

Christ Our Sacrifice (1 Cor 5)

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 30 April 2023

Preacher: William HC

[0 : 00] Cool, so let's open to 1 Corinthians 5, verse 1 to 13. It is quite a hefty and serious passage, but let God speak to you through it. So I'll be reading from NIV.

It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you and of a kind that even pagans do not tolerate. A man is sleeping with his father's wife, and you are proud.

Shouldn't you rather have gone into mourning and have put out of your fellowship the man who has been doing this? For my part, even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit, as one who is present with you in this way.

I have already passed judgment in the name of our Lord Jesus on the one who has been doing this. So when you are assembled and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord.

Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough? Get rid of the old yeast so that you may be a new unleavened batch, as you really are.

[1 : 13] For Christ our Passover lamb has been sacrificed. Therefore let us keep the festival, not with the old bread leavened with malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexual immoral people, not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, greedy, and swindlers or idolaters.

In that case, you would have to leave this world. But I am writing to you that you must not associate with any who claims to be a brother or sister, but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or slanderer, a drunkard or swindler.

Do not even eat with such people. What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? God will judge those outside.

Expel the wicked person from among you. William? I'm really encouraged how brave you were, Matthew, approaching those Maori guys.

[2 : 25] I'm shaking my boots, actually, handling this passage. Yeah, sounds like the kind of topic I'm sure most of us would rather avoid on a Sunday afternoon. I get it.

But as we resume our journey through 1 Corinthians, I want to remind us that here we are at PCBC English. We don't skip the good bits of God's Word, and we don't skip the hard bits either.

So would you pray with me as we journey through this difficult passage together? Father, we were bought with a price, the price of Jesus Christ, sacrificed for our sins.

And so help us to even comprehend what is going on in this passage, and how it might be relevant for us as we seek to live as a holy people here in New Zealand. Would you speak to us even now?

In Jesus' name. Amen. So two things, I think, for the next couple of weeks. One, I'll try and recommend a book each time. We're getting really topical in 1 Corinthians, and so I'm going to share what I think this passage has to say, but here is a whole book version of it.

[3 : 37] So particularly on Chapter 5, when you're talking about some difficult issues about what on earth is going on here, I would recommend this book, Church Discipline by Jonathan Lehman. It's in the library, so you can borrow it, and really just get to grips with how the church protects the name of Jesus.

And also, if you have more questions, and there will be lots of questions, because we're heading into territory in 1 Corinthians, where we're talking about things that really hit us day to day, whether it's about marriage or sexuality, whether it's about using your money, all kinds of things.

So I want to encourage you, use the question board that we have. So we'll put the link on our Facebook page. Join in the conversation. What questions you have will flow into what we talk

about, hopefully, Sunday by Sunday, as we open up God's Word together.

So I hope you paid attention to that reading, right? Imagine if that happened in our church, right? Someone who claims to be a Christian, comes to PCBC every Sunday, but sexually immoral in a way that, you know, everyone knows about.

People are talking about it. Even non-Christians have heard, and they can't believe it. What would we do as PCBC? How do we honor Christ, our sacrifice?

[5 : 06] Recall how this letter began, right? The Apostle Paul writing to the Corinthian church. He says, He's called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and he writes to the church of God in Corinth.

Not just a church. Those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be His holy people. So even in these opening words, we get clues as to what kind of things the Apostle Paul wants to address, right? The kind of burden that's on his heart for the church that he helped to plant. To a church that quarreled and divided into different camps, Paul, he spends four chapters, right, of his letter, trying to reframe their identity in Christ.

Not in the teachers they follow, whether Paul or Apollos. They're the church of God in Corinth. Not the church of Paul. Not the church of Peter. No one else. And now, in these next two chapters, we really see coming to the foreground, he's going to start talking about what does it look like to be set apart, which is the way to say sanctified, in other words.

Set apart, sanctified in Christ Jesus. What does it look like to be a holy people? This is what comes now to the foreground. This is what we are being challenged on.

[6 : 31] So as we listen in to the problems and the issues of holiness in the church of Corinth, we are being challenged ourselves. What are the issues that we, as a church, have failed to live as holy people?

And the key thing I want you to remember, okay, in the next three weeks that we're going to hear from 1 Corinthians, there's a pattern to notice, right? Every time Paul raises a sin that is particularly a problem in the Corinthian church, he's going to tell them what they should do, but he's going to connect it intimately with the gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ.

All right? There's a problem, and then he's going to connect it to the solution, which is the gospel. There's another problem. He's going to say, the gospel is where you start from. There's a problem, and he's going to mention Jesus Christ.

You see, the church puffed up about a publicly disgraceful sin like we just heard. He says, hey, Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Next week, we're going to hear a church taking each other to court on things they can settle themselves spiritually, reconciling, agreeing in the Lord.

He says, you were justified by Jesus. And then later on, for a church that treats sexual intimacy like waving a pay wave card, Paul says, you were bought with a price, the price of Christ.

[7 : 57] Every issue that we wrestle with as Christians, we must connect to the gospel if we're to be truly holy people. Every issue you and I zoom into as PCBC, right?

Whether on a Sunday, whether in a meeting, whether one-on-one or in groups, we must keep zooming out as well and see what has Jesus done for us on the cross and how does that shape our solution, what we do next.

Friends, we need Christ for all of life, okay? As death and resurrection should shape every area of our life in repentance and faith. And here is a church puffed up, right, about who was better connected with which speaker and yet they were blind, they were ignorant of such a serious issue in their midst.

And so have a look, let's take a closer look, verses 1 to 5. And we see, he first confronts this unrepentant sins that are swirling around in the church in Corinth.

Okay? Have a look at verse 1 again. It's actually reported there's sexual immorality among you. And he describes it, doesn't he? Our society's values have changed, but for now at least, not even secular Kiwis would tolerate this kind of immoral behavior.

[9 : 18] Let's make it personal. Imagine if one of your leaders here was doing this. Or God forbid, if I was. How would you respond? Oh, that's his personal life.

It doesn't matter. Oh, but she's been a faithful member for years. Besides, who are you to judge? Not Pastor Paul. He knows the Lord judges him on the final day.

We've heard that, right? And so in honor of his Savior, he's not afraid to confront them. I mean, you can imagine him today, right? You know, if verse 2 was typed out, I think he would have used big,

bold caps.

And you were puffed up about your sin. It seems like this is the even worse sin, actually, right? That the whole church is just turning a blind eye to what is going on.

They're puffed up about it. Look, I get it. Naturally, we want to zoom in, wag our fingers at this man's sin of incest. You know?

[10:22] And maybe some of us might even want to challenge it a bit. Why is it wrong? Can't we classify it as a disorder these days? Paul's focus, as you notice, is not on that. He mentions it. We have to deal with it.

But actually, he spends more time condemning the Corinthian church as a whole for boasting in that situation. We don't know all the reasons.

You know, when you read a letter, it's like listening in to one side of a phone conversation. I don't know if you've done that at home. So we hear one side, right? But we don't know what they were writing before, what the situation was. So we don't know all the reasons why the Corinthians were puffed up about this kind of immorality in their midst.

What's certain, at least, is that they have a worldly view of human sexuality. We're going to hear in two weeks, they describe sex in chapter 6 as like food for the stomach.

Something that God designed to be enjoyed by husband and wife, to picture Christ's love for his church, treated as nothing more than a bodily appetite.

[11:25] What a parody of God's amazing design. So they've got a confused understanding of sexuality. What's also clear later is that the Corinthians, they seem to have very distorted ideas of freedom, right?

We sang it, didn't we? Whom the sun sets free is free indeed. And then we take that and we say, I'm free to do anything I want. And that's where you fall into a ditch because freedom in Christ does not give us license to run wild, to dishonor Christ, our sacrifice, to do or celebrate whatever people want to do with their bodies, their minds.

And it's possible. It is possible based on what we've already heard, right, about first century Corinth, their situation, that maybe they were afraid to challenge this person.

Maybe this man who they're writing about, maybe he's got he's got cred. He's got street cred.

Maybe he's a celebrity. Maybe he's well-known. Maybe this man bankrolled the church budget.

Maybe he was part of their leadership team even. Too up there to touch. And in honor-shame culture, maybe people were afraid to call out something that was so terrible, even to non-Christians.

[12:48] And yet to misunderstand, right, how to view sex, how to view freedom, how to view power, that's not just a first century Corinthian problem. I think PCBC in 2023 wrestled with this too.

I think New Zealand society does not do well on sex, on freedom, on power in general, does it? And in an age where we rightfully in our world confront racism, we will call out child abuse, we will call out other moral failures in society, it is shameful when we fail to confront the sin within our camp, within the family of God.

The Bible says it's an outrage, a tragedy, a disgrace. if and when we fail to address unconfessed, unrepentant sin amongst the family of God.

And in the rest of verse 2, Paul summarizes what the Corinthians should have done instead.

Instead of being puffed up, they should have mourned the sin. They should have shown repentance.

And they should have put this man outside of their fellowship. Paul, the pastor who started their church, he may be living in a different town as he writes this letter, he might be gathering with another bunch of Christians week after week, but in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, he gives a verdict on this man, right?

[14:15] Verse 3 and 4. And he wants the church to agree with his verdict. This is a serious sin.

They should mourn it. And they should do what we call church discipline and practice that.

Paul describes this action of church discipline three different ways actually in our chapter. All right?

In verse 2, if you can have a look, he says, remove the man from our fellowship, right? Your fellowship.

All the way at the bottom, he says, expel the wicked person from among you. He's quoting the book of Deuteronomy. But actually, verse 5, very graphically, he says, hand this person over to Satan.

To use this language of the devil is, it seems very odd to us, doesn't it? All right? Seems like we've just entered into like spooky horror movie on Netflix territory.

This is not being overly dramatic, though. In fact, this kind of language appears in the Bible more than once. Here, in 1 Timothy 1, verse 20, Paul, he's using Old Testament categories and pictures to describe what really should be happening with this man.

[15:21] Okay? So, have a think about it. Throughout the whole history of the Bible, blessing comes when you are in God's sacred place, right? And if you're outside of his presence, that's because you've sinned.

That's because you've fallen short. You've been removed from his dwelling place. It's a wonderful thing to live with him, but because of our sin, we can't enter in. Okay?

Think about it all the way back in Genesis. The moment our first parents disobeyed God's good words for them, they were, what were they? They were cast out from the garden, right?

Cast out from God's dwelling place. Who else was cast out? The ancient serpent that deceived them, right? And so, the people out there, out of the garden, they're in Satan's domain, aren't they not?

That's the language that it's alluding to. That's the stories it's alluding to, right? To be put over to Satan, handed over, is like the time of the tabernacle and the temple.

[16:23] Sin must still be dealt with and removed from God's dwelling place where he dwells. And so, if there is sin that needs to be dealt with, it's thrown out into the wilderness. Or later on, it's land outside the camp.

Later on, it's exiled into a foreign nation. Time and time again, the Bible says, there is a place where you dwell, God. And there is a place where Satan still holds sway.

And if our memory verse is true, right, who are we? We are God's temple, meaning God's spirit dwells not just in a temple anymore, but in people, in Christ, through the Holy Spirit.

Then, that raises the stakes, right? Because now, PCBC English is not just a congregation, right, that is on a piece of paper. It's actually God's gathered people.

We, the church, are God's sacred space. The stakes are raised. And our dying world is where Satan still rules as prince. And to hand this man over to Satan, or to practice church discipline in any way, is simply to publicly state, we don't think this brother, this sin, belongs in God's sacred space.

[17:41] We're saying this person, by their life, by their unrepentant sin, really belongs in the wilderness. because that is how we will protect God's temple today, His church, so that it will be a light and salt to the world, a city on a hill.

But you might be asking me, you know, why stir up all this drama? Why risk hurting people's feelings by calling out what's wrong? Why not?

Why do we dare not to do it? Because rightly practice, discipline, biblical discipline, is a loving act. It protects the name of Jesus.

It might be the only thing, it might be the thing that brings someone to their senses, oh, I need to repent, what I'm doing is not right. The goal is rescue, not piling on.

The goal is to destroy the flesh, it says here in verse 5, so that His spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord. Paul talks in this way because he loves the church.

[18:57] Church discipline is not a hateful act, it's a loving thing to do. Here's an analogy that might help. This is one that a fellow Baptist pastor shared with me earlier this week, his name is John.

He says, imagine, right, that church is a mountain climbing team. Who's done Tongari crossing? Yep, own up, yep, that's a pretty long trek.

Thankfully, you don't need to hook yourself together, you can just walk the path and just enjoy the view and get tired. But sometimes you need to hook yourself together when you're climbing a mountain, right?

It's dangerous, right? So what happens in these kinds of expeditions, everyone is clipped together onto the same rope for their safety and their protection.

what happens is if one person falls, okay, or slips, the others can drag them out of trouble. So rightly practiced, with love and humility and patience, to be part of a church, right, to be a member of a church and to be disciplined works like this, okay?

[20:00] Church discipline is not a punishment, it's actually a warning, it's actually saying, all right, I'm clipping you from the rope. It's actually saying, hey, brother, sister, you're not even clipped in. You're not even clipped in, and if you keep walking with us, that is dangerous for you, it's deceptive, it's gonna hurt not just you, but everyone gathered here, clipped onto the rope.

If the rope is the gospel, to say to someone like this man, you know, that you're not clipped in is a loving thing to do. And I get that this is such a counter-cultural thing to imagine even, right? Here we are, we are part of a church that is unique, are we not? Our foot, well, one of our feet, right? Our church is one foot in Western culture, right? And so we're too used to treating even the most serious sins as individual preferences, right?

She'll be right, mate. You do you. And then we have another foot in Asian culture, right? That's where a lot of our heritage comes from. And so there's this group think.

We are too scared to speak up, too shy to break the harmony in the group. If we harm it, you know, that's even worse sometimes we think.

[21 : 18] And for a church like ours, that to my knowledge has never once tried to practice church discipline in any way, even though our church constitution says it, even though it's biblical, I think we would have to tread very carefully to do it carefully, corporately, biblically, with love and care and grace.

I think what Paul calls the members of the Corinthian church here to do has to be a last resort, right? A last resort after every other avenue has failed, after meeting up with someone or gathering in a group and just saying, hey, you know, we're seeing this too, following the steps, kind of like what Jesus laid out, right, step by step in Matthew 18 for confronting or challenging or reconciling with the disciples.

If we truly want to be God's people, set apart like Jesus, trekking together on a journey as BCBC, we have to make it clear that we are roped together by the gospel, not culture, not language, not life stage and certainly not a mix of people who love Jesus and people who don't care about him and disobey his commands.

And we must warn each other when someone steps into that territory, if they're not clipped in, if they're in eternal danger. In verse 1 to 5, that's what we see.

Don't let unrepentant sin spread in the church. But now, we need to also know what gospel truth will help us to obey this.

[23 : 05] And from verse 6 onwards, Paul zooms actually out as he calls us to become a Passover people through Christ our sacrifice. So from verse 6 to the end, we notice something interesting because think about it in your case.

When you want to address and you see something wrong with a brother or sister, too often we zoom in, don't we? hey, I notice so-and-so is really addicted to this or that.

Or hey, I've seen this person always getting angry, always mouthing off in a really ungodly way. And we're always zooming in.

Or even if you want to confront someone, hey, chapter so-and-so verse so-and-so says, don't get drunk, what's going on? And then you end the debate there, as if that is all someone needs.

We often zoom in, right? One or two verses, we think that would do it. I find it fascinating if we look at verse 6 to 8, that Paul, he could have gone that way. He could have started verse 6 by saying, a man had his father's wife?

[24 : 13] Don't you know that Leviticus 18, 8 forbids that? End of story. Now stop. What does he do though? He's far wiser. He doesn't just zoom in to a rule of regulation, he also zooms out.

Over and over again in this letter, that's what we see. This is what life in Christ looks like. We keep zooming out to grace, not just the law, to the gospel, not just all the nuts and bolts and what we have to do.

I mean, look, Paul, he's a former Pharisee, which means he knows and he's memorized the Bible, he knows all the extra rules that his Jewish group have put together. And yet, here in verses 6 to 8, what does he do?

He chooses to highlight, not rule, but a story of grace, the Passover story in the book of Exodus. Now, some of you might not be familiar with this.

It's mentioned hundreds of times in the Old Testament in story and song. This is kind of like the gospel for an ancient Israelite. Good news because they were once in slavery in Egypt and then God sets them free.

[25 : 21] redeems and rescues them. This is a song that they will be even singing about in the very end when Jesus comes back. We sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb, Revelation 15.

Look, because it's only when Israel remembers what it cost to win their salvation, right, that Passover night, that they have the motivation and the desire to be a holy people.

You can read more about this in Exodus 12, but by speaking about leaven and not just Leviticus, Paul is using the biggest salvation story of the Old Testament and he says you need to understand that to be holy you need to remember grace, how God has saved you.

To know what God wants of you and to live it out, you need to remember how God has saved you. You see, on the night the Israelites escaped from Egypt and the judgment of death, actually, Exodus 12 tells us, right, as a destroying angel passed over the signs of blood sacrifice on their doors, the people of God were also told, this is how you remember this night, you're to eat only unleavened bread, free of the fungus that spreads through the dough and changes it.

Imagine that meal, if you were an ancient Israelite, in the lamb, God is saying, an innocent sacrifice saved you from death. In the unleavened bread, God is saying, so now go live differently to the surrounding nations.

[26 : 54] Every time they ate this unleavened bread, it was to remind them of their new identity, a people saved by grace and set apart from the surrounding nations, to avoid anything that will infect God's holy people and spread through them and destroy them.

And you know what? Moses spoke to Israel, Paul now says to us, he uses this story and he says to us, PCBC, for Christ our Passover lamb has been sacrificed and so now you and I are to be a new unleavened batch.

Most of us don't think of yeast or starter as a bad thing. Who's amateur baker? Yeah? Some of you? All right. Certainly, I know my wife bakes very well, always leaving a little bit of starter, right? And then you just chuck it into some flour, you mix it all up, feed it, and then suddenly, voila, next day, more bread to make. Okay? Look, so we don't usually think of yeast or starter as a bad thing. So I want us to maybe change the analogy a bit. Paul is basically saying in verse 6, a little mold ruins the whole cheese. A runny nose spreads throughout the whole daycare or school.

[28 : 15] A rotten apple is going to spoil the whole bag. All right? And look, when a block of cheese costs an arm and a leg these days, you really would cut the moldy bit off, wouldn't you?

Right? You don't just throw the whole block of cheese out. Just too much, you know? Cost of living. Look, and so, look, if Christ, our Passover, priceless Passover, has been sacrificed, should we not deal with sin, unrepentant sin, in our church to save the rest of the church?

That's the logic here. The Bible says holiness is not just following a bunch of rules. It's asking what will honor Christ because he's been sacrificed for us.

To live out pure, unleavened lives is to say, I am now someone who belongs to the Lord. He has bought me. He has saved me. And because we connect holiness to grace, it means we show grace to others when they are sorry for their sins.

It's very different if this man said, I'm so sorry. I realized what I did was wrong. And we should be the same. Anytime we confront someone's sin and they respond with repentance, we should give them a big hug and say, this sin is forgiven in Christ.

[29 : 39] Let's keep going, brother. Let's help each other out, sister. That's good news, isn't it? Christ is your sacrifice. The Lord has laid on him all of our sins so keep going.

And that's what Paul speaks from when he continues on, verse 9 to 13. He refers to his previous letter, verse 9, so surprise, actually 1 Corinthians isn't 1 Corinthians, there's actually like a 0 Corinthians, but he clarifies, look, when I wrote to you last time, I did say, right, avoid sexual immorality, but now he wants to clarify, don't just hide from the world either.

That's not the point of Christ's sacrifice. And also, don't get busy judging and protesting what people do. That wouldn't be to show the grace of Christ either. Okay, especially, don't go outside and go on crusades on things that non-Christians do.

What's the point? It's not our business to judge them. That's their problem. The Lord will judge.

Rather, work on the rope team inside of us. If someone claims to be a brother or sister, if they say, I'm a Christian, if they've been baptized into this church, if they share in the Lord's supper, and yet they clearly in their life dishonor Christ in word and deed and thought, let's not stand for it.

And you notice, actually, in this verse, verse 11, Paul does not only have sexual sins in view, does he? Right? So, we've got to watch our lives.

[31 : 11] It's not just sexual immorality, it's greed, it's idolatry, which, by the way, not just bowing down to temples, it's whatever you love more than God.

It could be your credit card and what it buys you. It could be your job and what status you get out of it. Or slander, drunkenness. You see, it's far broader, isn't it? Rejecting the gospel, teaching false

things about Jesus.

Whether a sin is accepted or rejected outside in our culture, it does not matter. All of them can spoil, damage the block of cheese, the church of Christ.

And I mean, listen to Jerry Bridges, he lists a few other respectable sins that we should actually cut off and deal with, right, in the modern-day church. What about jealousy? What about gossip?

Anger? Right? Uncontrolled anger. Ungratefulness. Judgmental hearts. Would we be willing to call out a brother or sister, right, if every time they speak they're just talking about themselves and say, hey, Christ didn't die for you to just be all about yourself.

[32 : 22] or someone who's always critical of other people but never on their own? Cuts close, doesn't it? I mean, Paul says don't even mix with them, right, don't even eat with them.

No way. No way. What is going on here? Okay? What kind of eating has Paul been speaking about? Just think about it. Unleavened bread.

He says keep the festival, right? What kind of festival or commemoration with unleavened bread for an innocent lamb do we keep today?

Happens once a month. Lord's Supper. Yeah, Lord's Supper. Yeah. Okay, I think that's what's going on, right? I think that's what he's referring to, okay? Exclude him from the Lord's table, all right, if it comes to that, all right?

He's not saying, you know, just shun them, okay? Oh, too bad if, you know, he's your wife or husband, too bad, you know, just like lock him out, don't eat with him. No, I think this is publicly saying, look, you're not behaving like a Christian.

[33 : 23] You shouldn't take the Lord's Supper and pretend you are. Yeah, I think that's what's going on, right? It's not by accident that later on Paul will go and talk about the Lord's Supper, 1 Corinthians 11. It's not by accident here at church we will actually fence the table, right?

Every month I will remind us, right? This is a table for people who trust Jesus, who put their faith in him. It's a shared meal for believers in Christ. We want to protect that picture of Christ, our sacrifice. We're not just trying to be picky or exclusive. We want to protect Jesus' name. And so, look, in closing, I want to suggest three very baby steps for a church that don't even know where to start with church discipline.

I mean, the first thing we need to do is actually commit meaningfully to each other as members, right? Of members of PCBC, right? What's a member of this church? What's the benefit?

Is it just, oh, I get to formally, officially sign up to all the rosters in the world? Is it, oh, wow, I get to sit in hours-long meetings and not understand what's going on?

[34 : 26] No, membership is far richer than that. To commit to PCBC as a member is to clip in together in the same gospel rope team.

All right, and actually, I love how this is practiced in lots of other churches as well. At one church that Cheryl and I became members, we took a pledge. We actually stood up, it was, you know, a little bit wedding-like, but we took a pledge before we were welcomed as official members, and it was a pledge, you know, it's like even laminated, you know, nice thing, but on the pledge it said, for the sake of Christ, our sacrifice, we pledged to repent and believe in the gospel together, to gather together, to grow together, to go out and proclaim his name together.

You know, we took it seriously, and we take seriously a commitment to belong to a particular church, right, that's when we'll start paying attention to each other's lives, start caring, right?

Hey, how are you going? And secondly, right, second tip, right, the hey, how are you going will only happen if we're honest. why is it that we're okay writing a piece of paper, on a piece of paper, a prayer, but we have no one that we'll be willing to share that with?

What's going on in our church where we've become a group where we are not honest enough with each other or don't feel like that we can be? Is it because we're too quick to judge if someone opens up and is vulnerable?

[35 : 59] Is it because we don't meet each other enough and care enough about each other that we wouldn't even begin to share our deepest hurts and sorrows? We need to create a culture that is not just a holy huddle but actually an honest huddle, right?

Look, without holiness in our midst, we offer nothing, right, just a mirror of the broken world. But we need honesty and transparency, right? I need to be able to read out, okay, my own struggle, okay? I left my prayer card somewhere, but please pray for me because I struggle with wanting to please other people, right, instead of pleasing the Lord.

So please pray for me on that. Every Christian here, every member of PCBC, you need someone in this church who knows you and loves you like Jesus, who you can say, I have struggled with this. Can Christ really forgive me? and the other person can say, brother, that is wrong, but yes, Jesus can forgive you. Let's pray together. I wonder if you could do that.

[37 : 08] How can we grow that? Can I suggest, of course, you'll find more honesty and clarity if you make a group like this where you reach out to someone that's maybe of the same gender, right?

It can be real. And obviously, if you're not attracted to that person, it makes it easier as well. You don't have mixed motives. If you can't find anyone in the church to talk to about your struggles, come talk to me.

Come talk to a leader. Come talk to someone that we can... Look, I don't really match make romantic couples, but I would love to match make honest disciples here at PCBC.

Wouldn't you? Yeah? Wouldn't you? And look, finally, finally, connect everything we do to the gospel. That's what we see here in this chapter.

As we keep navigating what faith looks like for PCBC English, we might need to put up some policies together to protect the holiness of this church, or some road rules, I guess.

[38 : 10] Some guidelines, they might be necessary. But let's never draft a rule apart from looking to Jesus for why. Otherwise, blink, ten years down, why do we have this guideline?

I don't know. Do you know? I don't know. We always want to connect every holiness action to Christ in us. Only the gospel will give you and I the power and pattern to fight sin, to practice church discipline, to fix disputes among each other.

So go to the gospel. Go to what Christ has done for us. Go to that when we connect and plan our budgets or run our meetings or we talk to each other and encourage one another.

If you and I want to be wise Christians, Paul says turn from the chaos of life, clip onto the gospel of Christ and let's live it out as an unleavened, pure Passover people.

And we can start by what we've learned. Don't let unrepentant sin spread in this church. Why? Because Christ has become our Passover sacrifice.

[39 : 20] Let's pray. Help us Father.

We're challenged by every way that we fall short. But we thank you that the gospel frees us to be a people called to be holy.

So, may this word continue speaking into our hearts as we talk to each other, as we continue to grow in Christ. We beg of you, don't leave us the same today.

Challenge us. Make us a pure unleavened bread for you. We ask all these things in the name of Christ who is our great sacrifice.

Help us turn our eyes now to him in Jesus' name. Amen.