians 2:5), . . . your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God, because the ministry is not about me personally, or about you, it is all about Christ and His Church, and even the apostle Peter, when he spoke of his wonderful experience of the transfiguration of Christ with Moses and Elijah, went on to say (2 Peter 1:19), We have a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place" – he was speaking of the Scriptures, warning us not to base our faith on personal experience (as wonderful and as true as that experience might be), but on the Word of God only, **nevertheless**, occasionally, when it seems timely, it is appropriate to speak of personal experience – even the apostle Paul did so on rare occasions, not to draw attention to himself, but for the benefit of the Church. So, I trust that the Lord might use my testimony to encourage the saints in these difficult times, to be reminded that God has been with us all, preparing, providing, and working out His invincible plans for the good of all the elect.

*Well, the years have flown by, and now, roughly 33 ½ years later, time and experience have shown, that Timothy's call to preach the Word, ("because the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine"), has been abundantly vindicated to us as well, just as it has been in all generations. So before going on next week, God willing, to a brief study of Ezekiel 22, I want to underline what was a 'Beth-el' for us, a milestone in time when God met with us in a wonderful way, and I trust that the Lord will bless you and encourage your faith in Him, as we consider what an awful state of apostacy the Church has fallen into, right across the Western World, a state of apostacy that we could hardly even imagined 33 years ago, yet we already knew it was happening. If we thought people were hard of hearing when it came to the Word of God those days, how much more so today, when every man does that which is right in his own eyes, and hardly any belong to a Church, and if they do, their Church can hardly be called 'Christian' any more! Many of you will agree with me, when I say that in all those years, I have found very few people genuinely interested in the Word of God – never was it truer than now, that they **will not endure sound doctrine!** They have teachers by the thousands, but they know little of God's Truth! How tragic, that in a day when every man and his dog has a Bible and access to libraries of information on the Internet, that a generation could be so woefully ignorant! Yet the Word of God has never let us down, and is as true as it was, when it was spoken by those chosen apostles and prophets so many centuries ago! Let us pray for mercy to keep those Words in our hearts and not depart from them, and for the Lord to add labourers to His harvest field in these last days. Amen.*

Continued – The Lord’s Day 2022.03.06

Scripture Readings: Genesis 1:1-3, John 1:1-3, Hebrews 1:1-3, 2 Timothy 4:1-5, 2 Corinthians 13:1, 1 Corinthians 2:5, Ezekiel 22, Jeremiah 5:30-31, 2 Corinthians 11:4.

**PREACH THE WORD PT.2: EZEKIEL 22, A STUNNING PARALLEL TO
PRESENT DAY AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY**

We have given God the glory for the wonderful way He called Jacob, met him at Beth-el (The House of God), and that likewise, he meets His people in every generation, and calls them to His service, and shows us His glory.

I mentioned last week, that I normally avoid telling personal stories and experiences, except on the odd occasion, and the reason is very important – it is amazing how God’s people can be swept up in the emotions of an event, an experience, or a story, and this is why much preaching is so shallow, and doesn’t ground the people in God’s Word, as experience takes precedence over the Word. This is a form of blasphemy. It also has consequences for those so-taught: their consciences are lulled to sleep by a ‘gospel’ geared to their emotions not to their rational thoughts, and so they become incapable of discernment between right & wrong, and will follow the world’s propaganda and swear it is the truth. We must reject this emotionalism and hold fast to God’s Truth! This keeps us immune from the Devil’s propaganda games.

We know many Christians who went for the Devil’s bait, that Church should be entertaining, and focused on the needs of people. Decades later, we find that these Christians have no spiritual discernment at all, and it is impossible to have a rational discussion with them. Such Christians think that Jesus is there to serve them, and to make their plans and schemes successful. They boast about their religious achievements, and at the same time try to give glory to God, not realizing what a walking contradiction they are. The ‘Jesus’ they have created in their own minds, helps them to feel good, to find themselves, to achieve their own goals and dreams, and to win their battles. This is not the Jesus we read of in Scripture – He demands unreserved worship, pre-eminence, and service – at His Name, every knee shall bow. The way to glorify Him is to speak of Him and what He has done, and what He is doing, not about us and our schemes.

Jacob’s story is recorded for the benefit of all the saints in all ages, but Jacob was very careful to give all the glory to God, and not make himself out to be important – likewise, we see in Scripture, men like Samuel, Samson, David, and many others, were likewise careful to give God all the glory – John the Baptist, of whom Jesus gave the highest commendation of all the prophets, said, when he spoke of Jesus, and introduced Him as “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29), went on to say, “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30).

IT IS QUITE ALARMING THAT SO MANY WILL GIVE GLORY TO MEN AND NATIONS AND MEN OF GOD, AND THINK THAT GOD IS OK WITH THAT, SO LONG AS THEY GIVE GLORY TO GOD AS WELL!

- *We have seen this misguided zeal in reports from Ukrainian Christians recently, giving glory to Ukraine's troops as well as to God, and talking of being "proud". How can a Christian be 'proud' of anything? To speak of being proud, is to show that you have no understanding of Christ and the kingdom of God. It isn't about you, it's all about Him!*
- *The Roman Church likewise backed the I.R.A. terrorists in Ireland, and likewise their programme of 'Liberation Theology' in many nations of Africa etc. over many years.*

ALL THIS IS FROM THE JESUITS, whose chief mottos are: "The end justifies the means" and "To the greater glory of God", and it's a great mistake & a gross evil, because the Lord states plainly (Isaiah 42:8), "I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images."

THIS IS WHY THE REFORMED CHURCHES MAINTAIN THE 'FIVE SOLAS', which Martin Luther penned as a summary of the doctrine of salvation: "Salvation by Grace Alone, through Faith Alone, in Christ Alone, according to Scripture Alone", and ending with "Glory to God alone!" Anything less is heresy. So, let us seek God's grace to be faithful in this, and give all glory to God, and let no man try to share in God's glory, and let us have no fellowship with those who do give any glory to man.

Nevertheless, God calls men, and uses men for His purposes, and Ezekiel was another man whom God used in a wonderful way, as a prophet to teach and warn Israel at a very crucial time. Let us observe how the same Holy Ghost Who gave Ezekiel these Words, speaks to us likewise today:

MOREOVER the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

2 Now, thou son of man, wilt thou judge, wilt thou judge the bloody city? yea, thou shalt shew her all her abominations.

Could this alarming statement possibly apply to us today? The answer will be obvious, as we read on:

CAN WE ESCAPE THE SAME CHARGE OF MURDER AND IDOLATRY?

3 Then say thou, Thus saith the Lord GOD, The city sheddeth blood in the midst of it, that her time may come, and maketh idols against herself to defile herself.

4 Thou art become guilty in thy blood that thou hast shed; and hast defiled thyself in thine idols which thou hast made; and thou hast caused thy days to draw near, and art come even unto thy years: therefore have I made thee a reproach unto the heathen, and a mocking to all countries.

5 *Those that be near, and those that be far from thee, shall mock thee, which art infamous and much vexed.*

Israel, in that day, certainly was guilty as charged – the Word of God was given to Ezekiel as a testimony against his own people! And the charge was urgent, because God had already begun to show His Almighty Hand against Israel – therefore have I made thee a reproach unto the heathen, and a mocking to all countries.

CAN WE HONESTLY SAY THAT AUSTRALIA IS ANY BETTER, OR ANY DIFFERENT? Can we be so blind as to pretend that God is not angry with Australia, as He was with Israel in that day, and as He is “angry with the wicked every day” (Psalm 7:11)? Can we deny the wickedness of this nation, and even of the Church within the nation? Can we deny that God’s anger is evident all around us? Can we deny that God is angry with a Church that talks of being proud and places great importance of Pagan festivities every year, and dishonestly calls them ‘Christian’?

Sadly, many do deny it, but in denying the reality of God’s chastisement, they put themselves in an awful, untenable position before the Judge of all the earth.

The greatest sign of God’s wrath against us is an unwillingness to hear the Word of God, an unwillingness to hold sound doctrine above all else, and a stubborn pursuit of error even in the face of warnings.

LET US CONTINUE TO OBSERVE THE CLEAR PARALLEL BETWEEN EZEKIEL’S GENERATION AND OURS:

FIRSTLY, SYSTEMATIC MURDER BY AUTHORITIES (“PRINCES”): 6 Behold, the princes of Israel, every one were in thee to their power to shed blood. (Think of abortion, euthanasia, population control! Our health officials think they have a right to kill the weak and vulnerable with medication! Our police think they have a right to kill or maim peaceful protesters on the streets! Our authorities think they have a right to deny trial by jury (e.g. Martin Bryant), or deny the hearing of evidence, to those they frame up for serious crimes! Our governments think they have the right to wage war against nations, based on lies and propaganda, and often for mere monetary gain – business opportunities, for minerals, produce, or land! Our parliament thinks it has the right to hide evidence for 90 years, on child trafficking & murder of children! The Governor-General & the Queen think they have the right to confirm these murderous conspiracies, rather than expose them and stop them, which is their sworn duty!)

SECONDLY, SYSTEMATIC BREAKDOWN OF THE FAMILY BY AUTHORITIES: 7 In thee have they set light by father and mother: (Think of the education system and indoctrination of children in the ways of Sodom; think of a systematic departure from the faith of our fathers and from the godly Constitution they wrote for us!)

THIRDLY, SYSTEMATIC OPPRESSION OF THE POOR BY AUTHORITIES: in the midst of thee have they dealt by oppression with the stranger: in thee have they vexed the

fatherless and the widow. (*Our lot doesn't oppress the stranger from overseas, they oppress their own citizens, and favour enemy invasion, calling our enemies 'refugees'!*)

FOURTHLY, SYSTEMATIC REPUDIATION OF THE LORD'S DAY BY AUTHORITIES: 8 Thou hast despised mine holy things, and hast profaned my sabbaths. (*The government has made business on the Lord's Day almost a necessity, and Christians no longer have a doctrine of the Lord's Day, but falsely claim they worship God every day!*)

FIFTHLY, ABANDONMENT OF THE LAW COURTS TO PERJURERS & MURDERERS: 9 In thee are men that carry tales to shed blood: (*Our governments make war based on lies and send our young people to die for those lies, much as is happening in Ukraine today (In this case, we haven't sent men to die, but we've sent weapons to Ukraine to fight a pointless war and increase the death toll on both sides)! They've done it before in Viet Nam, Iraq, Libya, Afghanistan, Syria – sending troops to die for the cause of the Pope's New World Order 'Monopoly' game? Meanwhile they order a media blackout on the genocide that is happening to white South Africans and others.)*)

SIXTHLY, SYSTEMATIC HEATHEN IDOLATRY & ADULTERY ENFORCED BY AUTHORITIES:
and in thee they eat upon the mountains: in the midst of thee they commit lewdness.
10 In thee have they discovered their fathers' nakedness: in thee have they humbled her that was set apart for pollution.

11 And one hath committed abomination with his **neighbour's wife**; and another hath lewdly defiled his **daughter in law**; and another in thee hath humbled **his sister**, his father's daughter.

12 In thee have they taken gifts to shed blood; thou hast taken usury and increase, and thou hast greedily gained of thy neighbours by extortion,
Most basic Bible morality, which once was ingrained into the law of the land, is gone, while wickedness, including witchcraft, is now written into law. Can it get any worse?

SEVENTHLY, SYSTEMATIC FORSAKING OF ALMIGHTY GOD – THE GOD OF OUR FOUNDING FATHERS: and hast forgotten me, saith the Lord GOD.

The deliberate and systematic replacement of the "Almighty God" of our Constitution with 'Multiculturalism' has been a national decision for Paganism, a decision for Satan and against Christ! We are no better than Haiti, where they officially handed the nation over to Satan.

EIGHTHLY, GOD HAS BEEN PLEADING WITH THIS NATION TO REPENT!

13 Behold, therefore I have smitten mine hand at thy dishonest gain which thou hast made, and at thy blood which hath been in the midst of thee.

14 Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong, in the days that I shall deal with thee? I the LORD have spoken *it*, and will do *it*.

This is a comment on day-to-day business and government in Australia – entirely corrupt!

NINTHLY, GOD THREATENS TO USE THE HEATHEN TO DESTROY OUR NATION:

15 And I will scatter thee among the heathen, and disperse thee in the countries, and will consume thy filthiness out of thee.

16 And thou shalt take thine inheritance in thyself in the sight of the heathen, and thou shalt know that I *am* the LORD.

God took Israel to Babylon; in Australia's case, He has brought Babylon to us – a political commentator recently said in Canberra, "We are virtually a 'United Nations'". He was speaking of the different races of people gathered, but it is not just the different people – those people all bring their cultural baggage of Heathenism, and even their wars to us: they come to Australian and find peace, and then disturb the peace by promoting their wars in the countries where they came from! Then they call us 'racist' if we don't like their Pagan culture. God has brought Babylon to us, and we are captives in our own land, because we have forsaken the true God of our founding fathers.

17 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

18 Son of man, the house of Israel is to me become dross: all they *are* brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they are *even* the dross of silver.

19 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem.

20 As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt *it*; so will I gather *you* in mine anger and in my fury, and I will leave *you there*, and melt you.

21 Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof.

22 As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I the LORD have poured out my fury upon you.

THE LORD ULTIMATELY DESTROYED JERUSALEM AT THE HAND OF THE ROMAN ARMIES. AND TODAY, ROME'S ARMIES THREATEN TO DESTROY US AS WELL – AND YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A PROPHET TO SEE IT. Our leaders have long ago capitulated to the ungodly United Nations and Popery and their chief 'bully-boy' the U.S.A., and more recently to China, giving China and others, control of our ports, our large agricultural holdings, our mines & water supplies. Gough Whitlam was Australia's first Prime Minister to visit China. That was in the early 1970's, and every successive government since, has continued and accelerated that downward slide into Communism, Paganism, and total moral collapse.

The prophet speaks to Israel of their "princes" – let us consider, not only authorities in general, but our own 'Prince' Phillip and his equally ungodly son, Prince Charles: Phillip openly advocated population reduction (That's a fancy name for murder!!!), and, not long before he died, said he would like to come back as a killer virus to reduce the world's population! His son Charles follows in father's footsteps, literally! God forbid that Charlie should ever be king!

23 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
 24 Son of man, say unto her, Thou *art* the land that is not cleansed, nor rained upon in the day of indignation.

TENTHLY, THE CORRUPTION OF THE PROPHETS: – NB: Our Preachers are not Prophets, but False Prophets & False Teachers, Conspiring together in their lies:

25 There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof, like a roaring lion ravening the prey; they have devoured souls; they have taken the treasure and precious things; they have made her many widows in the midst thereof.

28 And her prophets have daubed them with untempered *morter*, seeing vanity, and **divining lies unto them, saying, Thus saith the Lord GOD, when the LORD hath not spoken.**

NO DOUBT, THEY CALLED EZEKIEL A ‘CONSPIRACY THEORIST’, BUT HE NAILED THEM WHEN HE CALLED OUT THEIR FALSE PROPHETS FOR CONSPIRING TOGETHER! All the false teachers agree on many things, but not on God’s Word. They get rich off God’s flock, they make money out of books & videos which are full of false doctrine and false predictions, they beg money from the local churches to fund their own ego trips. The Jesuits and Freemasons have infiltrated the Churches and Seminaries to such an extent, that their Anti-Christian brand of ‘political correctness’ rules the Churches, and the plain Truth cannot be found in their pulpits. They have even changed the very Words of Scripture, and that by the thousands! All this is by conspiracy among the false teachers, false prophets, and false Christ, just as Jesus predicted and warned about! Have you noticed they all agree?

- *They all agree that we are not to be governed by Scripture only, but by the traditions of men as well – otherwise NOBODY would ever celebrate Easter or Christmas – it completely escapes the empty minds of midst professing Christians that these things are just NOT FOUND in Scripture. Then they have the audacity to say how they love the Scriptures and base their lives on them. What complete and utter nonsense! What blatant lies they speak every day – yes, they all conspire to teach that Scripture is not the only rule;*
- *They all agree that the Pope is the most important spiritual leader in the world, even if they don’t say it, as Billy Graham and others did, they say it by their actions or lack of action;*
- *They all agree that God loves everybody, good or evil, Christian or Pagan, contrary to Scripture;*
- *They all agree that the publication of Bibles needs the Pope’s approval, because they buy them and use them and promote them, contrary to the faith of their forefathers – they are all CONSPIRATORS together against the Lord and His Christ!*

THEY ALL CONSPIRE TOGETHER IN A MASSIVE CONSPIRACY!!!

26 Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed *difference* between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them.

MOST OF THEM TODAY TEACH THAT THE TEN COMMANDMENTS ARE HARDLY RELEVANT ANY MORE, MUCH LESS THE SABBATH COMMANDMENT. *When you mention the Fourth Commandment to most Christian leaders today, they almost can't believe you would bother to raise what they think is such an irrelevant and unimportant subject! But the Lord "changeth not"! And His Law changeth not! Not a jot or tittle of it shall pass! When will the Christians begin to believe in Jesus again? When will Christians acknowledge that God's Word is God's Word?*

ELEVENTHLY, THE CORRUPTION OF THE PRINCES (RULERS):

27 Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, and to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain. *(They are all on the 'take', they all get rich, not by their wages, but by shady deals and kick-backs and tip-offs – their silence on moral and legal issues, which has been purchased with bribes and blackmail, is complicity with every kind of evil, including murder.)*

TWELFTHLY, THE CORRUPTION OF ALL THE PEOPLE:

29 The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy: yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully.

*What greater example of this can be seen, than the destruction of a whole nation's freedom to travel, to shop, to do business, to speak, to worship, and to be healthy? And all this is deliberate, and it is by **INTERNATIONAL CONSPIRACY!** If you could only see the statistics of the businesses shut down, the jobs lost, the financial ruin, and the souls destroyed as a result of government policy and government regulation, which wasn't even their own ideas, but just international policies of the Roman Antichrist – they didn't even have to think when implementing these Draconian oppressions on us. And the relevant point here is that, **The people of the land** have used oppression! It is not just the government, it is every man and his dog, enforcing this Draconianism on the whole population.*

And it is only by God's hand that people get evil rulers – the people are all responsible – the leaders did not elect themselves to office.

THE PROPHET JEREMIAH MADE THE SAME OBSERVATION: Jeremiah 5:31,

31 The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?

My people love it! Yes, they do!

It is my people who have not only condoned the evil of their rulers, but have literally voted them into power by their own hands, and carry out their policies as well! When business people put up a sign that says, "Proof of vaccination required", they know they

are breaking the law, but they think Big Brother is stronger than 'little brother', so they'll get away with bullying little brother – what an awful shock is coming to them!

What will ye do in the end thereof?, says Jeremiah. What indeed? What can you do, when God has taken a big stick to His people?

In Egypt, under spectacular judgments, even the stubborn, ungodly Pharaoh said, "This is the finger of God!"

Then how blind and stubborn and dishonest are the 'Christians' who refuse to accept the present reality, because they refuse to accept the doctrine of God's Word!

Fires, floods, droughts, pestilence, financial ruin, national bankruptcy, callous, corrupt rulers, the giving of our land to foreigners, suicide one of the biggest killers! – WHEN WILL AUSTRALIA SAY, "This is the finger of God"?

WHEN THE JEWS PERISHED IN JERUSALEM, THEY MADE THEIR OWN DEMISE – THEY IGNORED THE PROPHETS, THEY IGNORED CHRIST, WHEN HE SAID, "FLEE INTO THE MOUNTAINS!" (MATTHEW 24), THEY CHOSE TO STAY AND FIGHT THE ROMANS, NOT KNOWING THEY WERE FIGHTING AGAINST ALMIGHTY GOD!! They thought the Romans were evil, and so they were, but not as evil as the Jews – it was the Jews God was coming for at the time – how terribly they missed the point!

What of the Ukrainians? They ignore all the facts, all the wisdom of Scripture, and they say, "Putin is evil, and we will fight him to the death!", not considering they are evil themselves.

What of Australia? They say, "We are sovereign people. We have rights! We can overthrow the government because the government is evil." Well, yes, the government is evil, but the people are just the same – they are guilty of all the indictments above – all the charges of Almighty God according to Ezekiel 22, and more, they have forsaken the Almighty God of their founding fathers, just as the Jews did!

Their great problem, and great delusion, is SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS!

Well did God say to Ezekiel, "Wilt thou judge the bloody city?"

Well did Paul warn Timothy,

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

I repeat, The greatest sign of God's wrath against us is an unwillingness to hear the Word of God, an unwillingness to hold sound doctrine above all else, and a stubborn pursuit of error even in the face of warnings.

Let us pray earnestly for such a merciful intervention of Almighty God, to claim back His people who have strayed, before they all perish in their own conceit! Amen.

**PREACH THE WORD PT.3: EZEKIEL 22, A STUNNING PARALLEL TO
PRESENT DAY AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY**

The Lord's Day 13th March 2022

Scripture Readings: *Genesis 1:1-3, John 1:1-3, Hebrews 1:1-3, 2 Timothy 4:1-5, 2 Corinthians 13:1, 1 Corinthians 2:5, Ezekiel 22, Jeremiah 5:30-31, 2 Corinthians 11:4, Jeremiah 3:14-15, Ephesians 4:11-12.*

1 Chronicles 12,

NOW these *are* they that came to David to Ziklag, while he yet kept himself close because of Saul the son of Kish: and they *were* among the mighty men, helpers of the war.

2 *They were* armed with bows, and could use both the right hand and the left in *hurling* stones and *shooting* arrows out of a bow, *even* of Saul's brethren of Benjamin.

16 And there came of the children of Benjamin and Judah to the hold unto David.

17 And David went out to meet them, and answered and said unto them, If ye be come peaceably unto me to help me, mine heart shall be knit unto you: but if *ye be come* to betray me to mine enemies, seeing *there is* no wrong in mine hands, the God of our fathers look *thereon*, and rebuke *it*.

18 Then the spirit came upon Amasai, *who was* chief of the captains, *and he said*, Thine *are we*, David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse: peace, peace *be* unto thee, and peace *be* to thine helpers; for thy God helpeth thee. Then David received them, and made them captains of the band.

22 For at *that* time day by day there came to David to help him, until *it was* a great host, like the host of God.

23 And these *are* the numbers of the bands *that were* ready armed to the war, *and* came to David to Hebron, to turn the kingdom of Saul to him, according to the word of the LORD.

32 And of the children of Issachar, *which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do*; the heads of them *were* two hundred; and all their brethren *were* at their commandment.

A LITTLE BIT OF RECENT HISTORY: SADDAM HUSSEIN – AN ANTICHRIST HOPEFUL:
Twenty-odd years ago, I had been asked to be one of the advisers to the local Women's Aglow organisation. As part of their rules, they were required to have a pastor sit in their public meetings. Around that time some of the leaders of Women's Aglow were getting very vocal about Saddam Hussein, the President of Iraq, and along with many other misguided Church leaders, they were saying that Islam was the greatest threat in the world, and that Saddam Hussein was probably the Antichrist, and they would refer to Scriptures like Isaiah 14, which speak of the King of Babylon destroying his own people and threatening the whole world. They reasoned that he was in the very country of Babylon and was saying he wanted to create an empire like that of ancient Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar. I was concerned enough about their false doctrine and false prophecy that I wrote to the leader of the organisation, and advised that they return to the sound doctrine of the Protestant Reformation and recognise that the Pope is the

Antichrist, and always has been, and that Popery was the greatest threat and power in the world, and they should be warning about Popery, not making false predictions about a relatively minor Arab dictator.

Needless to say, I had something of a falling out with Women's Aglow over that matter, but I wonder if any of them ever thought afterwards, how wrong they were with their false prophecies and false doctrines – now, just two decades later, Saddam Hussein is gone and forgotten, just another foreign ruler 'toppled' by the U.S.A. and the international Cabal they work for, using the most ridiculous propaganda campaign (Remember the 'weapons of mass destruction' which nobody ever found! Remember Australian Prime Minister, John Howard, alongside Tony Blair and others, like hounds, baying for the blood of Saddam Hussein, and shedding the blood of our own troops as he forced us to enter that orchestrated war, and Howard defends his lies about WMD's to this day! It must really trouble his conscience, because just about everybody else has forgotten about the matter!), and so Hussein and many of his people were relegated to the growing pile of human carnage, and Iraq is probably a mess today, but the Cabal has more control over it, as per the plan, and Iraq is very rich in oil. Hussein got the special attention of world powers when he invaded Iran and Kuwait, and the New World Order propaganda machine was absolutely screaming, desperate to make these skirmishes amongst Arab nations, the other side of the world everybody else's responsibility – do you get just a hint of de ja vu in this? If you are not sound asleep, I think you should.

*With these matters in mind, I want to point you to that brief statement in **1 Chronicles 12**, which comments on the "men of Issachar": **And of the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do.** And I ask you,*

DO THE MEN OF ISRAEL TODAY (I.E. MEN OF CHRIST'S CHURCH) HAVE UNDERSTANDING OF OUR OWN TIMES, AND DO WE KNOW WHAT THE CHURCH OUGHT TO DO IN OUR PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES? *Or are we like Women's Aglow, and running with the popular preachers, with their false doctrines and false prophecies?*

What I want to continue with today, after spending two weeks already on the significance of Ezekiel 22 & 2 Timothy 4 for the Church today, is a momentous subject. It is not meant to be a burden to the Church but the very opposite – it is liberating Truth, if only you can accept it as such, just as is all that I've been deliberately sharing at length in our weekly Bulletin recently, and, as I said at the beginning of this sermon two weeks ago, it is timely, and it is something of a culmination of all that my call to the ministry has been about, for the past near 40 years, and I would encourage you to consider, whether what I'm speaking about is timely or not, and whether it is accurate or not, and if so, how is it that you can benefit, and be a benefit to others, as a result. And if anyone is tempted to think that, to speak often about the most real and current and relevant

matters facing the Church in the world, and the unashamed confrontation with forces of darkness and their errors and propaganda now attacking the Church, make the ministry somewhat unbalanced, I would urge you to get involved in our weekly Bible Study as well – for some years, we've been studying Bishop J.C. Ryle's "Expository Thoughts on the Gospels", which I don't hesitate to say, is second to none, as a thorough study of the Gospels, and nothing can be better, (for believers and unbelievers alike), than a study of the Gospels. And I would urge you to prayerful consider being more like the men of Issachar, who understood their times, and knew what Israel ought to do – such men are desperately needed in today's Church.

So, with that in mind, and with God's help, let us continue our study of Ezekiel 22, and the parallel in 2 Timothy 4, where Paul urged Timothy to "Preach the Word!", and never cease, because the people would not endure sound doctrine:

THIRTEENTHLY, THERE IS NO GODLY LEADERSHIP:

30 And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.

31 Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath: their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord GOD.

WE MUST REMEMBER, IT IS GOD WHO PROVIDES SHEPHERDS FOR HIS PEOPLE: *Apart from the fact that God is sovereign, hence that He orders all things that come to pass, He has made special promises to provide godly leadership for His Church:*

Jeremiah 3,

14 Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion:

15 And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.

The apostles also confirmed this doctrine: Ephesians 4,

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, **pastors and teachers;**

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

IF THE CHURCH DOES NOT HAVE FAITHFUL PASTORS, THEN GOD HAS NOT PROVIDED THEM! *If God has given the churches false teachers and false prophets to lead them, then there is a great urgency for the churches to seek God's face, and be like the men of Issachar, and see what they must do! The Churches must repent! This is not an option, but a vital necessity!*

And the same goes for national leadership as well:

IF THE NATION DOES NOT HAVE GODLY LEADERS, THEN IT IS GOD WHO HAS NOT PROVIDED THEM! *Why? Well, I don't think it takes a rocket scientist to work it out, but that is another subject, and I'm sure you know the answer.*

In Israel, the Church was the nation and the nation was the Church, and Australia is not greatly different, because our Constitution declares "Almighty God" to be our national Foundation. You cannot depart from a godly foundation and expect all to be well!

WHAT WILL YOU DO, WHEN GOD HAS NOT PROVIDED FAITHFUL MEN TO LEAD US AND CARE FOR US? *There is not one man in Canberra, who has the spiritual substance to lead the nation – the best we have is a handful of men who have a few convictions about some things, perhaps many things, but concerning spiritual leadership at a national level, they have not got to 'first base'. We have a few standing up to be counted, who are mere babies in the faith – they naively believe in Jesus and look to Him for help, but they have no idea what the real issues are, or how or why Australia needs to repent – they have not discovered what the Bible calls "sound doctrine", nor has anyone taught it to them. And bear in mind, that all the leaders of the present day, are following on from the likes of John Howard (as I mentioned), and all the way back to Gough Whitlam, years before that, and they have not begun to address the lies, the cover-ups of crime, even treason, and the gross sins by the parliament and the whole nation. Please observe: God has NOT given us faithful men to watch over us, neither as a Church, nor as a nation!*

NOT ONE MAN IN OUR CURRENT PARLIAMENT, MUCH LESS THE PRIME MINISTER OR THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL, OR EVEN THE QUEEN, WILL STAND UP PUBLICLY AND CONFESS, *"We have sinned against the God of our fathers; we have sinned against the godly Constitution and the Word of God they bequeathed to us; we are no longer Protestant (which means: we are no longer governed by Scripture alone, but have given ourselves to the ideas and opinions of the most wicked men, even to Popes and paedophiles!), nor do we care that our Constitution and Coronation Oath are Protestant – Not Catholic or Multicultural!"*

Well, there you have the reason in a nutshell; you don't need to do a lengthy study on it. But here is the problem with the people in general: they will not accept the solution to their plight, because they will not accept the plain Truth of it!

They KNOW we are no longer Protestant!

They KNOW we are no longer governed by Scripture!

They KNOW we have bowed down to the Pope!

They KNOW this is treason and blasphemy!

BUT they will not accept the need to do anything about it! And so, they continue, in the face of all this, and in the face of the threat of national annihilation, to just blunder on in the same errors and hypocrisy, as if it all just isn't real.

And God would say to us again,

I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none!

No wonder God cannot FIND a good man to lead us!

No wonder God DID NOT GIVE us a good man to lead us!

Because every time He did, we REJECTED them! (I think Joh Petersen was the last one who had a Christian perspective on his responsibilities as a leader of his people). And Joh is still ridiculed today by empty-headed, Socialist, Jesuit-trained city-dwellers, as a country hick and a 'Bible-basher'.

God put this prophecy of Ezekiel 22 on my heart over 33 years ago – it is a fire in my bones! And the truth contained in it and other similar Scriptures always has been! And after 33 years, almost nobody cares, and almost nobody is listening! Let us thank God for the few faithful souls who do hear and heed the Word of God! But we must pray, above all else, for God to raise up faithful men, who will call the Church and nation to repentance, and pray that God will indeed bring us to repentance on a national scale! If we refuse, and insist on blowing our own trumpet and beating our own chest, and boasting how great our soldiers are, the Lord might do worse to us than He is doing to Ukraine today – God forbid! But it might be the Chinese or the Indonesians he sends to take us out, if we do not repent!

NOTHING ELSE WILL DO, BECAUSE WE ARE LOOKING THE DAY OF THE LORD IN THE VERY FACE! And “the day of the Lord” “shall come as a destruction from the Almighty” (**Isaiah 13:6**)! Ezekiel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Jesus Christ warned us all! Apart from the political and social propaganda shaking the nations, the religious propaganda over the past few decades has been so intense, that it seems most Christians are so obsessed with the ‘apocalyptic’ predictions and the end of the world, that it never seems to occur to them that – whether the world ends soon or not, our nation could very well end, if we fail to honour the Lord, Whom we profess to worship!

There is a wonderful promise attached to the Fifth Commandment (Exodus 20:12), “Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee”. It is very sad, that most Christians seem to be oblivious to the fact that, if we would live long lives, and if we would maintain the right to live in our own land, then we must HONOUR father and mother – meaning we are not at liberty to despise the faith and the God of our fathers and mothers! Many think they have rights without fulfilling the conditions. They fight for a cause, because they think the cause is righteous, but neglect to consider how unrighteous they are themselves, and what the

Lord might think of their mindset and behaviour. They forget that (Matthew 5:5), “Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth”! The meek is the man who hands all things over to God, not the man who takes matters into his own hands and demands his ‘rights’.

DO WE THINK WE ARE SPECIAL? THE JEWS WERE NOT SPECIAL, WHEN GOD SENT THE ROMANS TO DESTROY THEM FOR CONTINUALLY REJECTING HIS WORD; *nor are the Americans, or the Ukrainians, or the Australians special today! But many think they are.*

WHO IS ON THE LORD’S SIDE?

Under Moses they had to choose! Under Joshua they had to choose!

Under Christ today we have to choose!

Not to choose a more meaningful life, a healing or a miracle, or a plan that God has for our lives, according to the false teachers and fake evangelists, No! We must choose Jesus Christ the Lord and life eternal, we must choose the Word of God not the opinions of men, or we justly perish for hating the Word of God! The false teachers say, “God wants to bless you!” But they lie! God does not want to bless stubborn sinners – He wants to destroy them! (Remember how Abraham prayed for Sodom). God did destroy Sodom; He did destroy Jerusalem! You are not special – especially if you beg to differ with God! Today, not only is there not a man who speaks for God on the national stage, but there is hardly a man who trembles at the Word of God – they can’t even recognise the Word of God! Not even the ‘Christians’! They are reading ‘Bibles’ (so-called) that are astronomically different from the ones read and translated by Tyndale, Luther, Knox & Calvin 500 years ago, and they don’t tremble at all. They say, “Don’t read the King James. It’s archaic.” There is no doubt in my mind, that if they were to read the KJB, it would indeed make them tremble. Some tremble with anger or laughter when they hear the King James Bible. I’m looking for the day when they tremble with mortal fear at the sound of it! May the Lord bring it on, sooner rather than later, for His own glory and the help of all His people! Amen.

**PREACH THE WORD PT.4: EZEKIEL 22, A STUNNING PARALLEL TO
PRESENT DAY AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY**

The Lord's Day 20th March 2022

Scripture Readings: Genesis 1:1-3, John 1:1-3, Hebrews 1:1-3, 2 Timothy 4:1-5, 2 Corinthians 13:1, 1 Corinthians 2:5, Ezekiel 22, Jeremiah 5:30-31, 2 Corinthians 11:4, Jeremiah 3:14-15, Ephesians 4:11-12, 1 Chronicles 12, 1 Corinthians 2:12-16, Romans 16:17, Psalm 61, Matthew 28:18-20.

FINALLY, THERE IS A GODLY REMNANT OF GOD'S PEOPLE: Ezek. 22, 2 Timothy 4:1-5

In our study thus far, we have observed the backsliding of Israel, outlined by Ezekiel in ch. 22, and what a parallel it is to present-day Australian society. The same backsliding of the Christian Church was predicted by the apostle Paul and others.

Let us not despair at the awful sight of apostacy before us! Remember, God promised (Jeremiah 3:15) that He would provide pastors for His sheep always, and Christ promised His apostles that he would be with them till the end of the world (Matthew 28)! Remember that, in every age, the prophets of God, and the people of God all faced the same thing – a rebellious and ungodly world (& church).

Both Ezekiel and Timothy, each in his respective day, are evidence of the provision of pastors (shepherds) for God's flock, even in the darkest of days. This is not actually stated in these texts, but it is implied in both, because Ezekiel was there! And when Paul had nobody else, by the grace of God, Timothy was there! Israel fell away, to the very point of God's judgment, but He sent Ezekiel! The Christian Church was falling away, but God sent Paul and Timothy! Under Ahab and Jezebel, Israel fell completely away to Baal, but God sent Elijah, and there were 7,000 others who had not bowed the knee to Baal.

We are not called to change the world, or fix the world, or even fix an apostate church, because apostate churches are part of the world – & the world is destined for judgment!

AND I THINK, THAT IS ONE OF THE PAINFUL LESSONS GOD IS TEACHING IN THESE DAYS. THE CHURCH AT LARGE, HAS BEEN DENYING THIS FOR DECADES!

But will God answer the prayers of those who flatly deny His Truth? They all preach unity and compromise, more than they preach Christ! If you preach Christ, you must preach that every knee must bow to Him! Otherwise, you are not preaching Christ at all, but, as Paul put it, "another Jesus" (2 Corinthians 11:4)!!! All those who have followed the false prophets and false teachers, (disinterested in doctrine, talking to the Devil in prayer, confessing their faith in what they can achieve & not faith in God's Word) – when they are tested, they will be left with nowhere to turn but to Jesus. And our responsibility is to testify to this unchanging Truth, and agree with God against self-reliant and self-righteous sinners.

Why else were the prophets ever called? Why else did Paul exhort Timothy to persevere with preaching in a time of apostacy, when they would refuse to hear sound doctrine but heap to themselves false teachers instead? We have a work to do, and what a privilege it is! The ball is at our feet – it is up to us to kick it! Let us plead for God’s merciful intervention, for the forgiveness of our sins, for grace to learn of His ways and walk in them, according to His written Words, and pray for the removal of the wicked from all high places, and their replacement by God-fearing men, and in due time, their utter destruction! Amen.

In every age, God’s people are called to be like the men of Issachar, who were, (1 Chronicles 12), men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do.

If we don’t have understanding of the times, we are no more effective as witnesses to Christ in this world than unbelievers – if we are believers, let us, by God’s grace, learn to act like believers, and speak like believers! Have you noticed, the world gets behind Christmas & Easter, and ‘human rights’ issues, but NOT the Word of God?

That’s why practically all politicians are compromised – they are of the world! That is why most preachers and most Churches are compromised – they also are of the world! Those who are of the world are not of Christ!

IN A TIME OF GREAT APOSTACY, THERE ARE MANY DISSENTERS, BUT THERE IS ALWAYS A FAITHFUL CHURCH!

This is why Ezekiel stood firm, preaching an unpopular message to Israel: His preaching was the very means of preservation for the Church, when all else was falling away! Because only the Word of God has the power to save and preserve souls, and to give the hearers the mind of Christ.

Do you realize that, though we labour to preach and teach the Word of God to all, we are not trying to save the Christ-rejecting world, or change the minds of apostate churches or dissenters (they have MADE their choice) – we are simply witnesses to Christ in this Christ-rejecting world? Can you see the difference between this & the popular, do-gooder religion, which tries to save every soul and fix every problem? The two are ‘chalk and cheese’!

A FAITHFUL CHURCH HAS THE MIND OF CHRIST: What is “the mind of Christ”?

The mind of Christ is revealed when we observe (in Scripture) the necessity of preaching:

This is also why Paul charged Timothy with the task of being faithful in the ministry, and not wavering to please men, or factions, or dissenters:

I CHARGE thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

4 And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

He said, “They will not endure sound doctrine!”

WHY MUST WE CONTINUALLY PREACH GOD’S TRUTH, AND NEVER LET UP?

(Have a look on Page 12 of today’s Bulletin. It will help you to follow what I’m about to say!)

1. *People don’t know God’s Truth;*
2. *People who do know God’s Truth, reject it;*
3. *People who do know God’s Truth, forget it;*
4. *People who do know God’s Truth and don’t forget it, don’t apply it honestly or wisely to every-day life & the real world around them!*
5. *People who do (true believers & disciples of Jesus), need to be reminded continually, & because of this, they have spiritual discernment.*

The first Four groups above bring trouble to the Church & the world!

Only the Fifth group of people above have “the mind of Christ”.

Paul teaches that all true believers have the mind of Christ:

1 Corinthians 2,

12 Now **we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God;** that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; **comparing spiritual things with spiritual.**

14 But **the natural man receiveth not** the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

15 **But he that is spiritual judgeth all things**, yet he himself is judged of no man.

16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? **But we have the mind of Christ.**

There may be times when true believers neglect their duty and become dull and ignorant, but all true believers should have spiritual discernment. They should be people who compare spiritual things with spiritual, not carnal things with carnal!

Some of those who are dull and ignorant, and appear to have little spiritual discernment, are not believers at all – therefore, dissenters and troublemakers are not to be entertained or accommodated by the Church – this only breeds more confusion.

PAUL ALSO WARNED THE ROMAN CHURCH TO AVOID DISSENTERS & TROUBLE-MAKERS:

Romans 16:17, Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

Call him, “Mr. D.”:

‘D’ for Dissenter – the nonconformist. **He or she sanctimoniously appears to be more holy than others by being different** – they may decide we are unfriendly or even unchristian because we doggedly stick to our doctrine, but they are being unfriendly to Christ Himself when they refuse to accept His Truth – they maintain the individual right to judge the Church and its elders, without submitting themselves to any form of commitment or discipline;

‘D’ for Disagree or Differ; Perhaps not openly opposing or dissenting, but **always begging to differ from what God’s Word & God’s appointed elders teach.** We are all learning and grappling with God’s truth, but those who continually disagree or differ, set themselves a course which is opposite to the Church – if you challenge them, they think that as members of the mystical body of Christ, they don’t have to belong or agree with anybody in particular – it escapes them that the Bible teaches membership in a local Church as essential to the Christian profession;

‘D’ for Depart from the sound doctrine of the Church – they deem our sound doctrine to be false doctrine. They may not say it, but their actions say it very loudly, as they refuse to have fellowship with us, and maintain the right to their errors, and their departure from Scripture, claiming the right to interpret as they please, or as their favourite preachers interpret;

‘D’ for Devil (slanderer / false accuser of the brethren), because he undermines the sound doctrine of the Church by talking quietly to certain members he thinks he can influence, or to gain a following and create a faction – because, by default, he is saying (without saying) that the elders are wrong, and the doctrine of the Church is wrong – when he talks to a member of the Church and says that what the Church is doing is “of the Devil” (as one did very recently), or that the Church is causing division – but he is the one who is of the Devil, and he is the one who destroys the unity of the real Church by urging the Church to follow error, and standing against those who speak the Truth; **Call him ‘D’ for Devil’s Dog,** snapping at the heels of the saints, weakening the saints, drawing away the weak and vulnerable and preying on them, unsettling those whose faith is weak or yet immature;

‘D’ for Devouring the lambs – as he harms the faith of those who are young in the faith;

‘D’ for Dingo, because a dingo is not a farm animal, but rather preys on the farm animals: he slinks around the perimeter of the camp, and subtly camp-drafts and cuts out the tender lambs from the flock, so as to tear and devour them.

The dingo doesn’t belong to God’s flock, but he is always hanging around one flock or another, to see what advantage he can get for himself and his master, the Devil, and he probably thinks he is serving God!

I trust that you can see, I am not referring here to every saint who struggles with doctrine and questions from time to time, this is about those who have a distinct pattern of behaviour, and most of them, we have tolerated them for years, hoping they might learn. So, don’t let your cage be rattled by the Devil’s whispering in your ear that you are one of these ‘D’ type personages, if you are a faithful member of your Church. Take the

opportunity to be an even more determined 'D' for 'disciple' of Jesus, and be thoroughly blessed as you serve Him in your local Church!

SOME CURRENT EXAMPLES OF DISSENT: *Many are led astray, not by outright lies, heresies, or false accusations, but by subtle, wrong applications of the Word of God to day-to-day life – in other words, by flawed wisdom, by listening to and following those who don't have the mind of Christ. **Here are some practical tips:***

- **SOME SAY THE CHURCH SHOULD OBEY THE GOVERNMENT IN EVERYTHING, BECAUSE THE BIBLE SAYS SO – THESE ARE DISSENTERS, THE DEVIL'S DOGS:** *The Bible does say so, (1 Peter 2:13, "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake..."), but this is not 'carte blanche' – it is not without its limits, nor is it the only word on the subject, nor is it open to your private interpretation or mine but, as always, every Word of Scripture is both explained and confirmed by other Words of Scripture. **These dissenters say that every time the government gets it wrong, we have a duty to obey anyhow, but they have never read or understood the Scriptures, or seen what John the Baptist or Jesus, or even the Hebrews in the Babylonian captivity did, when they refused to conform to the ungodly decrees of Emperors or Kings. Should we give our children medicine that the government requires when it is both immoral and harmful? Should we promote government, medical, or military practice, which is in clear breach of the Commandments of God? But some do, without even questioning whether it is acceptable to God or not! This is often a cowardly approach, as obeying the government gives them a false sense of safety – but their faith is not in God but in ungodly government! The depraved mentality of some professing Christians at present is that, if the government or the doctor or the ABC news says it, I must do or die, even if the Scriptures prohibit it! God forbid that we should obey ungodly governments!***

But some professing Christians are lazy and unbelieving – they think the Bible covers some subjects, but in everything else, we should follow the government! They are feeding on the Devil's propaganda, not the Word of God! By definition, they are NOT believers- they do not believe the Scriptures! Their faith is merely a vague concept with no reality to it.

- **SOME SAY THE CHURCH SHOULD DISOBEY THE GOVERNMENT IN EVERYTHING, WHENEVER THE GOVERNMENT IS WRONG – THEY TOO ARE THE DEVIL'S DOGS:** *Firstly, they are wrong, because Jesus paid taxes, even when He explained to Peter that they were not legally obliged to do so, and He performed a miracle of the coin in the fish's mouth, to show us that He can provide for us even when the government makes unreasonable and unlawful demands on us. **Secondly, they are hypocrites as well: They say, "Don't pay taxes because the government is evil!" But they don't do the same themselves, they don't refuse to pay their Council rates and State taxes, even though they urge us to disobey because they consider the government to be unlawful – they are Pharisees, they pick and choose what to obey, not according to Scripture, but according to their own depraved minds, and while they pretend to be holy, they are in rebellion against Christ. They say we should refuse to wear masks when the***

government commands us to wear them – because we cannot sing with masks on, and the Lord requires us to sing His praises. What nonsense! What puerile, mindless wisdom! Anyhow, did we ever wear masks while we were singing? Did I ever wear a mask while I was preaching? No! But these Devil’s dogs make a straw man to shoot at – they accuse us of things we have never done anyway! But if you want to wear a mask while you sing, who am I to forbid it? The Bible doesn’t talk about mask-wearing. But surely God is able to give His people wisdom – Surely we are required to have the mind of Christ.

Do we require the ladies to wear hats in Church? Do we require them not to wear hats? Does the Bible even talk about hats? If it does, does it mean the kind of hat the queen wears, or an Akubra hat? And is an Akubra hat a man’s hat or a woman’s hat? Oh no, that’s right, the Bible doesn’t mention hats at all – it mentions women covering their heads with veils in Church to show they are under the authority of their husbands. Do you have a photograph of the ladies at Corinth, to show exactly what they wore? Do you have a ‘First Century Illustrated Bible’, where Paul did sketches to show the required kind of head-coverings to wear? Oh, I’m surprised you don’t, because you seem to know all about it, some of you (not “you” here today, but some of ‘you’ out there). But the Bible does plainly say that women are to submit to their husbands as the head, and the Bible does plainly say that women should not wear men’s clothing, or wear their hair like men’s hair (that much, at least, is very plain) – the spiritual truth here is the sanctity of marriage, the sanctity of headship (i.e. male headship), and of proper order in the Church, so that the Church doesn’t look like the world with all its perversions. (By the way, I’m not reacting to a conversation somebody raised recently about this subject – my notes here were prepared weeks before – it was just one of the examples that came to mind as I prepared).

The issues at Corinth may have been different from the issues we face today: what about tattoos? Are we going to divide the Church and say a man who has had a tattoo is not fit to be in leadership? But then, of course, if he had an obscene tattoo or a Satanic tattoo, you would at least ask him to cover it up.

Since the days of so-called ‘emergency health regulations’ (about 2 years ago), I’ve had three people approach me with specific demands on how we should disobey the government regulations and make a stand against the government – and guess what? None of them were members of the Church, nor were they members of ANY Church! They were all self-appointed experts! Back when the government closed the Churches for a few weeks, one demanded, “Trevor, open your Church and I’ll come along!” Well, it isn’t ‘my Church’ to start with. Nor was I willing at the time to lead the Church into a head-on confrontation with the government on that temporary issue. It only lasted a few weeks, and in God’s providence, it forced us to organise ourselves with live streaming of the service, which was a blessing in the long run, as so many more are able to worship with us from a distance. But the gainsayer argues, “But there are churches that have opposed the government and they’ve been blessed.” I don’t doubt it, but I believe we also are blessed. But then again, I do know of pastors who are in jail, and their Churches spending many thousands of dollars on legal

defence, because they have taken on their government in court. Is it wise to inflict this on the Church? Is it wise in their case? Is it wise in our case? – Two different questions! And we need “the mind of Christ” if we are going to care for God’s flock in all this turmoil. By contrast, those self-appointed experts never took care of anything, except their own egos and opinions!

BUT ACCORDING TO THE ARMCHAIR EXPERTS, THE DISSENTERS, THE DEVIL’S DOGS, EVERY PASTOR IS SHIRKING HIS RESPONSIBILITY IF HE ISN’T FIGHTING THE GOVERNMENT IN COURT! These self-appointed experts have no idea how to care for God’s flock! And why is it? Because God has not appointed THEM to care for His flock – and the proof of the pudding is in the eating: when things get difficult for them, they don’t stick around to keep the flock, they run off to torment and deceive some other flock, as dingos do! I told one recently, that he was one of the Devil’s dogs, and that he wasn’t the first Tobiah or Sanballat to trouble the Church, but we’ve had dozens of them over the years. I rehearse these things for your own spiritual safety. Know what’s going on! Understand the times! Know what Israel ought to do!

- **SOME MAKE A FALSE APPLICATION OF THE SCRIPTURES, E.G., ON DAVID & GOLIATH:** David did slay Goliath, even when nobody else would take him on, but there was a time and place for that battle – David did not decide a year earlier that he should bring down the Philistines. No, God put that situation together over years, and drew it to a point, when David was ready, and David was compelled to go against the giant! There is a time for war and a time for peace, as Solomon said. And by the way, Goliath was a Philistine, not the King of Israel, David was not fighting against the leaders of his own people – it is an enemy outside of Israel he fought. And when it came the time that the King of Israel did want to kill David, David did not go to war against him but fled from the conflict! The Devil’s dogs don’t have the mind of Christ; they don’t know the Scriptures! They only use them in vain attempts to bolster their own lies! **But even if we allow their analogy, that Goliath represents the world: Just because the world is wrong, God does not require us to fight the whole world every day, nor does He even require us to fight the world at all, except in special and particular circumstances that He prepares us for.** You will find that the dissenters, the Devil’s dogs, will want you to fight their battles, but normally, they are not willing to risk all to do the same! Contrary to their own advice, they are still paying their Council rates. Why? Because they know that if they don’t, the Council will sell them up! And with all their protests against health regulations, they are still obeying most of them, just like the rest of us! But they want you to refuse to pay your rates and they want you drag the government into court. **Since when did the Great Commission say, “Go into all the world and challenge every government in the courts!”?** They are frauds – they will not be there to back you up when you act on their advice – you know why? Because they are not acting now! They only want you to do it so they can be spectators of your demise; they don’t have the guts to follow their own advice!
- **THEY ARE HYPOCRITES LIKE THE JEWS WHO TROUBLED THE APOSTLE PAUL, REQUIRING CIRCUMCISION, just to suit their own agenda, not because God’s Word required it: Galatians 6:13,** For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep

the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh. ***The Devil's dogs are spectators, not real contenders; they are merely trouble-makers, not true contenders for the faith.*** They will contend on some point that is not required, making themselves busybodies, but they will not join a Church and fight together with the saints for what is right and true, day-by-day, year-by-year, for no earthly reward. Some have never been an elder of a Church, some have never been the pastor of a Church, some have never even been a member of a Church, and yet they want you to give them the right to teach the Church, and change the order and doctrine of the Church according to every whim and fancy that passes through their empty heads, all just to puff up their own egos.

- **SOME OF THEM SAY, THE CHURCH SHOULD ALLOW A VARIETY OF DOCTRINAL POINTS OF VIEW FOR THE SAKE OF PEACE – ‘UNITY IN DIVERSITY’:** *The Bible says the opposite! Preach the Word – reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering & doctrine (2 Timothy 4); Note: with all longsuffering & doctrine! You'd better believe it – when you have preached the same doctrine for 30 or 40 years, and hardly anybody says, “Amen!”, that takes some degree of “longsuffering”! But Paul did say, the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, so, preach it with all your heart and all your being while you can!*

The Bible says to mark those who promote heresies, and avoid them!

The Bible says, Sanctify the Church, with the washing of water, by the Word!

The Bible does NOT say, sprinkle the Church with all shades of error, and let every Devil's dog have his say!

The Bible says, elders must be “apt to teach”! What does ‘apt’ mean? What does ‘teach’ mean? Neither wolves nor goats are apt to teach the sheep and keep them safe.

- **SOME HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THE CARE OF GOD'S FLOCK MEANS:** *They would happily plunge the Church into legal conflict with the government, some even advocate taking up arms, as they menace and divide the Church with their own pedantic rules and false piety. These are not men of God; they are the Devil's dogs, confusing and scattering the flock. Learn to recognise them for what they are.*
- **SOME DON'T KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A CHURCH, PLANTED BY GOD AND GIFTED BY GOD WITH QUALIFIED ELDERS, AND MAR'S HILL AT ATHENS (Acts 17),** *where every false god, and every opinion, of every man and his dog, were up for discussion, and welcome – until Paul came along with God's Truth, that is – then they were not so accommodating! That is not the Church! That is the world! Mar's Hill was not a Church but a Multicultural forum for the mixed multitude. But the Devil's Dog, the dissenter, doesn't know the difference between the Church and the world – he doesn't know he is part of the world, not part of the Church – some even refuse to become members of a Church ever, it is somehow beneath their special brand of dignity and holiness – they are Pharisees: they claim to follow the Word of God, but really only follow their own rules and opinions: “Touch not; taste not; handle not” (Colossians 2:21)! They strive to be more holy than everyone else, and while they do, they have no idea what God defines as holiness – to be separate from the*

world and worldliness, to be separate from errors, false doctrines, and lies! They are working hard for acceptance by God, and know nothing of “the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free”, but instead, are “entangled again with the yoke of bondage” (*Galatians 5:1*).

What is the “yoke of bondage”? The idea that our good works can impress God! This raises another point of discernment about the dissenter:

HE IS PROUD, NOT HUMBLE: Paul said, “O wretched man that I am!” (*Romans 7:24*). But the proud dissenter will say, “Oh, I *was* wretched, but *now* I’m saved and sanctified”, or he might not actually say that, but he acts as if that is the case, because that is what is in his heart – **he is not a humble man, as hard as he tries to make his voice sound holy, his words are not holy, for they disagree with the Word of God.** Please search the Scriptures about these things – for your own good, and the good of your family and friends! They are vital, practical Christian instruction for daily life.

- **ONE OF THE TELL-TALE SIGNS OF THE DEVIL’S DOG, IS THAT HE WILL NOT BECOME A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH – NOTE THIS AND DON’T THINK IT’S UNIMPORTANT!** – some think they already belong to Christ’s universal Church, so it is up to them whether or not they actually join a Church on earth – **this is heresy!** I am not saying good, honest people are wrong, when they cannot find a real Church nearby to belong to; I’m talking about the nature of the Devil’s dogs, who are often not committed to any local Church, because they don’t even believe in it.
- **NEARLY EVERY WORD OF SCRIPTURE TO THE CHURCH IS DIRECTED TO A PARTICULAR CHURCH ON EARTH, NOT TO SOME ETHEREAL BODY FLOATING AROUND IN THE HEAVENS:** The letters to the seven Churches of Asia (*Revelation 2 & 3*) are directed to seven real Churches, and then spiritually applied to all Churches in principle; the epistles of Paul are written to specific Churches (Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, Colossae, Thessalonica), and likewise, spiritually applied to all Churches. **These Divinely-inspired Scriptures were not addressed to the air, nor to footloose saints floating about, too holy to join any Church!**
- **THE LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA ARE VERY SPECIFIC AND VERY REVEALING: THEY WERE ALL ADDRESSED TO THE “ANGEL OF THE CHURCH AT...”** The “angel” (or ‘messenger’) is the pastor of the Church. He is the messenger of God, chosen to speak for God to the Church. Surely there is a lesson here, that, since the apostles didn’t live for ever, we are reassured that God gives His Word of doctrine and His Word “in season and out of season” to the pastor of the local Church. Otherwise, why did He appoint such men, if He did not intend to speak through them, and give them grace to keep the Church safe?
- **HENCE, WE SEE THAT TO BE A CHRISTIAN AT ALL, IS TO BE JOINED TO A LOCAL CHURCH SOMEWHERE – IF THAT IS POSSIBLE!** And that requires humility and submission to Christ and His Church – no, not submission to every weird and wayward Church, or to every false teacher around, but to belong somewhere in Christ’s Church – and today, you can do so even online, if you can’t do it in person! But imagine, if I said, “I’m a real family man, but I don’t actually belong to any particular family; I murdered my father and mother and brother, but I consider all

men to be my brothers; I don't have a wife or any children in my house, but I have children all over the place with different mothers looking after them". What would you think of my definition of a 'family man'??? How much credibility would I have, claiming to be a family man?

Then why do we accept self-proclaimed 'brethren' and 'members' of Christ's Church, who don't actually belong anywhere in a Church, but are just spiritual tramps and vagabonds? We ran across one, who had some fancy name for his position – some sort of 'pastor', he called himself – and when you asked him what that meant, it turned out that he just started up a group in his own home! Another one has often said, "I'm a minister!" But the truth is, he has never been appointed the minister of anything – ever! You see, some are dishonest enough to invent fancy titles to deceive you into thinking more highly of them! It's just as well we aren't impressed by "flattering titles" (Job 32:21-22)! Why do we give any credence to their cunning words and opinions, when the moment they disagree, they disappear? In the past 6 months, we've had two different men, who approached us separately, and at different times, saying they would come to us, if we met certain conditions! They didn't have the honesty or the humility to sit in the Church for 6 months and find out what we believe and teach, and how we behave, No! They wanted to dictate the programme for us before ever setting foot in the Church! I tell you – you wouldn't believe this stuff, unless it was actually happening! Who are they, to set the agenda, and doctrine, and order of the Church, before they even set foot in it? They are fake brethren, fake Christians, wolves in sheep's clothing, they are the Devil's dogs, and how much more so, are those who have left the Church, but keep slinking back, as if they are still welcome, to sow their seeds of dissent and discontent, and deceive the flock (often very, very subtly), and how brazen are those who separate from us because they can't stomach our sound doctrine, but then appeal to us for money to help their missions!

I hope and pray you can see the enormous benefit in studying these things as the practical application of the Scriptures to every-day life in this treacherous world. If you heed these things, and apply them, there is no telling what disasters you may avoid, and what awful sin you may be spared from partaking in, and what priceless instruction you may impart to your own family.

We have seen in Ezekiel 22, the Lord opens with the challenge to the prophet: "Wilt thou judge the bloody city?", that city being his own people, the city of Jerusalem, and the prophecy goes on to condemn both the leaders of the Church and State and the people themselves, as totally corrupt, and culminates with that awful statement: V.30, And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.

We have seen that, centuries later, Paul's epistle to Timothy emphasises the same need of continual preaching of God's Word to keep the Church itself from suffering the same awful judgment as did the city of Jerusalem in her day, and he stated the reason, (2

Timothy 4), 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

4 And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

And we saw that Australia today is in the same awful state of moral and spiritual decay, and that only the determination to continue to preach the Word can help (and you know what? I'd be a rich man if I had a dollar for every time in the past 40 years I've had somebody try to stop me or get me to deviate from the path of preaching that I am called to!). We observed that spiritual discernment, in the Church at large, is apparently at an all-time low, as professing Christians follow the very Antichrist, rather than the Word of God, because they do not have "the mind of Christ", and are not like the men of Issachar, that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do (1 Chronicles 12), and yet, God has a remnant of His people prepared for all that comes against them and against His Truth.

Hence, there is always a great need to contend for the faith among the remnant of the faithful, and contend against the wolves (the dissenters, the Devil's dogs) who ravage the flock of God and oppose sound doctrine and practice, from without and within, who don't have the mind of Christ. May God give us grace to be like Ezekiel and Paul, like the apostles and prophets, and expose the sins of the Church and of the world, and avoid them, to see the wolves for what they are and mark them and avoid them (whether in Church or State), and by God's grace, be part of a widescale repentance and reformation of the Church, if the Lord wills. And may we all be encouraged to remember, that even when the Lord has not provided godly leadership nation-wide, He always has a godly remnant of His own people, whom He absolutely cares for, and under whom are "the everlasting arms". Let us remember, that where the Devil's dogs are being exposed and run off, where false doctrine is being exposed, so that the saints might feed on sound doctrine, and have the mind of Christ, that is where the faithful remnant of God is, the Ark & safe haven of the redeemed in Christ alone, according to Scripture alone.

God help us to be part of it, and not give in to those devilish influences so common and so popular on every side! Amen.