

TODAY'S FACILITATORS

PRAYER: Austin

OFFERING: Isaac

WORD: Pastor

WELCOME

We warmly welcome you, if you are worshipping with us for the first time. We believe you've become a member of our church family by God's grace.

Please ensure you speak to the Pastor or one of today's facilitators before you leave.

May God bless you richly (Amen).

VERSE(S) OF THE DAY

Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time. Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.

Colossians 4:5-6 (NKJV)

THEME FOR THE YEAR

Our theme this year is to **enlarge and build better (Isaiah 54:2-3)**, and by God's grace, we're trusting that the boundary lines will fall for us in pleasant places (Amen).

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know you could join most of our services online when **you are unable to attend?** Talk to the technical team or the Pastor to find out how.



Image source(s): <https://pointofview.net/articles/free-speech-and-civil-liberties/>



Sunday 8 May 2022

WELCOME

Redeemed Christian Church of God

Bethel

WEEKLY SERVICES & MEETINGS

SUNDAY

Thanksgiving / Worship service
From 10am

FRIDAY

Prayer meeting / Bible study
From 7pm

RCCG Bethel Parish

Unit 13, Skylines Village

Limeharbour, London E14 9TS

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WEB: www.rccgbethel.church

Our 'must-visit' website



Home Our Focus About us Contact Us Sermons Privacy Policy



Our website is a treasure trove of information, and not only about our focus and mission. You could subscribe to our podcast or listen to past sermons too (<http://rccgbethel.church/sermons/>). This is particularly useful for when you are unable to attend services or for refreshing your recollection as an essential part of your private Bible study.

There's more! Details of events and outreach will almost certainly be available from relevant pages on our website and updated regularly, along with downloadable copies of our Sunday bulletins (<http://rccgbethel.church/category/bulletins/>).

So, why don't you set our homepage as one of your **startup page(s)** in your browser now? The following instructions for most of the common browsers may help.

Google Chrome

1. Open the browser and the **Settings** menu (or the **three vertical dots** to the right of the menu bar).
2. Scroll down and click on **Advanced Settings**.
3. Select **Open a specific page or set of pages** under **On Startup**.
4. Select **Set pages** and enter or add <http://rccgbethel.church/>.

Mozilla Firefox

1. Open Firefox. Press **Alt-T** on the keyboard and select **Options** from the drop-down menu or go to **Tools >> Options** from the main menu.
2. In the **Home** section, select **Homepage and new windows** and **Custom URLs...** from the field's drop down.
3. Enter or paste the URL: <http://rccgbethel.church/> or click **Use Current Page** if you are already on our website.

Microsoft Edge

1. Click the **three horizontal dots** to the right of the top menu bar.
2. Select **Settings** and select **A Specific Page or Pages** from the **Open Microsoft Edge With** section drop down options.
3. Enter <http://rccgbethel.church/>. (Click the Plus sign to add more pages if required).
4. Click the **three horizontal dots** to the right of the top menu bar again to close **Settings** menu.

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Does the bible support free speech?

Text: John 17:14-16

Freedom of speech is essentially our right to communicate about political issues. This means any communication with relevance for the public, including comments on government policies, criticisms of public officials or demands for certain rights etc. In some countries, this is codified as part of an established democratic process, but still subject to legislative processes.

What may have become clear over the years is that such freedom can be interpreted subjectively. What's freedom of speech for one person, in a community, organization, country may be very different from others. In that kind of environment, Christians, our faith and Jesus often invite criticism, mockery and ridicule too e.g. Jerry Springer - the Opera (April 2003 to February 2005).

We can also see examples of unwelcomed freedom of speech in the Bible. An example is when Paul spoke in Jerusalem, addressing the Jews, vilified for preaching to the Gentiles (Acts 21:17–22:30). Both John the Baptist and Jesus were ridiculed by the authorities of their day (Mark 6:14–16:20; 5:40; Luke 16:14; 22:63–23:36). Although free speech is often implied or justified by references to free will (Genesis 2:16–17), there's no specific reference to it in the Bible.

However, we may take some guidance from verses talking about speech in general, many rooted in avoidance of sinful behaviours that may lead to bondage (John 8:31–36; Prov. 10:19). The Bible is quite clear about not using our words to tear others down (Exodus 20:7, 16; Leviticus 19:11; Ephesians 4:15, 25, 29; Colossians 3:8–9; Titus 3:2). Therefore, our freedom to speak shouldn't be taken as license to mock or debase others, whoever they are and whether they're in authority over us or not.

We may see an illustration in the way Queen Esther spoke up for what is right and saved her people from Haman's evil plot, at great risk to herself. With sensitivity and skilful manoeuvring to eliminate the danger (Esther 2:21–23; 3:1–2; 5:6; 4:11–16; 5:6–8; 7:3–8). In general, a couple of things should be more important to us than fighting for or establishing our rights. Speaking the truth (Eph 4:15) and not destroying or debasing others with our words (Eph 4:29).

Bottom line:

As Christians, we're always called to take a different higher road in all things. While we're expected to challenge ungodly practices, we must do so with sensitivity and the skill it requires.

RCCG Bethel Parish
Pillar of truth ... defining the future today