

Proverbs 5:1-23; 6:20-7:27

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[0 : 00] Well, good morning, church. This summer, if you've been with us, you know we're studying the book of Proverbs, and Proverbs is a very practical book, isn't it?

Last week, Pastor Greg got down to some of the nitty-gritty of the things that we're going to see in the book of Proverbs this summer. And one of the benefits of teaching straight through a passage of Scripture, like this opening section of Proverbs, is that it brings before us topics that otherwise we might choose to avoid, like this opening, like the chapters we'll be looking at this morning, which are all about wisdom and your sex life.

One of the great things about preaching about sex is that I don't have to write a sermon introduction, because I just say we're preaching about sex and everyone pays attention. It's excellent. Now, remember, these opening chapters of Proverbs, chapters 1 through 9, they're cast mostly in the form of speeches of a father to his son.

And we'll be looking at three of these speeches this morning in chapters 5, 6, and 7, each of which has to do with wisdom and sex. So, in essence, what we have here in Proverbs through the literary voice of a father speaking to his son is God, our heavenly father, coming to us as children with infinite wisdom and infinite grace and saying to us, let's have a talk.

And I think if we were to boil down what these three speeches are saying, I think we could sum it up in two big points. First, because sexual folly destroys, run from it.

[1 : 47] And second, because sexual wisdom satisfies, delight in it. Because sexual folly destroys, run from it. Because sexual wisdom satisfies, delight in it.

So, let's jump in at Proverbs chapter 5, verse 1, and hear the wisdom our heavenly father has for us when it comes to this all-important area of sex. That's page 530 in the Pew Bible, if you want to turn there with me.

Page 530, Proverbs chapter 5. Let's start with Proverbs chapter 5, verses 1 through 14.

My son, be attentive to my wisdom. Incline your ear to my understanding, that you may keep discretion and your lips may guard knowledge. For the lips of a forbidden woman drip honey, and her speech is smoother than oil.

But in the end, she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death. Her steps follow the path to Sheol. She does not ponder the path of life.

[2 : 48] Her ways wander, and she does not know it. And now, O sons, listen to me. Do not depart from the words of my mouth. Keep your way far from her, and do not go near the door of her house.

Lest you give your honor to others, and your years to the merciless. Lest strangers take their fill of your strength, and your labors go to the house of a foreigner. And at the end of your life, you groan when your flesh and body are consumed, and you say, how I hated discipline, and how my heart despised reproof.

I did not listen to the voice of my teachers or incline my ear to my instructors. I'm at the brink of utter ruin in the assembled congregation. So, here's the first thing our Heavenly Father wants us to know.

Because sexual folly destroys, run from it. Keep your way far from it, verse 8 says. Now, in these chapters, we meet the character of the forbidden woman.

Other translations you have might read the adulterous woman. And this character in the book of Proverbs represents sexual expression outside of what God intends, outside of what God designed.

[3 : 53] As we'll see in a minute, in the rest of chapter 5, God created sex to be fully enjoyed in the lifelong covenant of marriage. Sex inside of marriage is a good thing.

But sex outside of marriage brings ruin. As one writer said, sex is like fire. Inside a fireplace, it keeps us warm.

Outside the fireplace, it burns the house down. Now, before we go any further, you might be wondering, why does sexual folly here have to be described as a woman?

That doesn't seem very fair, right? I mean, aren't men just as guilty of sexual folly as women? Well, if you're thinking that, actually, the Bible would totally agree with you.

Men aren't any better than women in this regard. I think the reason why the forbidden woman is a woman here is because of the literary form of the passage. Remember, it's a father speaking to his son.

[4 : 55] But as we've said before, these speeches are intended not just for sons, but for all of us, for the whole people of God. Both sons and daughters are meant to put themselves in the place of the son in these chapters and translate it, apply it accordingly to their lives.

In other words, Proverbs is really saying here, beware of those who would tempt you to sexual folly, whether male or female. And the first thing we need to know is that there will be temptation.

And at first, what will come at us will seem sweet and smooth. Look again at verse 3. With lips sweeter than honey, with words smoother than oil, sexual folly will come at you promising something sweet and smooth.

Something fun. Something pleasurable, real, lasting. But the Father wants us to get the whole picture here. He wants us to see that under the surface appeal lies hidden destruction.

Look at verse 4. But in the end, it is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. What promised to be sweet and smooth in the end is bitter and piercing.

[6 : 10] And instead of leading to life, it leads to the grave. But in the end. So much of wisdom, you know, is beginning with the end in mind.

It's picking your head up from the immediate, from the now, from instant gratification, to view life as a whole. To see things from the perspective of the end.

And what's the end of sexual folly? What's the end of pursuing sex outside of God's good design? The middle of Proverbs 5 starts to lay that out for us. And Proverbs 6, 20 through 35 unpacks it even more.

Here, the Father's showing us the consequences. In verses 9 through 11 of chapter 5, we see that the pursuit of sexual folly will cost us dearly. Look at the list. Our honor, our years, our strength, our labors, even our flesh and bones will be consumed.

In other words, it destroys our reputation, our wealth, our vigor. In the long run, all of it will be sucked out of us, the Father says. Now, does that sound exaggerated to you?

[7 : 25] I think it does, doesn't it? I think it sounds exaggerated because our world tells us over and over again that sexual expression and permissiveness is the key to happiness, life, and vigor.

If you want to turn the engine on real life, you've got to turn the engine on sexual expression. Right? I mean, show me, show me a movie plot or a TV show where happiness is found in a married couple sticking it out through hardship and I will show you 20 where happiness lies in pursuing a relationship outside of marriage.

But this is why we need the wisdom of Proverbs so badly. Because even though these are the stories we keep telling ourselves, in the end, they never come true.

Instead, what's true is what verses 12 through 14 go on to describe. Sexual folly will bring deep regret. It destroys our conscience. In the end, you will look back and say, how I hated discipline, how my heart despised reproof.

That's the voice of remorse, of regret. I knew what I should have done and I didn't do it. And now I've lost everything. If you look over at Proverbs chapter 6, starting in verse 20, it picks up the same theme.

[8 : 49] This is the second of those three speeches about sex in the opening chapters of Proverbs. And here, the father unpacks the consequences of sexual folly in even greater detail. In verses 27 through 29, he shows us that the pain of sexual folly is inevitable.

Can a man carry fire next to his chest and his clothes not be burned? Or can one walk on hot coals and his feet not be scorched? The answer is no. So is he who goes into his neighbor's wife.

None who touches her will go unpunished. And even though the warning here is against adultery in particular, the same applies to sexual sin across the board. It's a fire that will inevitably consume you.

Last, in verses 30 through 33 of chapter 6, we see that sexual folly brings ongoing shame. People do not despise a thief if he steals to satisfy his appetite when he's hungry.

But if he's caught, he will pay sevenfold. He will give all the goods of his house. He who commits adultery lacks sense. He who does it destroys himself. He will get wounds and dishonor, and his disgrace will not be wiped away.

[10 : 00] Proverbs is making a lesser to greater argument here, you see. If a person who steals when they're hungry still has to pay sevenfold when they're caught, how much greater and how much certain will the penalty be for the one who commits adultery?

His disgrace will not be wiped away. There will be ongoing shame. And again, this sounds like an exaggeration to our ears, doesn't it?

Is sexual folly really that bad? Is it really that costly? Is that really where it ends? But friends, despite what we see in our movies or hear in our pop songs, despite what we read in our magazines, despite what our friends might tell us, our Heavenly Father is telling us what's true and what's for our good.

You know, in all the couples that Beth and I have done pre-marriage counseling with, we've never met a single person who said, you know, I'm really glad I had all those sexual experiences before marriage. I feel like they really prepared me well for what's ahead.

No one has said that. Not a single one. Instead, all of them would erase their past sexual folly in a second if they could.

[11 : 17] So if sexual folly destroys, what should be our response? And Proverbs is very clear. Run. Keep your path far from it.

Again and again, that's the Father's wisdom to His Son, to us. Chapter 5, verse 8. Keep your way far from her. Do not go near the door of her house. Chapter 6, verse 25.

Do not desire her beauty in your heart. Do not let her capture you with her eyelashes. You see the advice? Physically and mentally, geographically and intellectually, go the opposite direction.

In chapter 7, we have one last speech that illustrates this for us. The Father here tells us a story, a parable. In verse 6, he says, One day I looked out my window and here's what I saw.

Let's pick up the drama in verse 7 of chapter 7. And I've seen among the simple, I've perceived among the youths, a young man lacking sense, passing along the street near her corner, taking the road to her house in twilight in the evening, at the time of night and darkness.

[12 : 20] In other words, here's a young person in the wrong place at the wrong time, foolishly wandering into danger. Verse 10, And behold, the woman meets him dressed as a prostitute, wily of heart.

She's loud and wayward. Her feet do not stay at home. Now in the street, now in the market, and in every corner she lies in wait. She seizes him and kisses him. And with bold face, she says to him, I had to offer sacrifices, and today I've paid my vows.

In other words, under the veneer of religion, she's come back from the temple with a costly meal, an expensive meal that she's going to share with him. 15. So now I've come out to meet you, to seek you eagerly, and I found you.

There's the flattery. You're the one I've been waiting for. There's no one like you. 16. I've spread my couch with coverings, colored linens from Egyptian linen.

I've perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. Come, let us take our fill of love till morning. Let us delight ourselves with love. For my husband's not at home. He's gone on a long journey. He took a bag of money with him.

[13 : 21] At full moon, he'll come home. In other words, no one will find us. We won't get caught, and there won't be any consequences. Do you see how powerful the temptation comes?

It's attacking this foolish youth at every level. His pride, his ego, his sense of physical desire. And that's how it comes at us as well.

You know, sexual folly is not going to show up at your doorstep and say, hey, if you want a big costly load of shame and regret, I'm the one for you. No, sexual folly will come and make you feel special.

I've waited for you. You're the one for me. This is true love. And it will promise you the heights of pleasure without any consequence. Comfort, escape, delight with no consequence.

No one's home. No one will find out. No one will get hurt. But that's not how it ends. Pick up in verse 21. With much seductive speech, she persuades him.

[14 : 29] With her smooth talk, she compels him. All at once, he follows her as an ox goes to the slaughter. Or as a stag is caught fast till an arrow pierces its liver.

As a bird rushes into a snare, he does not know that it will cost him his life. Like an ox marching to his own slaughter.

That's a vivid image, isn't it? It's an image meant to bring us to our senses and to get us to listen. Verse 24, You know, one of the things we often tell ourselves in the face of temptation, particularly sexual temptation, is that our situation is different.

We're not like all those other people. I can handle this movie. I can handle this website. It won't suck me in. Or what I have with this other person, it's the real thing.

We're not like all those other couples who are having an affair. We're in love. This is different. But verse 27, again, is telling us the truth. The victims are many.

[15 : 52] The slain are a mighty throng. In other words, you are no different. And we will not escape. And so we need to do the exact opposite of the foolish young man in this parable.

We need to keep ourselves far from the path of sexual folly. Like Joseph in the house of Potiphar, we need to run in the opposite direction. So what does that look like practically?

Can we just be real honest for a second? Most of us in this room have a ticking time bomb of sexual folly right in our pockets. And it's not just guys.

I saw a statistic recently that one-third of women are viewing pornography every week. And you know where most of it's happening? No surprise. Friends, what are we going to do as a body of believers to stay out of the path of sexual folly?

Parents, are you monitoring and engaging in conversation with your kids about what they're doing and seeing on their devices?

[17 : 05] And the conversations that they're having with their friends? Are you talking with them about this stuff? Do you know how to use the parental controls on their phones so you can protect them from spiritual danger?

If not, what are you going to do this afternoon to figure that out? Don't wait until tomorrow. And if you don't know, figure it out.

Talk to me. Talk to Matt. Talk to Jeff. Talk to one of the elders. Start to do some Google searches on how these things actually work. And figure out how you can come alongside your son or daughter and walk with them in the midst of this.

And students, high schoolers, middle schoolers, I know who you are. If you have a phone or a tablet that your parents aren't plugged into and helping you with, here's your homework assignment.

Invite them to do so. Welcome them into your space. Welcome their wisdom and protection. I know that might sound totally crazy.

[18 : 10] And cramping your style. But, imagine you wake up in the middle of the night, your house is on fire, and your bedroom is filling with smoke.

And your mom or dad comes in with a fire extinguisher and an oxygen mask to rescue you and get you out of there safely. My bet is that you wouldn't complain that they're being overbearing and all up in your space.

Just let me roast in my bed, dad. You're not going to tell them that. You're going to be like, Mom, dad, I love you. I missed you.

Thank you. I'm a four-year-old again. Because, friends, here's the deal. Spiritually, we're all in that situation. And we need help.

We need help. We need help. Now, more than half of us here aren't living at home with our parents. So, what are you going to do to stay far from the path of sexual folly?

[19 : 09] Are you willing to download an app like Covenant Eyes or X3 Watch on your phone and get a trusted mentor to track with you, to get into your story, and to help you? Look, I know those apps clunk up your phone, and I know that there are ways to get around them, and I know they're not foolproof, but at least it's a start.

At least it's being intentional about living your life and staying far from the path. Maybe this week you need to get coffee with someone and say, I need help.

Will you help me keep far from the path of sexual folly? Ask me hard questions. Help me get the right software on my devices. Be intentionally intrusive in my life. I'm opening up the door for you to step in and help me.

And if you don't know who to ask in that regard, start with someone you trust in your small group. And if you're not in a small group, get into one. And if someone asks you to be that person for them, and you have no idea how to do that well, then come talk to one of us pastors and we can coach you on how to do it.

We can come alongside you and point you into the right direction for resources and give you questions to ask and give you ways to pray for that brother or sister who's coming to you so we can do this together.

- [20 : 26] But of course, sexual folly doesn't just come at us in our phones, does it? So for you, maybe there are other decisions you need to make, other ways you need to stay far from the path.

Do you need to change the way you drive or the way you walk to work? Do you need to change some of the media you consume? Do you need to change the friends you spend time with?

Do you need to change the job scenario that you're in? I know each one of those is costly, but it's worth it. And how is your thought life?

Are you being intentional with what happens in your mind? Are you taking every thought captive for Christ's sake? When you see an image in the checkout line or when an old memory comes back to you in that moment, what do you do?

Well, friends, here's what you can do. In that moment, pray for the Holy Spirit's help. The Holy Spirit is nearer to you than any of those distractions.

- [21 : 33] Pray for His help to look away, to leave those thoughts behind, and to begin setting your mind on the good gifts that God has given you to rightfully enjoy.

Interestingly, in a number of places in the New Testament, what's the antidote to sexual immorality? It's gratitude. Cultivating a heart of gratitude and praise of God from the New Testament perspective is what will wither away the roots of sexual folly in your life.

Because ultimately, friends, the truth is, you have to fight fire with fire. Desire will only be overcome by a greater desire.

When the desire of sexual folly comes blazing in, yes, you need to get away, but deeper still, you need to have a greater, brighter flame that's burning in your heart.

And here's where the second big point of the passage comes in. We're only going to touch on this briefly because of time. But we said that sexual folly destroys, so we must run from it.

- [22 : 47] But what are we running to? Go back to chapter 5. Pick up the rest of the Father's first speech. And in the rest of chapter 5, we see part of the answer.

Part of the answer. Proverbs 5, verse 15 through 20. Stay far from the woman of folly, but drink water from your own cistern, flowing water from your own well.

Should your springs be scattered abroad, streams of water in the streets, let them be for yourself alone and not for strangers with you. Let your fountain be blessed. And then he raises the curtain on the metaphor.

And rejoice in the wife of your youth. A lovely dear, a graceful doe, let her breasts fill you at all times with delight, be intoxicated always in her love. Why should you be intoxicated, my son, with a forbidden woman and embrace the bosom of an adulteress?

The Father is telling the Son that because sexual wisdom satisfies, we must delight in it. And here in chapter 5, that means enjoying sex in the lifelong covenant of marriage.

- [23 : 55] Paul will teach the same thing in 1 Corinthians chapter 7. Husbands and wives are to mutually give the good gift of sexual intimacy to one another joyfully, gladly, frequently.

You see, friends, the Bible isn't embarrassed about human sexuality. It's a reality to rejoice in, and the proper context for it is the security and trust of the whole life commitment of marriage.

But why is that so? Why is the exclusive covenant of marriage the only context God designed for sex? Well, there are lots of answers we could give to that, but the ultimate answer, biblically speaking, is this.

Because God designed sex from the very beginning to be a picture, to be a picture of His exclusive, self-giving love and union to His bride, the church.

We heard echoes of this in our passage from Isaiah earlier, didn't we? I am your husband, the Lord tells the people in Isaiah's day. In Ezekiel, in the opening chapters of Ezekiel, I think around 16, the metaphor gets even stronger.

[25 : 09] The Lord found His people, loved them, took them to Himself, made them His own, and yet, they ran away, whoring, Ezekiel says, after other lovers.

And yet, though the Lord would be fully just in divorcing them, casting them off, leaving them in their sin and shame, what does He do? He takes them to Himself once more. He washes them clean. He renews His covenant with them, never to forsake them.

Perhaps the most vivid picture of all this is found in the prophet Hosea. God tells Hosea to do something that seems absurd.

He says, Hosea, I want you to go marry an unfaithful wife. And even when she leaves him for other lovers, God tells Hosea to go into the marketplace and buy her back.

To pay whatever price her new lovers demand and bring her home. To be unswervingly faithful to her despite her sin.

[26 : 11] And God tells Hosea to do that because He says, that's how I love my people. And I want through you, I want you to be a picture of the faithful love that I have for my people.

That though they had run after other lovers, other gods, other lords, He would buy them back. He would pay the price and He would establish His unbreakable covenant with them forever.

And friends, when the fullness of time had come, after 400 years of prophetic silence, God literally came to give back His wayward bride.

Friends, it's no accident that Jesus' first miracle turning water into wine was at a wedding feast. And throughout His ministry, Jesus was constantly saying things like, how can the wedding guests fast when the bridegroom is with them?

Referring to Himself. He is the groom. Come for His bride. And because the sins of His bride were so great and because the weight of their infidelity was so heavy and because His love for us was so faithful, Jesus, our true spouse, went to the cross and there He shouldered the betrayal and the shame and the cost of our sin.

[27 : 29] There He groaned and His flesh and body were consumed for us and our place to ransom us. And three days later, our love arose again, conquering shame and death, ascended to the Father, poured out the Spirit and now, Jesus is gathering His bride from every tribe, tongue, and nation through the proclamation of the gospel, preparing us for the future wedding feast when He returns and makes all things new.

Why is sex only for marriage? Because sex and marriage are part of a story that's so much bigger than you and me. They're pointers to the story of God's faithful, exclusive, covenant-keeping love for His bride, the church, of His union with us and for all who repent and believe.

And that means two things as we close. First, for singles, there's an even greater fire for you to stoke against the flames of sexual folly.

Chapter 5 had advice for those of us who are married, right? But what about those of us who are single? By the way, don't forget that the only perfect human being the world has ever seen, the Lord Jesus, was single, right?

And the greatest missionary and theologian of the church, the Apostle Paul, was also single. Singleness isn't a problem to overcome. It's a calling to live into. But look again at chapter 7.

[29 : 16] Pick up in verse 1. We skipped these verses earlier. My son, keep my words, treasure up my commandments with you. Chapter 7, verse 2. Keep my commandments and live. Keep my teaching as the apple of your eye.

That's your pupil. Guard it. Protect it. Bind them on your fingers. Write them on the tablet of your heart. Say to wisdom, you are my sister. And call insight your intimate friend to keep you from the forbidden woman and the adulteress with her smooth words.

Did you notice here? It's not the wife of your youth in this passage that will keep you on the path of sexual wisdom that satisfies.

What is it? Verse 4. It's wisdom itself. Say to wisdom, you are my sister. And call insight your intimate friend.

Now you need to understand that my sister was a term of endearment in the ancient world. Sounds a little weird to us to call your spouse my sister. But you know, terms of endearment are always a little weird and awkward.

[30 : 25] An intimate friend. Call insight your intimate friend. That's also a rich relational phrase, isn't it? So what is Proverbs saying here?

It's saying that refraining from sex outside of marriage is possible because in wisdom itself we have an intimate friend, a lover even, who we can call to, who we can cherish, who we can rest and find our souls to light in.

And you know, friends, when the curtain rises in the New Testament and we see that wisdom, this Old Testament figure of such grace and beauty and power, we see when the curtain rises in the New Testament, who is wisdom?

Wisdom's fulfilled in none other than the Lord Jesus Himself. So when you walk with Him daily, communing with Him by His Spirit in the Word and prayer and worship and in fellowship, you're communing with the most faithful of spouses, with the most intimate of friends, with wisdom incarnate.

You see, friends, every human marriage is just a shadow of what we have in Him. It's not, marriage isn't something we're supposed to look to in order to satisfy. It's something we're supposed to look through to the real marriage, our union with Christ.

[31 : 58] Every marriage is just a shadow of what we have in Him and what we ultimately will have in endless delight with Him when He returns. So for those of us who are single, stoke that desire for Christ.

Do anything you can to fan the flame of your love for Christ. Delight in wisdom. Delight in your Lord Jesus and that will fill your heart with a joy and with a gladness and with a resilience that will keep you far from the path of folly.

Last thing, when we see what sex means in its full biblical scope, we see and we know that in Christ there's full forgiveness for all your sexual folly.

Friends, some of you are carrying a load of shame and guilt this morning because you were like that young fool in chapter 7. You put yourself in the wrong place at the wrong time and whether on the internet or in person with someone who wasn't your spouse, you willingly went looking for sexual pleasure outside of God's good design.

But friends, brothers, sisters, as you see yourself in that story in Proverbs 7, let me call your mind to another story about a young man who took his father's inheritance and went into the far country and spent all that he had on prostitutes and reckless living.

[33 : 40] Do you remember that story? Do you remember what that young man did when he was finding himself feeding pigs, poor, alone, and ashamed? Loaded with guilt and regret when the price of his sexual folly had cost him everything?

He came to himself and he remembered his father and he went home. And what did he find when he went home? Rejection?

No. He found the father's embrace. The best robe was wrapped around him. The ring was put on his hand. The shoes were put on his feet.

And the fattened calf, the feast, was prepared to celebrate his return. And friends, that can be your story this morning.

It is your story if you're in Christ. Because of what Jesus has done, there's forgiveness for all your sins, covering all of your shame. The father who warns you in his grace receives you home in his grace.

[34 : 49] And he receives you home not with reservations, but with rejoicing. So you see, today, right now, if you're carrying a burden of sexual folly, go to Christ in faith.

Rest in his finished work and know that the father delights in you. There's forgiveness for it all, no matter how great it's been.

Christ, Ephesians 5, will tell us, has washed his bride clean. That we are spotless in him without wrinkle or blemish. That we're radiant so that now we can delight in him again.

And we can walk faithfully in the way of wisdom once more, staying far from sin and close to your Savior, delighting in him and finding in him the satisfaction for your soul.

Let's pray. Lord Jesus, we ask that, I ask that you would come near to us by your Spirit.

[36 : 05] Lord, we've dealt with heavy topics this morning from your Word. Lord, I pray that we've dealt with these things accurately and faithfully. Lord, I pray for those who are here now who find themselves enmeshed, entrapped in sexual folly.

Lord, would you give them by your Holy Spirit the courage and the grace to turn and to step back into the path that leads to you, Father.

Jesus, would they see the utter completion of your grace on the cross for them and know that all their shame and all their guilt has been covered and they can come home. And Lord, I pray that you would give us courage and perseverance as a church family to help one another in this fight of faith, to stay far from the path of folly and to stay near you.

Lord, help us to be those who ask one another loving, good, intrusive questions, who welcome the input of our brothers and sisters into our lives. Lord Jesus, you said that it's better to pluck out an eye and cut off a hand in order to enter the kingdom of heaven than to go down to the grave.

So Lord, give us that kind of courage and that kind of perseverance and that kind of desire to want to enjoy the riches of you more than we want to enjoy the folly of this world.

[37 : 30] Holy Spirit, stoke that love in our hearts, we pray. Amen. Well, friends, it's fitting that we're celebrating the Lord's Supper this morning.

The Lord's Supper is actually an act of covenant renewal. Here is Christ, our lover, offering himself to us again through this bread and through this cup.

And he's inviting us into deeper union with him. Here we see in this bread that's broken, our lover's body broken for us. And here in this cup that we share, the blood of our heavenly spouse shed for us, paying down the debt of every single sin so that we can be with him forever.

And we celebrate the Lord's Supper regularly, frequently, because we so often forget how faithful and how good and how thorough is the love of Jesus for us.

The Lord's Supper is for believers. It's for those who've turned from sin and placed their trust in Christ. What does that mean? It doesn't mean that you've sort of tried to clean up your act and start living the right way.

[38 : 49] It means that you've stopped depending on your own efforts to clean up your act and live the right way. And it means you've thrown yourself in complete rest and trust and abandon on the one who has lived perfectly and on the one who has done it for you.

And you're resting in him alone for your acceptance with God. So friends, if you're here this morning and that's true of you, then as the bread comes around and as the cup comes around, then take and eat and drink in repentance and in faith and remember the deep love of Christ for you.

And if you're here this morning and that's true of you and you haven't been baptized, then that's your next step. Go down into the waters of baptism and publicly proclaim all that Christ has done for you.

If you want to talk about baptism, you can come talk to me after the service. I'd be happy to do that. If you're here and you're not a believer in Jesus yet, if you're still exploring what Christianity is all about, then just pass the plates by.

Don't take it. Instead, we would invite you this morning to put your trust in Christ. Instead of taking these signs and tokens of what Jesus has done, take hold of Him by faith.

[40 : 01] There are some prayers in your bulletin a couple pages in that are just meant to help you cry out to God and ask Him to open your eyes or ask Him to become your Savior and your Lord. So, those who are coming and helping to serve, come up.

The way we do this at Trinity, if you're new, we pass out the bread and we eat it together, then we're going to pray again and we're going to pass out the cup and we're going to drink it together. We'll sort of do one at a time and we'll sing and worship and pour out our hearts to God together.

Antoine, would you pray for the bread for us? Thanks, brother. Lord, how great it is that we stand here in remembrance of you, your body broken for us, yet very sobering, knowing that all our sins are covered.

that you stand unashamed of us, you've molded and created us into your likeness, into your image, and may through your sacrifice, we may know your great love and desire for us, to restore us and to make us into the people you've called us to be.

So as we partake in this bread, Lord, may we remember all you've done for us and how great and how wide your love is.

[41 : 51] In Christ's name, amen. Amen. I heard the voice of Jesus say, come on to me and rest.

Lay down, thou weary one, lay down thy head upon my breast.

I came to Jesus as I was, weary and worn and sad.

I found in Him a resting place, and He has made me glad.

I heard the voice of Jesus say, behold, I freely give the living water.

[43 : 23] Thirsty one, stoop down and drink and live. I came to Jesus and I drank of that life-giving stream.

My thirst was quenched, my soul revived, and now living in.

I heard the voice of Jesus say, I am this dark world's light.

Look unto me, thy morn shall rise, and all thy day be bright.

I looked to Jesus and I found in Him my star, my sun.

[44 : 42] And in that light of life I'll walk till traveling days are dark.

Thank you.