

We might say a similar dynamic applies in the Psalms. The various psalmists speak with honesty, often brutal and painful, about their feelings toward friends, enemies, and even God himself. But this is never for the purpose of self-validation or, worse still, wallowing in self-indulgent self-pity. Rather, it's for the purpose of setting the recounted experiences and feelings within the context of God's great truths.

For the church to grasp this truth and shape our psychological intuitions in the biblical way, she needs to think long and hard about one of the central and formative acts of worship: singing. It's no coincidence that the Psalter is a book of corporate praise. Singing such poetry as a community shaped the social imaginary of the Jews. And the church needs to do the same today.

Yes, we've been complicit in expressive individualism; no, we don't want to go down the road that leads to Oprah Winfrey and make sentiments the foundation for how we live our lives. But that doesn't mean we should eliminate sentiment and emotion from our church lives. Far from it. We need to reform our corporate church lives in a way that forms our inner lives appropriately. And that means choosing worship songs that don't indulge in emotion for the sake of emotion or press upon me that my needs and my desires are the reason God exists. We need songs that allow us to understand and express our feelings honestly but in a way that always leads outward to God and to his truth. And while I don't think, as some do, that the church should sing only psalms, I'm inclined to say that singing more psalms—or any psalms if you don't sing them already—would be an excellent place to start.

Think about it: the psalms present a view of the Christian life that's marked by joy but that also knows sorrow and loss. They set the struggles of the present in the context of God's great actions in times past and his promises for the future. They help us to understand our status as strangers in a strange land. By setting forth a grand picture of God and the promise of future rest, they help us to keep perspective—theological and emotional—on the events of the present, whether personal, such as illness, or social, such as the disturbing transformations of society. We are creatures of emotions and sentiments, and we are fallen. Therefore, we need songs of redemption to help restore our emotions to their proper context.

#### Collect

O God our Redeemer, in our weakness we have failed to be your messengers of forgiveness and hope: renew us by your Holy Spirit, that we may follow your commands and proclaim your reign of love; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen**



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*'This is the covenant I will make them,' says the Lord God: 'I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God and they shall be my people. [Jeremiah 31:33]*

#### Lent 5

##### 17<sup>th</sup> March

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Psalms 119:9-16

Hebrews 5:5-10

**John 12:20-33**

#### Palm Sunday

##### 24<sup>th</sup> March

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Psalms 118:1-2, 19-29

Philippians 2:5-11

**Mark 11:1-11**

#### Biblical Worship in a Strange New World

Carl Trueman – TGC, July 2022

Expressive individualism as we find it in contemporary society is problematic for how it places individuals and their own desires—we might even say their own egos—at the centre of the moral universe. Yet we must be careful not to miss the important truths it contains, such as its underlying commitment to the notion of universal human dignity regardless of where we're placed in the earthly hierarchy.

Furthermore, its emphasis upon our inner psychological space and upon our emotions and desires is not in itself wrong. It's wrong only when it makes such things effectively ends in themselves. God has created us as beings with emotions and desires. We are intentional creatures, not simply animals of instinct, and our inner thought processes are vital to who we are. And that means we need to acknowledge that inner psychological space and shape its intuitions in the right way.

St Augustine, early in the 5<sup>th</sup> Century wrote an autobiography entitled *Confessions*. It is one of the classics of Christian literature. The book is preoccupied with Augustine's inner life, and he recalls key incidents from his earlier life. What's interesting, however, is that Augustine's inward move of reflection doesn't terminate there but always ends up moving outward toward God. Ultimately, his feelings are set in the context of, and corrected by, the larger truth that is God and his revelation in Christ.

## A guide for our prayers during the week

### Monday

Our diocese and the gospel

- Bishop Peter
- Other parishes
- Dean for Cathedral – Rev. Ross Nicholson

### Tuesday

Our church and the gospel

- Children and youth
- Families
- Seniors
- BCA

### Wednesday

Our community and the gospel

- St Luke's Shop
- Blackwater
- Emerald Churches

### Thursday

Our nation and the gospel

- Prime minister
- State and local government
- Religious Freedom legislation

### Friday

God's world and the gospel

- Islamisation
- War and poverty
- Persecuted Church
- CMS and ABM

### Saturday

Ministry and the gospel

- Bible Studies
- Food for Body and Soul
- Wardens and Parish Council
- Rev Daniel and Jenni

## Dates to Remember

17 March (today)	Blackwater at 3 pm
21 March	Bible study at 5.30 in hall
24 March	Service at 4 pm
	Food for Body & Soul 5.30 pm
29 March	Good Friday at 9 am
30 March	Easter service at Blackwater 3 pm
31 March	Easter Sunday at 9.30 am

	17 March	24 March
<b>Service Leader</b>		
<b>Welcome</b>	Alan	Alan
<b>Power Point</b>		
<b>Read</b>	Jenni	Jenni
<b>Prayers</b>	Larry	Nancy
<b>Sunday School</b>	Cate & Noah	Cate & Noah
<b>Morning Tea</b>		
<b>Shop</b>	Jenni	Jenni
<b>Mowing</b>		Nuku (Friday)

## The BCA Prayer

Lord our God, help us to remember those who live in isolated and remote parts of our land. We ask you to strengthen and encourage all whose ministries are supported by The Bush Church Aid Society.

Refresh them in times of discouragement and loneliness and call others to stand with them in the task of making Christ known.

Grant that, through the ministry of the Word and Sacraments, through caring service and by support for young people, the message of your redeeming love may be proclaimed and accepted by the people of our land. We ask these things through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

### Direct Debit Giving Information

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