



The theologian, Hendrikus Berkhof (p.494) points out that our world is reliable and yet also full of surprises. Against the backdrop of natural laws which reliably repeat themselves, we find humanity as God's *counter-player*, a being who is free to act in surprising new ways; someone who is free to master the laws of nature and thereby bend nature to his or her will. The very freedom which marks humanity, makes it impossible for humans to master each other in the same way as nature. Neither can humans master God, who stands beyond us as the God who is in heaven and able to over-rule both nature and human freedom. God, however, does not wish to enact his will in such a way that it takes away the freedom of humanity. According to Berkhof, "Precisely the fact that we are called to pray proves how much God respects and wants to involve our freedom, not only to rule the world but also to talk over with him its direction and course. That shows that there is a surprising scope for our petitioning initiative in our walk with God, because much of what may appear humanly impossible is possible with him."

God can, of course, act without humans, and at times does do so. "Yet as a Father he desires to do things in consultation with his mature children." God has committed himself to listen to us, and to work with and through us to establish his Kingdom on earth. That is the gift of prayer.

## HAPPENINGS THIS WEEK

### SUNDAY

Prayer meeting before church  
Sundays @ Six & service tonight

### MONDAY

Explorers' Bible Study 9. 30 am at the church.

Bible Study at the church at 7pm.

### TUESDAY

**Craft group starting this week**

Pastors' meeting

### THURSDAY

Mainly Music Outreach to carers with toddlers.

### OTHER MINISTRIES

**Brighton Kids** continuing on every day.

**Music Committee** meets first Sunday of the month

**Saturday Prayer Meeting** 8am every second Saturday

**Mentoring at Primary School** - to be decided when to restart

**Finance Meeting** - once a month

**Management Meeting** - once a month

**Elders' meeting** - once a month



KNOW

*Our values are grouped around three actions: Know, Love and Go. This morning we are looking at what we value knowing.*

A church focused on Christ where our members

- understand God's work of grace in Christ Jesus
- know that they are forgiven only because of Christ's death on the cross
- acknowledge that they have eternal life only because of Christ's resurrection from the dead, and
- accept that they have all this by faith alone and in Christ alone

A church growing in its reliance on the Holy Spirit where our members

- use their gifts to serve each other in love
- bear the fruit of a Christ-like character

P3

A church built on the Bible where

- we depend on the Bible as the authoritative revelation of who God is and what He has come to do for us in Christ and through His Spirit
- we know the contents of the Bible and are equipped to read it and share it in a responsible way with others

A church that is discerning where

- we are able to differentiate between the essentials and non-essentials of the faith.
- we are able to handle theological differences between each other with maturity and in humility

Who believes what we've heard and seen?

Who would have thought God's saving power would look like this?

The servant grew up before God—a scrawny seedling,  
a scrubby plant in a parched field.

There was nothing attractive about him,  
nothing to cause us to take a second look.

He was looked down on and passed over,  
a man who suffered, who knew pain firsthand.

One look at him and people turned away.  
We looked down on him, thought he was scum.

But the fact is, it was our pains he carried—  
our disfigurements, all the things wrong with us.

We thought he brought it on himself,  
that God was punishing him for his own failures.

But it was our sins that did that to him,  
that ripped and tore and crushed him—our sins!

He took the punishment, and that made us whole.  
Through his bruises we get healed.

We're all like sheep who've wandered off and gotten  
lost.

We've all done our own thing, gone our own way.  
And God has piled all our sins, everything we've done  
wrong, on him.

He was beaten, he was tortured,  
but he didn't say a word.

Like a lamb taken to be slaughtered  
and like a sheep being sheared,  
he took it all in silence.

Justice miscarried, and he was led off—  
and did anyone really know what was happening?

He died without a thought for his own welfare,  
beaten bloody for the sins of my people.

They buried him with the wicked,  
threw him in a grave with a rich man,

Even though he'd never hurt a soul  
or said one word that wasn't  
true.

Still, it's what God had in mind all  
along,

to crush him with pain.

The plan was that he give himself  
as an offering for sin

so that he'd see life come from it  
—life, life, and more life.

And God's plan will deeply  
prosper through him.

Out of that terrible travail of soul,  
he'll see that it's worth it and be  
glad he did it.

Through what he experienced, my  
righteous one, my servant,

will make many "righteous  
ones,"

as he himself carries the burden  
of their sins.

Therefore I'll reward him  
extravagantly—

the best of everything, the  
highest honors—

Because he looked death in the  
face and didn't flinch,

because he embraced the  
company of the lowest.

He took on his own shoulders the  
sin of the many,

he took up the cause of all the  
black sheep.



Who is Jesus?