



14 & 15 August 2021



Naomi William

Trinity Eleven

Almighty God, who called your Church to witness that you were in Christ reconciling men to yourself: help us so to proclaim the good news of your love, that all who hear it may be reconciled to you; through him who died for us and rose again and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Contemporary Service

Saturday, 5pm, via Zoom

Sermon Topic

Shine (for Jesus) Where You Are

by Benjamin William

Philippians 2:1-18

Sunday Service

8.45am, Main Sanctuary

Scripture Readings

First Reading: Romans 12:14-21

Gospel Reading: Matthew 5:38-42

Sermon Topic

Refusing Retaliation

by Rev Jeremy Ponniah



Sometimes We Must Settle for Peace

Article by Jon Bloom, www.desiringgod.org

“Why did you not go with me, Mephibosheth?” (2 Samuel 19:25). The weary king stood looking sternly at the disheveled disabled man sitting in front of him.

David had just been through the most terrible experience of his life. He was grieving deeply the recent death of his son, Absalom, who had died trying to kill his father and seize the throne for himself (2 Samuel 15–18). The coup had failed and the rebels were dead or scattered.

For many who had stayed loyal to David, this was a time of celebration. David, however, had to force every smile. His grief went deeper than witnessing a tragic end to a prodigal child. He knew just how responsible he was for his son’s death.

The Complexity of Life

God’s words through the prophet Nathan still burned in David’s ears as they were unfolding before him:

“Why have you despised the word of the Lord, to do what is evil in his sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and have taken his wife to be your wife and have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. Now therefore the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.” Thus says the Lord, “Behold, I will raise up evil against you out of your own house. And I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun. For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel and before the sun.” (2 Samuel 12:9–12)

He could hardly bear it: his beloved son had been that neighbor. “O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you” (2 Samuel 18:33). David had stopped saying this out loud, so he wouldn’t keep demoralizing his people (2 Samuel 19:5–7), but he was still saying it in the deep places of his soul.

This tragedy, not only of his son, but all who were swayed by him — some of whom now lay in fresh graves with wailing mothers and wives beside them — was shot through with complexity. Real evil was inscrutably woven together with God’s righteous judgment. This was one of the reasons David was so merciful to those who had abandoned and even cursed him as he fled Absalom’s ascendant forces. He knew they had been

swept up in this raging, complex current that he, to one degree or another, had brought upon them all.

Whom Could He Trust Now?

The complexity also made returning to Jerusalem confusing for the great, sad king. Whom could he trust now? Were the unfaithful words of those who had not joined him mere words for the wind, spoken in the fear and confusing tumult of war? Were these people, who were now singing a different song as he returned, showing their true colors — or simply trying to save their skin? “All mankind are liars” (Psalm 116:11). David included himself in that “all.”

And now here was Mephibosheth. His betrayal, in particular, had hurt.

Mephibosheth was Jonathan’s son. He had become disabled as a child in the fear and confusing tumult of another grievous, inscrutable weave of evil and righteous judgment (2 Samuel 4:4). David, out of his profound love for and covenant with his closest friend (1 Samuel 20:42), had sought out Mephibosheth, and given him back his royal grandfather’s land, along with a crew of paid employees — Ziba, his fifteen sons, and his twenty servants. David also gave Mephibosheth an honored spot at the king’s table, treating him as if he were one of his own sons (2 Samuel 9:7–8, 11).

But it was Ziba, not Mephibosheth, who had joined David as the king escaped Jerusalem just as the munity moved in. And from what Ziba had reported to David, Mephibosheth appeared to be just another treacherous “son” gunning for his throne (2 Samuel 16:3–4). David had immediately rewarded Ziba’s loyalty by granting him all of Mephibosheth’s property.

Ambiguity Emerges

But as the now-victorious David was reentering Jerusalem, Mephibosheth was there to greet him — and he was a scraggly, smelly mess. An aide had informed David that Mephibosheth claimed to have not shaved or bathed or cared for his lame limbs the entire time David was in exile (2 Samuel 19:24). And there were tears in Mephibosheth’s eyes. This cast some serious shade on Ziba’s story. More ambiguity.

“Why did you not go with me, Mephibosheth?” David asked. The disheveled disabled man replied,

My lord, O king, my servant deceived me, for your servant said to him, “I will saddle a donkey for myself, that I may ride on it and go with the king.” For your servant is lame. He has slandered your servant to my lord the king. But my lord the king is like the angel of God; do therefore what seems good to you. For all my father’s house were but men doomed to death before my lord the king, but you set your servant among those who eat at your table. What further right have I, then, to cry to the king? (2 Samuel 19:26–28)

Mephibosheth’s earnestness was convincing. He certainly looked like he was telling the truth. But then again, that’s how the Gibeonites pulled one over on Joshua (Joshua 9:3–6). And Ziba had showed loyalty by risking his neck to align with David at the king’s weakest moment. But then again, David himself had instructed Hushai to risk his neck to feign loyalty to Absalom (2 Samuel 15:32–37). Ziba’s risking his neck might have been nothing more than betting on an experienced king rather than an overconfident prince. Who was telling the truth?

The Best He Could Do

So, David issued a new ruling: Saul’s former property would be divided between Mephibosheth and Ziba (2 Samuel 19:29). One of them would receive less than he deserved, the other more, because someone was obviously lying. David, however, could not peer into the hearts of these two men. Nor, given the urgent circumstances, could he prioritize an investigation into this. He had a kingdom, a family, and a heart to try to piece back together. Besides, this was no time to make new enemies.

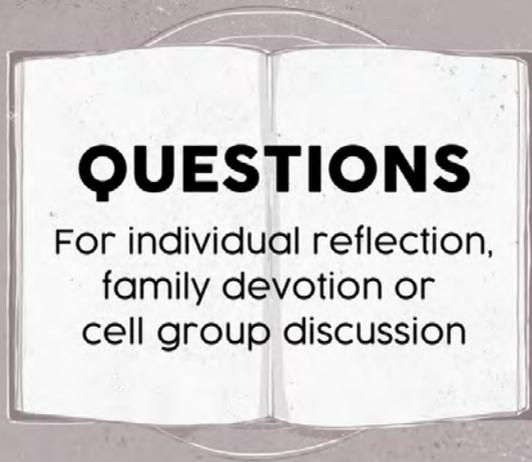
Both men had apparently demonstrated loyalty to him, and David could think of no other way to communicate to both of them that he was choosing to assume the best of each of them. He would have to leave full justice to God.

The Best We Can Do — Sometimes

Sometimes, that’s the best we can do too in complex situations. Sometimes — in families, in friendships, in pastoral and employment situations — sufficient evidence is lacking, or circumstances are too ambiguous, or time is too limited to ensure that full justice, as we understand it, is done. Sometimes the best decision, all things considered, is to be as generous as we can with all parties concerned and trust God to bring about full justice in time — which he will.

God knows. And “all his ways are justice” (Deuteronomy 32:4). He has ways of working out justice that are simply inscrutable to us. He can, like no one else, weave what people and devils mean for evil into his perfectly just and righteous ways, and end up working them all to bring about good beyond our wildest dreams (Genesis 50:20; Romans 8:28). And he will use our imperfect judgments — and the injustices we receive in this age — to bring his good to pass.

On our part, we are called to make our imperfect judgments in good — and real — faith, to the best of our limited abilities. But let us never hide behind “limited abilities” because secretly it’s easier to appease evil than to “do justice” (Micah 6:8).



Discuss the intent of the law taught by Moses in Ex 21:24 regarding “eye for eye, tooth for tooth”. How was the teaching by the scribes and Pharisees going against the intent of this law?

In Matt 5:39, Jesus said “Do not resist the one who is evil”. How has this been misunderstood by others? Share the principles of non-retaliation expressed through each of the four examples used by Jesus in Matt 5:39-42.

Share the challenges you have faced in overcoming the impetus to retaliate. What steps can you take to overcome evil with good and follow the example of Jesus?

CONTEMPORARY SERVICE

21 AUGUST 2021

5PM - 6PM

JOIN US IN ZOOM



OVERCOMING FAILURES!

What can failures bring? Depression? Suicidal thoughts?
How about discovering the strength and faith in you?

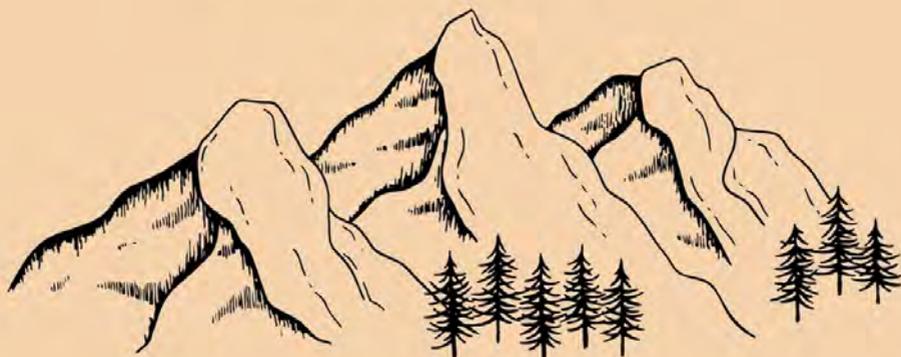
GUEST SPEAKER: RUTH
(Trained Counselor for Mental Health)

Zoom link: bit.ly/2VzBFra

Meeting ID: 838 611 0235

Passcode: 909305

FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST 2021



SERMON SERIES

EC Sunday Service

1 Aug: Honouring your Marriage Vow
(Matt 5:31-32)

8 Aug: Honouring your Commitment
(Matt 5:33-37)

15 Aug: Refusing Retaliation (Matt 5:38-42)

22 Aug: Loving Your Enemies
(Matt 5:43-48)

29 Aug: Serving & Giving in Humility
(Matt 6:1-4)

The "Already and Not Yet" KINGDOM

*A Perspective of the Kingdom of
God from the Old Testament*

5 Sessions via Zoom
14, 21, 28 Sept & 5, 12 Oct
7:30 pm – 9:00 pm
Led by Kian Siong

**Register at bit.ly/3jumrvT or
contact Joanna at 81610926**



ANGEL TREE PROJECT 2021

The Angel Tree Project was founded by Prison Fellowship Singapore (PFS) in 2005 with a vision to bring the hearts of inmates and their loved ones together in the spirit of Christmas. Over the years, we have witnessed how inmates have found Christ in prison and how the Word of God has transformed them. With this initiative, they are given an opportunity to seek forgiveness and share with their families how God has touched their lives.



CONNECT

Hand-written letters with powerful messages of hope and reconciliation are written by inmates and are personally delivered with a grocery gift voucher by PFS volunteers to each of their families.



RECONCILE

This reconnection of hearts not only brings hope and joy to children and youths with parents in prison, but also opens the door to the restoration of broken relationships between inmates and their loved ones.



UNITE

Churches and organisations unite in the spirit of community and social service. Through donations, dedication of time and service, our partners make this project a meaningful and successful one.



Let's do our bit for St Paul's outreach to the Prison Fellowship Singapore (PFS) Family Care Ministry. Let's support the PFS Angel Tree Project!

HOW?

Help deliver inmates' letters, together with grocery gift vouchers, to their families. Visits will take place over Nov & Dec 2021. Each group of 2 or 3 SPC members will pay a visit to each family.

Donate towards the cost of the grocery gift vouchers.

HOW TO VOLUNTEER TO DELIVER THE LETTER AND GROCERY GIFT VOUCHER?

Click on the URL or scan the QR code below to fill up the form as a volunteer to deliver the letter and grocery gift voucher.



<https://tinyurl.com/spcatp2021>

**Please let us know your interest by
22 August 2021.**

HOW TO DONATE

Scan the QR Code for SPC Tithes & Offerings and indicate "ATP2021" under the reference no.

Alternatively, you can also mail a cheque to SPC or place your cash donation in an envelope and drop it in the offertory box during service.

Please remember to indicate "ATP2021" at the back of your cheque or envelope.

If you need any clarifications, you may find out more from Arulnathan John at 9823 0517 or Joyce Tang at 9797 0715.



A photograph of a person with long, dark hair, seen from behind, wearing a dark t-shirt. Two other people are visible: one on the left with their hand on the person's shoulder, and one on the right with their hand on the person's shoulder and a ring on their finger. The image is in a dark, monochromatic teal color.

Pastoral Care

For those who require prayer or pastoral care, do drop us an email at contact@stpaulschurch.org.sg or contact the respective pastoral staff directly.

Rev Jeremy: 9477 5476

Pastor Leon: 9199 3815

Pastor Leroy: 9710 2900

ST PAUL'S CHURCH

ONLINE GIVING



INTERNET BANKING

St Paul's Church

DBS Current Account No. : 023-000684-7



PAYNOW

USING BANK APP

Scan the QR Code or enter
UEN: T08CC4082E

Please indicate "S2 or CS" under Reference No. The code "S2" refers to the Sunday English Service and the code "CS" refers to the Contemporary Service. Other information like specific giving (e.g. mission, building, etc.) as needed. Names are optional.



GIVE BY CHEQUE

Made payable to "St Paul's Church" and mailed to our Church address - 843 Upper Serangoon Road Singapore 534683. Kindly indicate CS or S2 at the back of the cheque.