

### Call to Worship

Welcome to worship with Feilding Baptist Church this Waitangi weekend!

Last week our verses in Matthew mentioned the new covenant (Matthew 26:28). A covenant is "more intimate and loving than a mere contract; more binding and accountable than a mere relationship".

And I hadn't made the link between then and Waitangi weekend. For a treaty is a covenant. If you're not sure about that, Google, 'is a treaty a covenant'? This is the AI answer that I got;

A treaty is legally synonymous with a covenant in international law, both representing binding agreements between states, similar to conventions or pacts. While a treaty is a formal, legal instrument, a covenant often implies a more solemn, foundational, or long-term, sacred relational commitment, such as in the context of the Treaty of Waitangi. (Google AI)

More intimate and loving than a mere contract. More binding and accountable than a mere relationship.

If you're interested in reading more in this area, the most influential books I have read are:

Michael King's - History of New Zealand - this should be in every household in the country

Keith Newman's - Bible and Treaty - this should be in every Christian household in the country

Dick Scott's - Ask that Mountain - where I simply couldn't believe what I was reading. There are parts of our history that I am ashamed of.

We're here to worship.

Let's be reminded of God's greatness by these two verses from Jeremiah;

Jeremiah 10:6-7 New Living Translation

**6 Lord, there is no one like you!**

For you are great, and your name is full of power.

**7 Who would not fear you, O King of nations?**

That title belongs to you alone!

Among all the wise people of the earth  
and in all the kingdoms of the world,  
there is no one like you.

Father God, we celebrate that there is none like you! We celebrate your greatness, your power, your wisdom. Thank you for caring about us. Thank you for your help in troubled times. Thank you for being dependable, for being ever present. Thank you for the comfort of the Holy Spirit, giving us strength and endurance. And thank you for the life and hope that Jesus gives us. Please bless our country with unity and respect. Please be God of our nation.

And this morning, please bless us by speaking to us, please bless this time, and this space, in Jesus mighty name we pray, Amen.

### Message - Cups/Need you now

We share in the suffering of Jesus, but praise God, the suffering of Jesus brings us salvation and life.

To conclude the Last Supper, they sung a hymn, one or all of the six Hallel Psalms, 113 to 118. Those hymns conclude so well last week's verses, and set up this week's. So let's read

Matthew 26:31-46 (NIV - UK)  
Jesus predicts Peter's denial

**31 Then Jesus told them, 'This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written:**

**"I will strike the shepherd,  
and the sheep of the flock will be scattered." [a]**

**32 But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee.'**

33 Peter replied, 'Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will.'

34 'Truly I tell you,' Jesus answered, 'this very night, before the cock crows, you will disown me three times.'

35 But Peter declared, 'Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.' And all the other disciples said the same.

### Gethsemane

36 Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, 'Sit here while I go over there and pray.' 37 He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. 38 Then he said to them, 'My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.'

39 Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, 'My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.'

40 Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. 'Couldn't you men keep watch with me for one hour?' he asked Peter. 41 'Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.'

42 He went away a second time and prayed, 'My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done.'

43 When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. 44 So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing.

45 Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, 'Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour has come, and the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. 46 Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!'

### Footnotes

Matthew 26:31 Zech. 13:7

There is something about solid foundations, strong and sure foundations. And that's the surprising thing when Jesus begins by talking about the disciples falling away. And then we have Peter's bravado, those others, they might fall away, but not me! What does Peter need to learn? What do we need to learn?

The strongest one, the one who hadn't discovered his weakness, was the one who so publicly denied, disowned his Master three times.

To fall away is not the same word as disown/deny. The background to falling away is sin. Here we are to recognise the power of sin. These 12, okay, probably 11 now, as Judas has most likely left, these 11 were so close to Jesus. Jesus was their Master. Jesus had chosen them! They were disciples or students, or apprentices to the Master. To deny or fall away from the one who had chosen them, that's appalling, a real kick in the teeth to their Master.

But this is the power of sin. Sin turns us from and against God. We can be like Peter, and try to be strong, determined, and passionate. But sin will still get us. And it will take us to a place of pity, misery and guilt. We have to recognise the power of sin and our helplessness, and hopelessness, before we can appreciate the greater power of Jesus. For Jesus has broken the power of sin, and death, and darkness, and Satan. And now through Jesus can we be set free.

We must accept our brokenness, our depravity, our need of Jesus, and then accept God's forgiveness, and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Even here, for the disciples, it isn't hopeless. Firstly, see the words from Zechariah that Jesus uses, chapter 13, verse seven, it's always good to go back to the Old Testament and read before and after. What do we have two verses later, Zechariah 13:9

9 This third I will put into the fire;  
I will refine them like silver

and test them like gold.  
They will call on my name  
and I will answer them;  
I will say, "They are my people,"  
and they will say, "The Lord is our God."

Then see v32, there will be a regrouping of the scattered disciples in Galilee. Jesus provides some hope, some restoration for those who will fall away. We are broken. But Jesus can make us whole, can restore us.

That's the disciples, and us, what do you think the power of sin was tempting Jesus to do? We see that in the next eleven verses, from v36. Instead of falling away, Jesus turns, to the Father. Three times Jesus goes, to the Father. Here's a model for us.

Now, let's pause here. If you had to act out v38, how would you say Jesus' words - 'My soul is overwhelmed to the point of death...' Do you think this was a casual comment with a cup of tea in His hand? Luke (22:44) tells us that Jesus was sweating blood (hematidrosis). This is a rare but known medical condition that occurs under extreme anxiety. Jesus was hugely stressed. Imagine how these words were said, and the emotion in the prayers to the Father.

Three times Jesus goes to the Father. It's a contrast to the disciples who fall away. And in a revelation of the humanity of Jesus, Jesus asks for the suffering to be taken from Him. What connection this is with us! Jesus might not have experienced our circumstances, but He certainly knows the depths of emotion.

All through our lives we suffer challenges. Often these try to lure us away from Jesus. What's the challenge you're facing at the moment? How are you suffering?

Singers and poets express emotion. The Christian artist Tiffany Lee who goes by the name of Plumb expresses this in the song 'Need you now'. The background to the song is painful. She has had and continues to have some really rough stuff to deal with, struggling with pain and anxiety attacks since she was 13. She wrote a song called Need You Now in 2011. As if to amplify all this, as she was about release this song her marriage unexpectedly imploded, which gave the song fresh meaning.

She says this song means more to her than any song she has ever written, because of the hope it gave her in the darkest hour of her life (Plumb - Tiffany Lee). Hope she says, is like oxygen. And music like this draws her to Jesus. She recognises that redemption is something that happens instantaneously, but restoration takes a lifetime.

[https://www.crossrhythms.co.uk/articles/music/Plumb\\_How\\_songs\\_of\\_healing\\_helped\\_a\\_disintegrating\\_marriage\\_/50830/p1/](https://www.crossrhythms.co.uk/articles/music/Plumb_How_songs_of_healing_helped_a_disintegrating_marriage_/50830/p1/)

It's a song that moves me, comforts me. You might know it? May it help you in times of trial.

Let's listen.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ylnx0NA9X4&list=RD9ylnx0NA9X4&start\\_radio=1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ylnx0NA9X4&list=RD9ylnx0NA9X4&start_radio=1)

Suffering in its many forms pulls us in all sorts of directions. When Jesus suffered, He turned to the Father. This was His foundation, His Solid Rock, His sure and steadfast Anchor.

May Jesus, God, be our dependable solid rock too.

Is there hope in these verses? Yes, in v39, with the cup. Jesus prays, 'May this cup be taken from Me.' What is this cup? Of course, it's the cup of suffering, an Old Testament symbol of judgement. But we should linger here a moment, and consider two other Old Testament cups. There is also the cup of God's wrath (Isaiah 51:17, Job 21:20, Jeremiah 25:15) and indeed Revelation 14:10. Was this cup also the cup of God's wrath that Jesus was having to endure? Of course it was. But was God's wrath coming on Jesus? How could God bring wrath on God? This is God's wrath all right, on evil, on Satan, on death, on darkness, and most definitely on sin. All the things that took from God what God had intended for the earth.

And we should stop to imagine if Jesus was not able to endure this cup of suffering, if this cup of wrath was not poured out. What if evil, death, darkness had not been put in their place?

Of course, this leads to the third Old Testament cup, the cup of salvation. And you wouldn't believe where this one is mentioned - in the Hallel Psalms, the Psalms that were sung after the Last Supper.

Psalm 116 (NIV - UK)

- 1 I love the Lord, for he heard my voice;  
he heard my cry for mercy.
- 2 Because he turned his ear to me,  
I will call on him as long as I live.
- 3 The cords of death entangled me,  
the anguish of the grave came over me;  
I was overcome by distress and sorrow.
- 4 Then I called on the name of the Lord:  
'Lord, save me!'
- 5 The Lord is gracious and righteous;  
our God is full of compassion.
- 6 The Lord protects the unwary;  
when I was brought low, he saved me.

  

- 13 I will lift up the cup of salvation  
and call on the name of the Lord.
- 14 I will fulfil my vows to the Lord  
in the presence of all his people.

I will fulfil my vows. There is one more thing. See the other thing that Jesus prays, not my will but your be done. I've heard those words before, 'Your Kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth, and in heaven.' But not in my life... So often we pray this prayer and think of others, and other places. What about our lives?!

In a stunning act of submission and surrender, Jesus submits to the Father, and continues with the path set before Him. And for that, we can be very grateful. But we're followers, disciples, apprentices of Jesus. We're also called to submit and surrender.

God has given us free will, so we can choose to steal the egg money, break into cars behind Dominoes, or make that sneaky tax claim. Or we can surrender to the Kingdom of God, and follow the right path. The Holy Spirit, God, will help us change, help us to make good decisions, help us to embrace God's will.

Romans 12:12 sums up where we've been today. Let's be  
**12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.**

Father God, please help us to have hope in the times when we suffer. Please help us to endure, to have patience as we work through these times. And please help us to accept the model of Jesus, by being faithful in prayer, and willing to submit to what is right.

Thank you for the salvation and life that Jesus has brought us by following Your will. Thank you for enabling Jesus to be King. Amen.

**Benediction**

Romans 15:13 New International Version - UK

**13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.**

We go now in confidence and peace, to love and serve the Lord, Amen.