

Walk in Love (Eph 4:25-5:2)

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Preacher: William HC

[0 : 0 0] Thank you, Fran. Everyone give Fran a round of applause, if that's okay. Sorry to embarrass you, but I just thought she helped us particularly well to prepare our hearts to hear from God's Word. So thank you so much for that.

It is Anzac Day today, so before we go into God's Word, I'd love to spend a moment, let's pray and thank the Lord for the freedoms we have to worship today. Let's pray. Our gracious Father, once your Lord Jesus, our Lord Jesus said this in John chapter 15, verse 13, greater love has no one than this, than he lay down his life for his friends.

Our Lord, we thank you so much for the freedom to worship together today. And we know and we recognize on a day like today that there were men and women who fought for this country, for other countries, serving you and serving the countries that they were part of.

We thank you for all these people. Thank you for their sacrifice, that they demonstrated and showed in their life even what it looked like to love others and lay down their lives for them.

And we thank you that especially as Christians, we know one who did this at an infinite cost to himself, one who laid down his perfect sinless life for the love he had for others.

[1 : 3 0] We thank you for Jesus. And we ask that you would help him to live in us through your spirit and help us to walk in Christ and to walk in love today. I pray these things in Jesus' name.

Amen. So do stay in your Bibles in Ephesians chapter 4, verse 25. And this is where we'll be listening to God's word.

It's said that one of the first words a child learns is no. Some people claim that by the time you've turned one, you know, like Jubilee's age, you've probably heard the word no an average of at least 400 times, you know, a week or a day even sometimes.

It's pretty intense. You know, you hear no a lot of the time apparently. I don't know if you've reflected on how many times in your life you've heard the word no. I mean, as we get older, right, it gets a little bit more sophisticated, but essentially the answer is often still no, right?

No, you can't have Wi-Fi tonight. No, there's no more pocket money for you, right? No, you've got to stop playing now, right? No, you've got to study. And then you think, aha, after school, no more no's, right?

[2 : 3 5] And then it's like, oh, no split bills, no trespassing, no parking, not this time, sorry. Man, life is full of no commands, right? Life is full of no commands.

So I can sympathise with you. If you're feeling a little defensive, as we heard Fran read those commands, right, essentially there's a whole bunch of no's in there. Were they not? Right?

Stop stealing. No unwholesome talk, you know. None of this lying stuff. No malice, no anger. Right? It seems like Paul suddenly made a shift.

Before he was talking in big, big ideas, right? We've been journeying through the book of Ephesians. And before this passage, I think he's been speaking a lot about what Jesus has done, what God has done, who we are, lots of kind of statements.

And then suddenly, it's as if he switched, right? And now he is giving all kinds of instructions for God's people. It's a stark difference, isn't it?

[3 : 33] From chapters one to three, if you actually count them up, there's actually only one command in the whole of the first half of the book. And it was actually, the command was actually to remember. Do you remember verse 12 of chapter two?

Remember, you know, you were once separated and now you're together. So it was actually just one command in that whole first half of the book. But then now, in this section, we kind of hit a purple patch of instructions and commands.

And so I can sympathize if you're feeling like your defenses are up. It's like, Paul, you're going to tell me what to do or not to do? But we should be grateful. We should be grateful for these practical commands.

Because this is Paul helping us, right? Us listening in to the Ephesian church's letter. To make us not just go deeper into his love up here as kind of like, oh, I know this now, thank you.

But how do we go deeper into his love in how we act, how we live, how we walk, what we do day by day, right? I mean, right at the beginning of this letter, Paul actually hints at this.

[4 : 34] I wonder if you remembered chapter one, verse four, it says this, So you see, actually, Paul, all this time, has had our daily walk in mind.

Okay? God's love, as we go deeper, doesn't just change us up here. It's going to change what we do and think, how we talk, what we get angry at, you see. And now we're going to learn.

This is what it looks like to walk in love. This is how God's Spirit-empowered people live. So these are not just a bunch of no's, please. These are good words to obey from a God who has loved and saved us in Christ.

And so we need to remember that, right? Because there's mistakes we can make otherwise. We might hear these words and these commands, and then they just drive us to despair. We just feel like, I can't live up to this.

These are such hard commands to follow. Of course not. We can't. Without the life of Christ in us. Without His Spirit steering us. These are commands for those who walk in Christ.

[5 : 39] So we're just going to basically, you know, step through them one by one. All right? Take a look, though, at the first word, okay, in verse 25 in your Bibles. And you can guess what I'll ask, okay?

The first word there in my Bibles, actually, is therefore. Okay? And when you see a therefore, what do you want to ask? What's the therefore? Therefore. Yes. Well done.

Okay. We'll do this often because it's important. Paul is connecting these commands, as I said, with what he shared last week. In case you missed it, right? To walk in Christ, we need two mind shifts.

Sin starts from inside our hearts. Not our behavior. Not just our behavior. And the other mind shift is that when we want to fight sin, if we want to live holy lives set apart for God, we need to remember to put on the gospel.

Remember who we are in Christ. And from that, to live out a holy and blameless life. Right action comes from right beliefs about who we are. Okay?

[6 : 37] And so today, really, Paul is just extending a long section on application. How do you apply? What does it look like to live according to your calling? What does it look like to live and walk in Christ?

And we're going to look at five examples in the section that Franz just read of holy living. And I'll put up a table, and don't worry about copying it down, but you'll see most of them actually follow a very consistent pattern.

Did you notice that? It's often not this, right? Yes to this. Because of this. Do you see? Paul is just walking through what he's already said that we heard last week.

Okay? It's not just a list of do's and don'ts, but it's also why. What is the gospel motivation? So remember that. Okay? Remember that, because we'll see that as we go. And it will help us to stay focused on what really matters.

So let's get into the first example, right? Example one. Let me read verse 25 to you. And verse 25 says, Therefore, each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body.

[7 : 50] So the first example is, it's no to falsehood, yes to speaking truthfully instead. Why? Because we belong to each other. Paul's word choice here is deliberate, actually.

In the original, it says here, Therefore, each of you must put off falsehood. So that's actually the same word that we saw last week, where we talked about putting off your old self. Okay? Exactly the same word.

And we see it here again. So it's the same idea. We put off our old self. And what does that look like? Putting off falsehood. Okay? That kind of fakeness that we like to carry around.

That kind of two-faced attitude that we like to present before people. Because God's church, God's special people, should be known for honesty.

Speaking the truth. Paul's already raised this point, actually, earlier in verse 15. Remember how maturity in Christ looks like speaking the truth in love.

[8 : 47] Instead of being sucked into the waves of hearing this teaching and that teaching. Paul says our truthfulness should extend to everything, though, that we say and do.

I think it can be quite hard, right? Because different cultures will respond to this differently. I don't know what you've experienced in your own culture growing up. Even in the midst of some cultures, you actually have people who will lie to save face, right?

Maybe you won't reveal the whole truth because it might shame someone. It might put someone down. And so we start to just pick up unconsciously that being truthful and open and honest is not the right way to live.

Well, at least not in our circles. But Paul says no. He says, Haven't you put away your old self? Now speak the truth, each with his neighbor.

And he gives the reason at the back half of verse 25. Because we are all members of one body. You see how Paul has reached back to the gospel.

[9 : 49] The good news of Jesus for motivation, right? It's in Jesus that he knits together a people for himself. Diverse, different backgrounds, okay? And we need to remember that. It's like, oh, these people and I are part of the same family.

Therefore, it matters how truthful I am, how open and honest I am with them. We speak honestly and openly. Why? Because Christ has knitted us, raises up with him as one body together.

You get it? You get it? There's gospel motivation. So next time you're tempted to cover up or just kind of put on a fake face, right? Maybe you're in groups and people ask, how are you doing?

And you say, yeah, I'm fine, I'm fine. Actually, think again, your family in Christ. At the very least, we can be upfront. I don't think Paul's advocating here in this verse saying everything to everyone in our lives, okay?

I think there is much wisdom in knowing who in your church family you can be more open with, right? Who understand you, who can get what you're saying. And maybe sometimes guys speaking with older guys or girls speaking with older girls, that kind of relationships could be helpful at times.

[10 : 59] But let me encourage you, if you belong to PCBC, to find at least one brother or sister here in this church who you are open enough to ask, right?

How are you really doing? It could be making the most of your cell groups or people in church that you've been friends with. God sees everything. We belong to each other.

We don't have to lie about how we got it all together, okay? I try to practice that too, right? I'll try and put myself down in front of you in public because it matters. We want to be honest and open with our lives.

Share our joys and sorrows. I think if we practice that and that becomes part of our culture, then we'll really start to look like God's distinct people, okay?

No to falsehood. Yes to speaking truthfully with all our lives. Because why? We belong to each other. That's example one. Okay, next verse.

[11 : 56] That was easy. Let's go to the next one. Verse 26. In your anger, do not sin. Do not let the sun go down while you are angry.

And do not give the devil a foothold. Here we have a second example, Paul says, of walking in Christ, walking in love. No to sinful anger. For it's the devil's playground.

I want you to imagine that you've been just looking on your phone. You're just relaxing, okay? Scrolling on whatever social media that you prefer. And then someone posts something that's really hurtful.

Okay? Maybe it's something really unfair about Christians. Okay? Maybe they share something that is obviously fake news. Okay? Maybe it's something that is about vaccines or something that really gets your blood boiling.

Or they call someone else hurtful things. And you just get so, so mad at how they portrayed you or your friend. You're going to have this strong urge, right?

[12 : 58] To jump up on your keyboard or your phone. And you're going to pound in some comments, right? About why they're wrong. Five reasons why they're wrong. Or stalk their details. You really want to get at them and get this conversation going. This is the kind of angry situation that actually King David once upon a time sang about.

And he sang about this in Psalm 4. And some of your Bibles have quotation marks around, In your anger, don't sin. Because actually, he's quoting, okay, Psalm 4.

Do you get it? The words, they're actually almost word for word taken from the Greek text of Psalm 4. So let me read Psalm 4, a bit of it to you. In Psalm 4, David's crying out, How long will men dishonor my glorious one, my God?

How long will they love delusions and seek lies? Verse 2. And then in verse 4 to 5, he says to himself, Be angry and do not sin. Ponder in your hearts on your beds and be silent.

Offer right sacrifices. And put your trust in the Lord. You see, I suspect that Paul, at this point, When he quotes this verse, this Psalm, for the Ephesians listening, He doesn't have to spell out anything more than that, that quote.

[14 : 08] Because I think once they hear the quote, They're going to hear the Psalm and go, Ah, okay. That's right. This is what we need to do. Be angry and don't sin. Instead, keep that lid on your anger.

Sometimes the best response is not to rage online, Not to call down fire on someone. Rather, the Chanawha energy, right? Psalm 4 verse 5, to offer right sacrifices And put your trust in the Lord.

Okay? What Paul says, right? And he phrases it himself differently. He says, don't let the sun go down on your anger. Again, he's saying, look at your hearts.

Look at your hearts. Don't just think about what words are coming out of your mouth, How you're feeling, what temperature your head is right now. He wants to see what's going on in your hearts when you're angry.

It's not that God's people can't get angry, right? Did you notice that? It says, be angry and do not sin. It doesn't say, don't be angry, don't sin. I mean, remember our Lord Jesus.

[15:12] When he walked this earth, he was angry at times. But he was angry for the right reasons. He was angry at fake religion. He was angry at people's unbelief. And he never sinned.

Our Lord never sinned. So there must be a way for us to be angry and not sin as well. But often, there's an upsetting situation. And then we make that situation all about us.

That's sinning. Or we use it as an excuse to think worse thoughts about someone. Or to do something terrible to them or to ourselves. I'm so angry I need to trash my liver and down some drinks, right?

And get drunk. I'm so mad that I think I'll just share this dark secret that I know about this person. Really get them back. Can you see? You've taken your anger and you've crossed the line.

Anger is like acid, okay? And some of you science grads will know this better than me. You hold it too long, right? It's going to corrode something. Anger is like acid. If you hold it too long here, it will corrode you on the inside.

[16:17] It will poison your heart. So give it to the Lord. Okay. Psalm 4 verse 5 is a great response. Just offer sacrifices. Put your trust in the Lord.

Right? Give that angry situation to the Lord. Because why? Look at verse 27. It says this. And do not give the devil a foothold.

All right? It joins straight on from verse 26. In the Bible, the devil actually doesn't get much airtime. All right? There's actually max 10 verses, I think. People can construe about him.

Like the evil one, the devil, Satan, whatever you call him, doesn't get a lot of airtime. But I find it interesting that Paul chooses here on something as ordinary as anger to bring up the enemy.

I think we make a mistake when we think the devil always works in crazy, miraculous ways to attack us. He'd love you to think that.

[17:15] But actually the evil one loves using the mundane and ordinary to pull down his believers, to pull down God's children. One of the lies Satan will tell you is that you only see him at work in flashy ways.

But so often, he will just shoot at the easiest target, and that's our sinful hearts. He is great, the devil, at convincing us we need to have control over a frustrating situation that will sin, that will tear someone down.

He is great at tearing down church leaders and church members like ours, right? Letting grudges fester. He loves that. The devil loves that.

He loves letting hurtful events to keep dominating our thoughts and lives so that we will never forgive. We'll always be in the same place. I mean, I think about my own life, right?

Cheryl and I, we've been married 11 years, and I know in my life, if I'm honest, I've said and done some pretty anger-inducing things. Mostly my fault, right? Really, it should all be my fault.

[18 : 14] And I don't know, listen and reflect on your lives too. Some of you will have past hurts with each other. Okay, if some of you have grown up with each other, there's no doubt.

And I mean, even last week, I've been praying for one of you who shared that last week in the Slido. Praying for you, be angry, but don't sin. That was my prayer this week. Resolve what you can.

Trust the Lord of what you can't. So that the devil has no room to take advantage, to damage your unity with each other, with the Lord Jesus Christ here. Okay, second example.

All right? In your anger, don't sin. Instead, trust the Lord. Because the devil loves to take advantage. Okay, example three.

How are we going? You want to get another dose? This is verse 28. Let's hear it. He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work.

[19 : 14] Doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need. I was reflecting on this when I'm, you know, not to name any names, but, you know, sometimes we sit and have lunch, and people are chatting about what they ate, you know, which restaurants have visited.

And I've just realized, we are a really wealthy church. Seriously. We are very wealthy. I mean, put all that aside, you know, about where you last went for dinner or whatever.

But any one of us, because we live in a Western country, we already live in the top 1% of the world in terms of income. Okay? So even wherever you lived in New Zealand, okay?

You're already 99.9% richer than everyone else in this world. Most of us, I know, in this church would not blink at a \$7 bubble tea. But actually, that's like more than a day's wages for half the world, at least.

Think about that. Now, this is the situation, I think, in the Ephesians church. There was actually a really big gap between rich and poor, right? There's no problem for God to bless you with resources and wealth.

[20 : 18] And what was happening in the Ephesians church is there were people who were coming to Christ that were from wealthy backgrounds. Praise God. And then there were people coming to Christ who maybe they were kind of tenant workers.

They just worked day by day. If they didn't get work, they didn't get paid. Maybe they were even slaves back in those days, right? And so for some of them, the temptation, and Paul speaks right to them, was to be lazy and to rely on the charity.

Oh, great. We've got wealthy people in the church. Now I can just chill out and relax. And Paul says no, right? Let the thief no longer steal. Don't rip off your brothers and sisters.

Keep working hard. All right? Keep working hard. And you might think, because when you read that, right, let the thief no longer steal. And you're like, I'm not a thief. You know? When was the last time I shoplifted?

Okay? So I'm fine. But again, go beyond behavior. Think of your heart. There are all kinds of ways that we steal. I could be browsing Facebook instead of doing my job at work, right?

[21 : 20] I could be bingeing on Netflix instead of studying for a test. I'm stealing from my university. My teacher who's asked me to do something. I could be freeloading from my parents.

Maybe even my spouse, right? Not actually being hardworking, okay, when I can. Maybe I'm in a flat, living with flatmates, and I'm not pulling my weight. Let the thief stop stealing.

Notice Paul doesn't just say, don't do this, do this. He also adds, why though? And I love what he says. I love this gospel motivation. Don't steal.

Work hard. Why? Because we want to be generous. We want to meet the needs of our brothers and sisters, those who have less. And who is the best example of that generosity, that generous heart?

Our Lord Jesus, right? Jesus gave up his place in heaven and generously gave his life for us. Man, if that changes you, changes your attitudes, then God's church should be full of people who work hard, who don't freeload, who are generous with their lives with each other.

[22 : 31] I am so thankful when I hear people just shout at each other for lunch or look after people's, you know, I don't know, grocery bills and stuff when they can't. Praise God. That happens when we worship a Jesus who is generous with his life with us.

You see, gospel motivation. I mean, look, Satan, let's pick on him again. He'd love it when our churches are full of ministries, right, just done by one or two, overworked, burned out people.

He'd love it, right? There we go. He'd love for Christians to be the stingiest people, okay, who never donate to charities. He'd love it so much. But if you and I, PCBC, are committed to living out the gospel, to be generous like Jesus, let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor and work hard.

That's example three. No to stealing. Yes, to working hard and faithfully. Why? We want to be generous like Jesus. Verse 29.

Have a read. Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

[23 : 47] Wholesome is what I have in my translation.

Wholesome is a very trendy word, I've realized. I only learned it since I came to PCBC English. And it's what the NIV seems to have gone with. Okay. But I will burst your bubble.

The Greek word here doesn't quite have the same sense as we use it, I think. Here, actually, unwholesome, the word literally kind of has a sense of spoiled, rotten fruit, okay, or fish that's gone bad.

Imagine if, you know, someone went fishing and they just left their fish out there for days. That's the kind of vibe you're getting, okay? Unwholesome talk. And Paul says that is the kind of talk, that kind of speech that should not even come out of our mouths as God's church.

So then why do we do it? Why do we DM nasty things about one another behind their backs? Why do we spread rumors about people's personal lives? Why do we spread rumors about people's personal lives?

[25 : 23] pause it down, with my words. Then I'll look better. Yeah. Then I'll look better. And we dare to do it in church too. James, Jesus' half-brother, he puts it this way.

What we say, it can kill people. It can hurt people so badly. And James says this, James 3, verse 10, And with the tongue, we praise our Lord and Father. And with it, we curse people who have been made in God's image.

Brothers and sisters, this should not be. I think part of the problem, if I'm honest, is that we set the bar too low when it comes to what good, wholesome speech is.

Okay, look at verse 23 again. Look at verse 23. Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouth, but only what is helpful for building us up.

According to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. I reckon so many conflicts in our church between us could be avoided if we just applied these three filters before we opened our mouths.

[26 : 29] Is it edifying? Does it build someone up? Is it actually necessary? Okay. Will it give grace to them? Will it benefit them? Literally, it says, give grace to the hearer. That's the vibe there.

Sometimes the answer is all three, right? And so, yes. You need to confront a concerning issue. You need to encourage someone in the gospel to stay strong.

You need to just rejoice with someone who's rejoicing. There are so many good reasons, but apply all these three. And I reckon if we did all these three, okay, is it edifying? Is it needed?

Will it benefit them? I reckon 99% of what we actually say and just blah, I don't think we'd just go, oh, I don't have to say this. Let me just let it slide.

Because maybe what am I to say doesn't really just build anyone up. Okay? That's just words. Or I don't think this person actually needs to hear this right now. Maybe I'll be quiet.

[27 : 29] Actually, if I share this, I don't think this person will actually benefit at all. Okay? Let's hold it back. I think that's why it's important, okay, as well, to read verse 30 with verse 29.

Can you see verse 30 with me? And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. You see, the stakes are much higher. Wholesome, fruitful speech is not just an issue of good manners.

Okay? It's a sign of whether we care that God's Holy Spirit is working among us. Okay? The Holy Spirit who in chapter 1 sealed and guaranteed our salvation.

Do we care how the Holy Spirit feels when we talk? And one way we can honour and worship the Spirit, okay, and not grieve the Spirit, one way we can let Him work in us is if we let Him nudge us, prompt us towards a new way of speaking to each other.

So let Him work in you. Let Him prompt you, maybe even today, if you need to leave a gossipy group chat, just go. Let Him guard your mouth so that you, when you hang out with someone next time, don't just dominate the conversation, what you think, but say the right thing at the right time.

[28 : 47] Let Him point you to grateful, gracious, building up speech because you know you've been sealed by the Spirit for His kingdom. Okay? And so what if we say like 80% less than we currently do?

Right? You save your voice anyways. Right? And look, if what we say and do builds up, fits the occasion, gives grace to others, what a testimony for the Gospel.

Okay? Because then we get to picture God's Spirit at work. Isn't that good? Isn't that worth striving for as we change our speech? Paul is so kind to us.

Right? Don't do this, but do this because the Gospel matters, because we are members of one another, because the Holy Spirit should not be grieved. Okay? Not falsehood, but truthful speech.

Not resentful, bitter anger, but trusting in the Lord. Trade this thieving and stealing with your time, your talents, and bless others with your hard work. And not rotten talk, but godly, building up, grace-giving speech.

[29 : 53] That's the kind of people God wants us to be here at PCBC. And then he starts to round up, and so we have our final example, and we get this in verse 31 onwards. Get rid of all bitterness, verse 31 says.

Rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Right? No to bitter rage, to malice, but kindness and forgiveness. I love this part. Okay? What does living according to our old self look like? It looks like bitterness.

It looks like calling people names. It looks like rage and quarreling, okay, that characterizes your life. Notice how Paul's list here, in verse 31, it kind of starts in the inside again, and then works out into outward actions.

And Paul wants Jewish Christians who read this, Gentile Christians who read this, Asian Christians, Kiwi Christians, whoever you are. If we're going to reflect God's holiness to the world, we have to put this kind of thinking and speech away from you.

[31 : 03] Step away from all evil. Quit those terrible, hurtful conversations. Pull away from those never-ending family feuds. Instead, Paul calls us to bring in a new attitude, a new way of seeing one another.

Right? Here it says, in verse 32, to be kind and compassionate. In the Greek, be kind is pronounced *Christi*, okay?

Christi. Okay, not *Christi* the person, but it means Christ, right? And actually, when you say Christ, it sounds exactly the same. Paul is being punny here, okay? He's saying, be Jesus, okay?

Actually, he does the same thing in a little book called *Philemon*, so you can see. He used to be Christless, okay? Useless, and now he's useful, okay? Be kind. Be Christ.

There was this, I don't know if you can think back to February, right? There were a couple of performances at the Love Feast, okay? The Love Feast was like, imagine this place turned into, like, lots of dinner tables, and we ate a lot of food, and there was a lot of performances.

[32 : 10] And I loved all of the performances. There was one in particular that stuck in my mind, right? And it was one where one guy was dressed in white, and he was, like, arguing with Satan, who was dressed in black, and, you know, leading up to the night, Cheryl, who was in this group, told me they were practicing and nervous about lines, the pressure to be a good Jesus, to reflect his heart, to kind of say his, share his love well.

And Paul is saying, this is what holy living looks like. He says, be a good Jesus, right? Verse 32, just as God and Christ forgave you, now be kind to each other, compassionate, show his love, his tender heart.

Imagine if God's forgiveness grabs you so much that it just spills over into how you think and speech. That is what Paul wants us to do. And imagine that for our whole church family.

And naturally, there has to be, the result will be, less bitterness, less malice, less rage and anger with each other. Okay?

Because, look, it is so much harder, it's very hard, okay, to look at someone and throw a really bad, nasty comment at them. If you remind yourself, Christ died for you.

[33 : 27] Christ died for this person in front of me. God forgave her in Christ. God forgave him in Christ. If I have that in my mind, always, front of my mind, I am far less likely to jump into all those negative ways of thinking and living.

Okay? Just tell yourself before you throw something at someone, God saved them too. See how that changes? Because at the foot of the cross, all of us are a bunch of saved sinners trying to imitate our God who has poured grace into our lives so we can be gracious to others, right?

That's exactly what Paul says. He sums it up here in our last two verses. He says this, Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

I'm a dad of four kids, as most of you know. Some of the most beautiful moments, okay, when you're a dad is totally undeserved when my kids run up to me and say, I want to go where you're going, right?

Someone said to me, I preached in another church, I want to come to church with you. I was like, oh, can I come with you? You know, right? Some of my most joyful moments, I think, is just cycling along the same road together or trying to do the same activity, playing the same board game, okay, climbing up the same volcano, you know, inactive, of course.

[34 : 55] And then, I'm so grateful and thankful that when over time, our kids, okay, my kids, they start to take on more and more of my likeness. And friends, the best way to walk in love, the Bible says, is to run after our Heavenly Father as if you know you are dearly beloved children.

Okay, that's what it says here in verse one. PCBC, God is not just saying, do this, don't do this, do this, don't do this. He's saying, I loved you this much.

I'm building something special here at PCBC. Will you be a part of it? Will you walk with me? Will you walk in love? Will you study and savour the way my Jesus lived?

Will you dig deep into the Gospels and just get yourself stuck into His life and see how He spoke so truthfully, how He only got angry at stuff that really mattered, how the Lord Jesus worked hard, He taught and healed till probably His hands broke, I don't know, from tiredness.

He had never had a lazy moment. How the Lord Jesus spoke to His disciples, so tender, so true. Will you study Him? Will you gaze more and more on Him and let that shape you into someone who is gracious and timely and encouraging with your words?

[36 : 17] Right? How kind Jesus was. He was gentle and lowly. He was humble to death on a cross. We remember the Anzacs today, but how amazing when, look, soldiers willingly lay down their lives for their country that they love.

How much more amazing when Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice. That is the Gospel, friends. And when that fixes our vision, we're going to walk in love best.

When our eyes are fixed upon the Lord Jesus Christ, we will imitate God well. We will live and live how He does. We will share His heart, right, like children who love their mum and dad so much that they copy Him.

That's what God wants for us. And only Jesus offers this power and the pattern to turn us from bitter, angry people into little, amazing reflections of God's goodness and grace to our friends and our family.

So can I encourage you? Can Paul encourage you this week to show the world how deep God's love is? And we're going to do it by walking in Christ in love.

[37 : 27] Will you pray with me? How deep, Father, Your love was for us that You would give Your only Son as a fragrant sacrifice, as an offering, perfect, unblemished for us.

How deep Your love was for us. Help us to be so amazed by this love, so challenged that we do not love like this, that we would turn from the way that we think we want to run our lives and to worship You, to follow You, to live for You.

Thank You for these practical examples of what it looks like to walk in love. Would You help us? We need Your help so much. We speak out of turn.

We get angry, bitter, and stew on the wrong things. We're lazy. We don't work as hard as we could. But ultimately, we are selfish people and we need Your help.

Help us look at how selfless You were at the cross and change us and shape us so we walk in love. Would You help us with all these things in Jesus' name? Amen.