

Walking in Christ with others

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: 28 July 2024

Preacher: Brady Owens

[0 : 0 0] Colossians chapter 4 verse 7 through 18. We've made it to the end of Colossians. It only took 34 sermons. Actually, this is 35. But you know, I love to preach verse by verse because you get this sustained sort of feel of what God has been saying to a particular group of people. And oftentimes without that, we're just sort of, you know, jumping to different things.

And sometimes we don't catch the context and we miss the glory and the splendor and the power of the passage that we're looking at. And so it also forces us to deal with things we might not ordinarily do. I'm not sure who in their right mind would ever preach a sermon on the closing of a letter, right? There's a lot of people who would just skip over this, but there's some good things here for us to see this morning. Things that I think will be of benefit for your soul. So in Colossians chapter 4, beginning of verse 7, we'll read all the way through verse 8. Here's the word of the Lord. Tychicus will tell you all about my activities. He is a beloved brother and a faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord. I've sent him to you for this very purpose that you may know how we are and that he may encourage your hearts. And with him, Onesimus, our faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will tell you of everything that has taken place here.

Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, greets you. And Mark, the cousin of Barnabas, concerning whom you've received instructions, if he comes to you, welcome him. And Jesus, who is called Justice, these are the only men of the circumcision among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have been a comfort to me. Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God. For I bear him witness that he has worked hard for you and for those in Laodicea and in Hieropolis. I practice these, I promise. Luke, the beloved physician, greets you, as does Demas. Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea and to Nympha and the church in her house. And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans and see that you also read the letter from the Laodicea. And say to Archippus, see that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord. I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my chains and grace be with you. Let's pray. Father, we trust you. We trust as you have spoken in your word that every word is breathed out by you and is profitable for instruction and for training, for correcting and for rebuking. And Father, we need more than anything for our minds to be shifted onto the same track that you think, to think your thoughts after you, to live in the way that you've called us to live. And Father, even these words have much to tell us. And so we pray that you would open our hearts. You would help our minds to grasp and understand. You would help us to believe. And then you would help us, Father, to give you all the glory in Christ's name. Amen.

One of the questions that I get a lot, particularly because, well, the number one question I get is, where in the Bible does it say? So I walk around a little bit like a human concordance, but that's okay. You're welcome to do that. So, but the other question I get is, so if I'm going to read a book or I'm going to listen to a particular pastor, who are people who are safe to listen to? One of the things that you probably remember about me is I really do believe that doctrine, theology, is vital, important. I mean, without doctrine and theology and studying good doctrine and theology, we really don't have a foundation on which to live life. And the thing is, is that we all do doctrine. We all do theology. And the question is, is whether we do it well or if we do it poorly. And there are people out there who are teaching in ways, some of them are charlatans and teach false doctrine, and you need to stay away from them. And some people are teaching in certain ways in which it's not so much that it's false, it's just that they're not very accurate in what they're doing. And so I keep constantly looking at different people and books and pastors in order. So when you ask me, say, listen, I want to study more about this, or I want to hear more about this, who should I stay away

from? I can tell you.

[5 : 13] Now, for some people who think, well, that sounds really ugly. Well, Jesus didn't call us to be nice. He called us to be holy, righteous, and good. And that is about him and his word. And so we have to uphold the truth. And upholding the truth means we sometimes have to look at people who are not preaching the truth. Well, I think this is what Paul's doing here at the end of his book.

Remember, the Colossians are facing false teachers, three different kinds of false teachers. False teachers that are coming in and trying to teach them that Jesus is not enough for them, that they need more than just Jesus. They need maybe my rituals, or they need my rituals, or they need my secret knowledge, or they need this from me. But Jesus is not enough. You're going to need a little bit more. And so as Paul's closing this letter, he wants them to understand there are people who preach the truth. There are people who they can depend on. There are people that they can listen to.

And so as he's closing the letter, giving greetings, and talking about people who are going to come see them, he gives us a glimpse into people that Paul thinks are commendable. And so in what ways are they commendable? Because here's what I think we see. I think we see, out of these nine names, we see some characteristics that come together that if we were to say, listen, I don't have my pastor to ask if this guy's a good person to listen to or not. I want to give you three characteristics that if you understand these three characteristics, you can go examine the person you're listening to and determine if this is someone you ought to be listening to or not. Does that make sense? You can look at it this way, that if the Lord calls me away, you could use these criteria to begin to narrow your field and say, this person could be a good pastor. Because if he doesn't have these qualifications, not to mention what's in 1 Timothy 3, then you certainly shouldn't look at him. But this also has to do with not only who we're listening to from the pulpit, from the TV, and the books that we read, but also sometimes we're standing at the mailbox and somebody has something to say to us, and the question is, should we listen to them? Does this person meet these qualifications? And what they're saying, would it be the truth? So I want to help us with these three qualifications, and we find them here.

They're faithful, encouraging, and shepherding. The first one, faithful, we find it in verses 7 through 9, as Paul talks about two men, Tychicus and Onesimus. Now Tychicus, who was from Asia, he is called a beloved brother, a faithful minister. He is faithful to God, faithful to doing what it is that God wants him to do. As a minister, the word minister there is also the word deacon, and so he is this servant person that Paul is talking about. He's been traveling with Paul.

Now Onesimus, he's a runaway slave from Colossae, right? We talked about that a couple of weeks ago, and if you read the book of Philemon, Philemon is a man in the church of Colossae that Onesimus used to belong to. Now if you want to know more about the whole slavery issue, you can go listen to my sermon on that. I preached a sermon on that, so it's there. You can go find it.

[8 : 30] But Onesimus, when he ran away from Colossae, he was not a Christian, and he ended up meeting Paul and becomes a Christian, and now Paul is sending these two men back, but he calls them both this.

He says that they're both faithful. They're both faithful. Now when we begin to say to ourselves, well, what does it mean that they're faithful? What we must do is we must let Paul, the apostle, speak for himself. And one of the ways to do that is just to look, does Paul use this word faithful in any of his other letters? And if he does, does he have a pattern to how he uses these?

Because here he doesn't give us a lot to go on as what he means as faithful. So going through and reading all the passages where Paul uses this, we basically come up with three kinds of things that we could say, make someone faithful. Here they are. Number one, it means that they are Christians.

It means that they're Christians. It's the interesting thing to me that the Greek word behind the word faithful and the Greek word behind the word believe for salvation is the exact same Greek word.

The context tells us which we use, whether we use believe or faithful. And so Paul would never see someone who's faithful, who did not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation.

Someone who was truly converted, not someone who was a cultural Christian, but somebody who was truly Christian all the way down to their toes. The second thing is that Paul uses this many times to speak about the trustworthy word or this saying is trustworthy. And oftentimes he's either quoting from the Old Testament or giving a revelation of knowledge that the Lord has given to him as a scriptural doctrinal truth. And he's saying that these truths from God are trustworthy. They are

trustworthy. And he expects people to believe these things, to hold on to these things and to accept them.

[10 : 33] And so a faithful person is somebody who's going to hold on to the faithful word. The third thing is that he talks about God being somebody who's faithful to himself. The triune God, Father, Son, Holy Spirit is faithful to himself. Now think about this. We often think about God like we think about Tinkerbell, that if we stop thinking about him, he will just die. But that is not the case at all.

You and I could all muster everybody in the world that we want to, to deny and say we do not believe in God, and yet he would still exist regardless of how we feel about it. He does not deny himself because he's a faithful God. And so he expects us, as Paul's saying that these men are faithful, he's saying they have that characteristic of God where they are faithful to God as God is faithful to himself. What does it mean to be faithful? It means that you treat God the way God would treat God.

And so we need to say to ourselves then, so then what does this mean? As Christians, as we're looking out at people who are potential people for us to listen to their sermons, read their book, ask them for advice, it means that we need to be looking at people who are faithful. And the number one question you need to ask yourself is, is this person a Christian? I can't tell you the number of Christians who will go ask non-Christians for advice. Why would you, as a Christian, ask a non-Christian what you should do about something in your Christian life? You need to know this person is a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. They're starting from the same place that you're starting from. A lost person is not starting with Jesus and the word. He's starting with his own ideas and thoughts. The second thing is that we need to be sure this person is committed to the scriptures. That this person knows the scriptures. That this person will uphold the scriptures. That this person will preach the scriptures as they're meant to be preached. They won't take passages randomly out and then just sort of throw them at you as though this is a nice little aspirin to take. Now read this verse and call me in the morning. And you can tell when people take it out of context. Megan, do I have the verse here, Jeremiah 29?

Put this verse on the screen. Jeremiah 29 11. I love this verse, but I don't love it for the reason that most people love it. Most people will look at this verse and they will read it and they'll say, for I know the plans that I have for you, declares the Lord. Plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. And most of the time that's preached in a sermon at New Year's.

Because it's, you know, trying to help the church understand, hey, listen, your next year is going to be better than it was last year. But do you understand the context of this verse? Has anyone ever preached to you the context of this verse? Because the context matters.

[13 : 35] It was a letter written to the Babylonian exiles and they were told, you're not getting out of exile.

So settle down, buy a house, have children. In other words, you were sent into exile for your sin. You're in punishment. Stay there because I'm going to prosper you there in suffering, outside your home, and away from your family. Now that's not the same message that you often hear when people use that.

I'm just using this as an example to say that when somebody comes to you to preach, teach, or offer you some sort of word from the Lord and gives you a scripture, don't take that out of, don't take that one thing and say, oh, well, this is it. No, go look at the whole context. Go look at the whole context. A couple of weeks ago, we said this, never read a verse of scripture.

Never read a verse of scripture. Read several verses altogether, right? But the other thing is, is this person not only committed to the scriptures, but is this person committed to upholding the character of God in their life? Do they have the aroma of God Almighty in their life? Now, this is great for us.

We're trying to figure out, okay, who do we need to listen to? Who do we need to not listen to?

We're looking at things like, are they a Christian? Are they committed to the scriptures?

Are they committed to the Lord? Do they act like the Lord? But because of time, I want to go on and press this. The question is, are you faithful? Are you faithful? Are you a Christian? If you were to stand before the Lord today in judgment and he asked you why he should let you into his heaven, what would be your answer? Because there is a right answer. You may not have the exact words that I would have in saying this, but the right answer is partly, well, I don't deserve to be there.

[15 : 44] I'm full of sin, but Jesus' death counts for me. And the only reason I should be let in is because I'm covered in the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Are you a faithful person? Are you truly a Christian? Are you committed to the scriptures? Are you committed to them so that you

read them as often as you possibly can every day, preferably? Do you read them with your family? Do you read them with other people? Are you faithful to God? Do you have the aroma of God, the character of God flowing out of your life? If you are tried and tested with suffering, when you're squeezed with that, does Jesus or complaints come out of you? When you're angry, does it provoke you to get even or to get down on your knees?

Beloved, we need to be faithful people and you need to see where you are and then you need to see where you're missing it and you need to go that direction. And we'll come back to that in a second.

Let's talk about the second thing. Not only should they be faithful people, they should be encouraging people, encouraging people, verses 10 and 11. Now here, Paul starts talking about some Jewish people, right?

He says, these are the only men of the circumcision among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God. And these men were like Paul, Jewish by birth. They've trusted in Christ for their salvation and they're working with Paul. Here they are. This one that I had trouble saying, our starkest, Aristarchus, Aristarchus, Aristarchus, there we go, Aristarchus, Aristarchus, I have to say it a couple of times. Aristarchus, he's most likely from Thessalonica. He's become a traveling companion with Paul. He was probably going with Paul to Rome to appeal to Nero when he was on the shipwreck. He's been with Paul through thick and thin and he himself, he himself in the book of Acts, it tells us that he was dragged before a bunch of people to be examined because of the riot that was going on in Ephesus.

Mark, who's also called John Mark, was a young man and he went on a trip with both Paul and Barnabas, but something happened and he left. He just abandoned them. He just walked away. He'd had enough, something happened and we don't know, but he just walked away. And so a few years later, Paul and Barnabas were going to go on a second trip and Barnabas wanted to take Mark and Paul said, no. And so Paul and Barnabas ended up having a strong disagreement and they split. And Barnabas took Mark and Paul took Silas. Well, this has been about 12 years and now we see that Paul has a different attitude towards Mark, probably because Mark has changed his attitude somewhat, because in his travels, Mark has made it to Rome and he's been serving under Peter. You can see this in 1 Peter if you go read that. He's been serving under Peter as Peter has been teaching there in Rome.

[19:02] As a matter of fact, and he is listening to Peter, Mark is the one who's written for us the gospel of Mark. And so Paul wants to send greetings from him as well as justice. Now this man was called Jesus, who's called justice. And Jesus was actually a pretty common name during this time, but this is not Jesus Christ, right? This is Jesus justice. Okay, just making sure you're with me. We don't know very much about him at all, except that he is possibly one of the ones who was going to be a replacement for Judas Iscariot in Acts chapter 1. Now, why is Paul mentioning these men? Well, they send their greetings to the church, and so he wants them to know that these men feel some sort of affection for the Colossian church, so they're greeting them. And Paul says that he is comforted by these men.

And he wants the church at Colossae to know that these men comfort him, and that these men are the only ones of the circumcision working for the kingdom of God with him. Now, why is this comforting to Paul?

Well, I think it's comforting to Paul, because in Romans chapter 9, you see that Paul loves his Jewish nation. Paul loves his Jewish kinsmen. He loves them so much that in Romans 9, he says that he wishes himself accursed that they might believe in Christ. But many of them have rejected Christ, and his heart aches for his people because he wants them to trust Christ. He wants them to run after Christ. And so when he sees these three men who are of the circumcision, who have not only trusted Christ, but are working for the kingdom of God to take the gospel everywhere, it brings him great comfort. As a matter of fact, the word comfort here, the Greek word is *paragoria*. And if you know anything about old medicine, you'll recognize that. This word means to relieve from pain.

Paul is saying that these Jewish men who love Jesus Christ and are taking the gospel and building the kingdom are a balm to his soul. They are a solace to him. They are a refreshing wind. They are a joy to his heart because God has not abandoned his people as he sees right in front of him, three Jews saved, taking the gospel to the kingdom, taking the gospel to the Jews. So this means then as we look at people trying to understand who should we listen to, who should we follow, it needs to be

the kind of people who are kingdom minded. Kingdom minded. If you watch most of these TV preachers, one of the things you get a distinct impression of is that they're more minded about their own little kingdom than they are the kingdom of God. Being kingdom minded means that we seek to make disciples of all the nations, teaching them to obey all things that God has commanded. This is the entryway, if you will, into the kingdom. And these leaders who are kingdom minded, who are making disciples, they're going to preach the whole counsel of God, not leaving anything out so that that people might be made disciples of the Lord

[22 : 34] Jesus Christ. It's kind of like me telling you last week that starting in two weeks, we're going to start preaching through the book of Leviticus. And everybody kind of goes like, oh, because that's like where all Bible reading programs go to die. Right? You start reading through the book of Leviticus and you kind of go like, oh, please, no, let's go, let's skip that season. Let's go to the next season.

Well, why would we do that? Because there are things in the book of Leviticus that you need. There are things there that are profitable for instruction and training and righteousness.

I'm convinced that you don't understand the death of Jesus if you don't understand Leviticus.

When's the last time you heard a sermon from Leviticus? I'm sure it's probably been a while.

But you see, people who are kingdom minded, making disciples, taking the whole word of God to give to people, it's not enough just to say the truth. But is this a person who's willing to take the gospel and apply it to your life? And apply it to your life. I mean, it's one thing, we see churches all the time preaching things about, you know, how to have a good marriage or how to be a good parent or, you know, success and finances and all kinds of life situations. But the question is, is where's the gospel come into those situations when nothing's going according to plan?

Where are those sermons that talk about how to deal with life falling completely apart? Applying the gospel to our lives is not just how to have a successful marriage, but it's about how to get by when the marriage has fallen apart. The gospel is the answer to all of it.

[24 : 28] These are leaders who will then, as kingdom minded disciple makers, they will challenge you to make disciples as well. See, I mean, think about that. You're listening to someone who's preaching to you and they never challenge you that you can't just be a pew warmer, right? You can't just be a pew warmer.

You got to be somebody who takes what you're learning, be equipped with this and go out and do. Now that means that somebody's got to kind of sometimes get in your face a little bit and say, you know, you got to get busy. And that's not always comfortable for either party.

But if you're listening to somebody who says, no, I mean, they never talk about that. They never get into saying, listen, you ought to be doing something for the sake of the kingdom. I'm not sure that's somebody you should be listening to. But if they're challenging you saying, no, no, no. What you read, what you hear, what you're equipped with here, go out and take it to them, then maybe that's somebody you should listen to. And so this brings us back to this. What about you? What kind of person are you?

Are you this kingdom minded disciple making kind of person? Or let me say it to you this way. Do you think you bring comfort to your pastor? I'm not Paul. But if Paul were here, would Paul have comfort because he sees us being kingdom minded disciple makers? Because if all we can think about is ourselves. And sometimes, sometimes that's all we can think about. But there should be times that by the grace of God, we can move from ourselves to then turning outward and seeing a lost world out there. I mean, listen, the world out there is wicked. It is terrible.

And it needs the gospel. And there are going to be many of those that we take the gospel to, that they're not going to listen to us. They're not going to believe. But there are going to be many who will. And our job is to take the gospel and go. Is this person a person who is encouraging?

[26 : 55] Are they faithful? And the third thing is shepherding. Shepherding. Verses 12 through 18. Here there's five names. I'm going to do them out of order just because. Demas is the first name I'll look at. Pretty much we know really nothing about Demas except at some point he loved the world more than he loved Christ and he abandoned Christ. 2 Timothy chapter 4 is where we find that. Luke.

Luke is the author of the gospel of Luke and the book of Acts. So he's written two books out of the New Testament. He was a Gentile and a physician. Now there's probably some more we could pull together about Luke from these things. But he goes on and he really expands on Epaphras.

Epaphras. We know that he is the one who has come to Paul to talk to Paul about what's going on

in the church at Colossae.

He's one of their elders. He's one of their pastors. And as he's come to tell Paul what's going on, Paul is writing a letter back to the Colossians in order to instruct and train them. But he talks about Epaphras as one who is always struggling on your behalf in his prayers. Like he's praying for you all the time. He's praying for your spiritual maturity. He's praying that you be fully assured in all the will of God. He's working hard for you. Now I know that that's difficult for a lot of people to grasp and understand that prayer could actually be hard work. You know, there was a time I was at a, we were leading a VBS. This was probably 20 years ago and we were at this church and I was saying something about, you know, this VBS and saying, you know, well, you know, everything had been taken care of. And somebody said, well, what are the men going to do? I said, well, you know what? If the men that come, let's gather together, we'll be praying for the VBS while it's going on. And a lady looked at me, she says, no, they actually need to do some work. And I understand the sentiment, right? I understand the sentiment because there's a lot of logistics sometimes to pull together and be nice to have a few extra hands. But beloved prayer is not preparation for the work. Prayer is the work. Far better, far better for you that I spend time in prayer for you than I come to your house and visit you. Now there's room to do both, but I'm just saying prayer is so vital. It is so vital.

Epaphras is being talked about because he has a shepherding heart praying for these people. He goes on to tell us about Archippus. Archippus was obviously another elder there at the church of Colossae. He is being told, tell Archippus this, that he needs to fulfill the ministry that he received. So in other words, he's got a ministry there to that church. He's supposed to do what he needs to do. Maybe he's slacking off. Maybe he's not being diligent in what he needs to do. For some reason, Paul's telling the Colossians, tell him, fulfill your ministry. Make it happen. Do what you need to do.

[30 : 08] And then Paul brings up his own name. He doesn't say his name, but he's in there and he's saying, listen, I've written you this letter. I've written a letter to Colossae. I've written a letter to Laodicea. So when you get it, read it and then trade and read each other's letters.

Because what Paul is after with all of this is he's representing the task of shepherding. The task of shepherding. That's what he's representing here. The Greek word for pastor.

Okay. Pastor comes because of the Greek word *poio*, which means to shepherd. It means to shepherd. A pastor is defined by the word pastor because it's the task we do. It's the shepherding of the sheep.

Okay. And when you shepherd God's sheep, you do three things. You care for the sheep, which means that you love them. You do what you can to help them. You cry with them. You laugh with them. You help bind up the wounds. You help when they're afraid. Just think of that image of David, the shepherd, right? As he's got these sheep that are with him, following him as they go off into this place or that place. And he's bringing them back or they, they need some water. He cares for the sheep, but he also leads the sheep. Leading the sheep in the church means leading them towards accomplishing the mission that we have. And the mission is to make disciples. And so as you lead the sheep, you help to equip them, to train them so that they know how to do the things that they ought to do.

And you feed the sheep. That is, you teach them in large groups and small groups. You help them understand the word of God so that they can know. This is what a pastor does. This is what a pastor ought to do. And as Paul is commending these people, these are people that they ought to look towards.

[31 : 57] What he's telling us is that as we launch in and think about listening to this guy on the TV or read this person's book, we need to ask ourselves the question, does this person have a shepherding mindset? Does this person love the church of the Lord Jesus Christ? Because if they don't love the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, then they're not going to shepherd the church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Do they love the church? The church is the bride of Christ. It is here in the local expression of the universal church that souls are saved, marriages are healed, sin is fault, and holiness grows. And there are many out there who don't care about what happens in the local congregation, in the life of the church. And these are people to be avoided. Because the church is the bride of Christ.

He loved the church and gave himself up for the church. So not only do you want to ask, do they love the church? But you need to ask, do they submit to the shepherding of the church that they go

to?

Beloved, there are many men and women and Christian ministries out there who do not want, nor do they yield themselves to any kind of pastoral oversight or church oversight at all. And that becomes a dangerous thing for a particular ministry. There's a gentleman who's on the internet. He has this creation ministry. He has no home church. He has no pastoral oversight. And he has been in more trouble than you can shake a stick at. And why is that? Because he refuses to allow anyone to hold him accountable. You see, here's the thing. Shepherding, in part, is about you being willing to be shepherded, which means being held accountable. Are you willing to be held accountable? You come across a ministry, somebody who doesn't want the local church or a group of churches to have any sort of accountability in their ministry, and that is not a ministry we should support. But then ask yourself, do you love the local church?

Do you have a heart for the people in this congregation? Do you have a shepherd's heart for one another? If one is missing, do you find yourself asking the question, where is so-and-so?

[34 : 37] Perhaps, perhaps it's where we've failed just a little bit. Or this, do you love to be shepherded? Or are you fearful that a pastor is going to be mean and say terrible things to you? Ah, beloved.

It's a difficult thing. It's a difficult thing to be a bunch of sinning humans. It's so hard to get along sometimes.

It's so hard to be vulnerable, in particularly a community so small where it seems like everybody knows your business. If you think about these things, being faithful, encouraging, and shepherding, and you begin to examine your own heart, you begin to think about yourself, am I this kind of person?

And you find yourself saying this, like, no, I've got like one out of three. No, I'm 0 for 3 here. Or maybe you're 2 for 3.

Or maybe you feel like you're 3 for 3, but you know you need some improvement. And you find yourself looking at your heart today, and you kind of go like, man, this is a little bit of a spanking. And let me give you some good news.

[36 : 00] God, in his great compassion and love, sent the Lord Jesus Christ to pay the price for our lack of faithfulness, for our lack of encouraging, for our lack of love and shepherding of one another.

You look around and you say to yourself, no, I haven't loved like I should. You need to understand, it's been covered in the blood. You look around and you say to yourself, you know, no, I haven't been kingdom-minded like I ought to.

It's been covered in the blood. You say, no, I haven't really been faithful. I haven't been in the Word like I should. It's been covered in the blood. And if you are truly a Christian, then understanding that all of your sin that we've lined out here today has been covered in the blood ought not to be a thing that makes you go like, woo-hoo, we'll do some more.

But instead, it ought to be the thing that makes you go, dear God, praise you. That you have saved me. That you have died for me. That you've purchased me. That even the sin that I committed this morning because I thought about this person that I didn't like, it's been covered in the blood of Christ.

And I am therefore, there's no condemnation for me. You understand the good news? The good news is for all of us. As Christians, I can't keep living my Christian life unless somebody tells me the gospel that the sin that I just committed is covered in the blood.

[37 : 31] Because it is the gospel story and it's what God has done in Christ in the gospel that empowers me to live the way that I'm supposed to live. He doesn't just wipe the slate clean and says, try harder.

He wipes the slate clean, takes the righteousness of Jesus, puts it on you, puts his Holy Spirit in you, and then walks you all the way to eternity. Doing in you what we cannot do ourselves.

The glory and the greatness of the gospel. As he has taken those who have broken his law and who can't stop doing so.

And has purchased for them their freedom, given to them the righteousness that they need, empowers them by his Spirit so that they can obey him and follow him.

And Paul says, listen, listen to people who teach you that. Dive into ministries that focus on that. So that you grow, so that you learn, so that you're mature.

[38 : 45] May God be gracious to us. May he thrill your soul with what he's done in Christ.

Let's pray.