

2 Corinthians 7:2-16 - Genuine Repentance

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Preacher: Steve Palframan

[0:00] Hi guys, I'm going to do the reading now. Alright. This reading is taken from 2 Corinthians 7, verse 2-16.

I have said before that you have such a place in our hearts, that we would live or die with you. I have spoken to you with great frankness. I take great pride in you.

I am greatly encouraged in all our troubles. My joy knows no bounds. For when we came into Macedonia, we had no rest, but we were harassed at every turn. Conflicts on the outside, fears within.

But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus. And not only by his coming, but also by the comfort you had given him.

He told us about your longing for me, your deep sorrow, your ardent concern for me, so that my joy was greater than ever. Even if I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it.

[1:19] Though I did regret it, I see that my letter hurt you, but only for a little while.

Yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended, and so were not harmed in any way by us. Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. See what this godly sorrow has produced in you.

What earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point, you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter.

So even though I wrote to you, it was neither on account of the one who did the wrong, nor on account of the injured party, but rather that before God you could see for yourselves how devoted to us you are.

[2:20] By all this, we are encouraged. In addition to our own encouragement, we are especially delighted to see how happy Titus was, because his spirit has also been refreshed by all of you.

I had boasted to him about you, and you have not embarrassed me. But just as everything we said to you was true, so our boasting about you to Titus has proved to be true as well. And his affection for you is all the greater when he remembers that you were all obedient, receiving him with fear and trembling.

I am glad that I can have complete confidence in you. This is the word of the Lord. Great. Thank you, Jamal. Let's pray as we come to God's word. Let's pray.

Gracious God, we want to just pause and ask now for your help as we look at your words. We're hungry. We want you to feed us.

We're thirsty. We want to drink of the truth of your word. We're empty. We want you to fill us. We know our neediness, and we want you to meet our needs.

[3:29] And so we pray now that as we look at your word together, that you would guard our hearts, speak to us, we pray. Help us, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.

I think it's true that anything that is good or desirable can be faked, right? If something is good and you want it, it can be faked.

So if you go to Shepherd's Bush Market, you could get yourself a fake Rolex. You could probably get yourself a pair of fake Nike trainers or fake perfume.

Sometimes it's true that even things don't try that hard to be fake, do they? So if you shop at Aldi, like we do, you can get wheat biscuits instead of Weetabix, right?

It's not even trying that hard to cover the fact that it is a fake, or wheat shreds are shredded wheat. Even now we're in a world where the fake phones you up on your mobile phone, yeah?

[4:32] So my phone rings and I am offered a brilliant new contract. Whatever you're paying, sir, we will halve it. Oh, I'm only paying five pounds a month.

Two pounds fifty and you'll get a brand new iPhone. It's a fake, isn't it? Anything good and desirable can be faked. And what I hope we've seen over the last few weeks as we've been thinking about repentance and jumping around the Bible a little bit for that series, is that you can see that of all the spiritual goods, repentance is good and desirable.

Repentance is right there at the top of the list. Repentance, we saw, didn't we, Peter says, opens the door for times of refreshing for the Lord's people. In Psalm 32, repentance brings joy and wholeness.

If you read your Bible, you will notice that repentance is good and desirable. It is brilliant. But, like a Louis Vuitton handbag or a Rolex watch, because it is so good, it is also often faked.

Faked. Not everything that calls itself repentance is repentance. And that, you'll notice, is the idea in our passage this morning. You'll notice, if you've still got it open and if you've not, get back to it, that Paul talks about sorrow for sin, but he distinguishes between two kinds of sorrow, a worldly sorrow and a godly sorrow.

[5:58] And while both might look the same for a moment, one godly sorrow leads to a genuine repentance, and the other, worldly sorrow, is a fake, and it leads to death.

And our sermon this morning, as we finish this mini-series in repentance, we're going to think about how repentance is not just being sad at things going wrong or at the things that you have done wrong.

I want to suggest to you that everybody feels sad for the things that they've done wrong. Everybody feels sad for the things they've done wrong. It is just a common human experience.

We have a moral conscience. We feel a sense of sadness when we do things wrong. Some people are more sensitive than others, right? So some people feel particularly sensitive about things that they have done wrong, and other people, it seems to take something wilder for them to feel guilty. But we are all sad. So if I asked you this morning, you know, do you feel sad for getting angry or lashing out or lying or cheating? Do you feel sad that you didn't listen to that good advice, that you pretended to be better than you really were?

[7:05] Are you sad at the relational breakdown and the hurt and the mess? We all are, aren't we? That is a common universal human experience. But being sad does not mean we've repented.

Because the question to us, the question our passage is going to ask us this morning is, that sadness that you feel, is it godly sadness or is it worldly sadness?

Which is it? Is it the real deal from God which leads to genuine repentance and life? Or is it a fake sadness that leads to death?

Because it's possible even for a Christian to be sad and yet unrepentant. It's possible, isn't it, that what we think is repentance is really just a knockoff of the real thing.

Now to see that, we're landing in the middle of this letter and we're going to have to do a bit of work to kind of understand it. We're jumping into the middle of something and that's not always the easiest thing to do when we want to understand a part of the Bible.

[8:09] So let me try and explain to you briefly what's going on here in 2 Corinthians and stay with me if you can and then we'll come back to some big ideas about repentance. Okay, what you need to know is that in Acts 18, Paul visited Corinth and started the church.

Paul stayed in Corinth then for about 18 months, establishing the church, teaching the new Christians and then he moved on. After moving on, Paul and the Corinthian church exchanged letters several times.

Now, two of those letters are in our Bibles as 1 and 2 Corinthians, the other letters we don't have. And what's important for us this morning is to notice that between writing 1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians, Paul visits the church in Corinth again.

But he's not there for very long. He only visits for a short time because while he is there, somebody in the church opposes him and his apostolic authority. So we don't actually know exactly what they did, but in some manner they oppose him and his authority.

It was really bad. And the badness of what he did is magnified not just because it was one person who opposed him, but because the Corinthian church as a whole were largely ambivalent towards it.

[9:27] And so they just stood by and let it happen. And so Paul was undefended against this man's accusations and his rebellion. So Paul left. He was only there briefly. And having left, he then wrote to them another letter confronting the way that he'd been treated.

We don't have that letter. It's not in our Bibles. It's been lost in history. But it's mentioned in 2 Corinthians several times. So in 2 Corinthians 2 verse 4, Paul says that he wrote out of much affliction and anguish of heart, he says.

In other words, Paul was chewed up about the way he'd been treated and the seeming ambivalence of the church in Corinth towards him. And so he poured over that in his letter and spilt that out, explaining in his letter why he was so grieved.

And so it's no surprise that in our passage this morning, you hear that that letter that they received made them sorrowful. They did not like reading this letter from Paul.

In fact, 2 Corinthians 10, it seems to suggest to you that some people even accuse Paul of being bold in his letters but weak face to face. He writes stern letters, but when you see him, he's nothing.

[10:38] Now, having written this letter calling out their behavior, Paul is, as you might imagine, anxious to know how they're doing. How are they going to respond? Are they going to change their minds? Are they going to repent and move towards me again?

So he waits for a guy called Titus, who is the guy who took his difficult letter to the church in Corinth. He waits for him to return with news of their reaction. And this waiting is really difficult for Paul.

He's anxious to know how they've responded. In chapter 2, Paul describes being in Troas whilst he's waiting for Titus to come back and says that he's so distracted by this concern for the Corinthian church that he was unable, even though the door was open to ministry, he was unable to do anything because he was just so overwhelmed by his concern for what the Corinthian church were thinking of him.

But now, in chapter 7, you find that Titus has returned and brought good news. The Corinthian church were sad at how they'd wronged Paul. Paul expected that much, but the good news is that their sorrow was not worldly sorrow, but godly sorrow.

And it led them to repentance. Paul's opponent is temporarily put out of fellowship with the church, the record is corrected, and the relationship is restored. And that's what we are jumping into the middle of in chapter 7 here.

[11:54] And so if you can keep that kind of situation in mind, let me show you three things about genuine repentance from 2 Corinthians 7. Let me show you firstly the importance of genuine repentance. I hope you see here that Paul is really clear, isn't he, that without genuine repentance, there is no restoration of relationship.

Paul's anxiety, I'm not sure whether anxiety is the right word because that implies that there's a wrongness to it, but it's not anxiety in that sense. There's an eagerness from Paul for news. His inability to concentrate in Troas comes from the relational breakdown with the Corinthian church, a relationship that cannot be restored unless the Corinthian church are willing to deal with their sin through genuine repentance.

Of course, we know this, don't we, from our own experience. If someone is not genuinely sorry for what they have done, for how they've mistreated you, for what they've said, or how they've behaved, you cannot be truly reconciled, can you?

It doesn't matter how willing you are to be forgiven, the absence of reconciliation is there if there's no genuine sorry. And that lack of reconciliation is a terrible burden to carry.

But what I want you to notice, which I think is the surprise of the passage, is not that it's just a burden for Paul. You might kind of expect that. What I want you to see is that a lack of repentance would have been a great burden for the Corinthian church.

[13:20] Look down at verse 10. I'm going to read verse 10 a number of times through this sermon because verse 10 is really the point. So if you get verse 10 in your minds and that's what you go away remembering, you've understood. Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret.

But worldly sorrow brings death. Do you see this? Worldly sadness, worldly sorrow, sadness that it just happened, sadness at sin brings death, death, while godly sorrow brings repentance and salvation.

Now, both sorrows, as we mentioned, might look the same at the start. I'm sure there's lots of tears from both kinds of people. But the truth is that they both come from different places and lead to different places, different destinations.

And what I want you to notice is that Paul is writing to a church here. The salvation and death that he is talking about in chapter 7 are not necessarily the categories of heaven and hell.

They could be, couldn't they? Right? So it is true. It is the gospel, isn't it? That if you individually are only sad at your sin and do not repent and turn to Christ, you will not be saved.

[14 : 35] You will die in your sin and for your sin, not just physically in death, but spiritually dead, separated from the mercy of God who made you for all eternity.

But if you are genuinely godly sorry for your sin, then with godly sorry, you will repent and you'll be saved. That's what we've been thinking about for the last few weeks. That's not what he's talking about here in chapter 7.

This is talking about the Christian's repentance. How Christians should repent. Repentance is how the Christian life starts, but it's also how it goes on.

And so for Christians, to people Paul calls saints, called, adopted, and rescued, he says to them, doesn't he, ongoing godly sorrow and repentance is important to you.

Because there is, even for the Christian, a kind of death and a kind of health or salvation. There is a rottenness in the Christian life that comes from persistent unrepentance.

[15 : 35] and there is a health and a life that comes to the Christian through genuine repentance. On our willingness to genuinely turn from our ongoing battle with sin.

I don't know what you're thinking. There is, there's perhaps a chance that through this series on repentance, you've been thinking, well, you know, this is all very well, Steve. Yeah, all this talk about repentance. I know that's important for people who don't come to church very much.

You're probably not Christians. I've been a Christian for years. Will you please say something that's relevant to me? I repented of my sin long ago. Please tell me something that will help me with the battle for Christian maturity.

I want to learn the deep truths of the Christian faith. I want to know how to live as a Christian in the complicated situation that I find myself in now. Well, listen, if that's you, here is the deep truth that leads to maturity.

Here's the deep truth that will help you live a Christian life in the complex world that you're in. Here it is, right? You ready? Repent. Turn back to the Lord. That's it.

[16 : 37] Repent and believe. Repent and believe. That's maturity. And it's maturity not just for us as individuals, it's maturity for us as a church, corporately as well, dealing with our sins and our failings by taking them to the Lord, yet full of sorrow, but joyfully receiving salvation.

So that as a church, we don't rot from the inside out with a kind of death of worldly sorrow that doesn't lead to repentance. A friend of mine works in cancer research.

He's a professor. He's one of those really bright people, right? So it's very gracious of him to be my friend. But anyway, he works in something, it's not chemotherapy, but it's more training your own body to defeat cancer cells.

He does explain it to me, I don't understand it, right? He's had quite a lot of success, he's been on the television with it and that kind of thing. It's not quite there yet. But I want you to imagine that it works, okay? And he has in this treatment an infallible cure for cancer.

And imagine then that you receive a diagnosis, a terminal diagnosis for cancer. There's no hope, the cancer will kill you. And so you come to my friend and he offers you the wonder drug, right?

[17 : 54] And you take it. Cancer is defeated, there's great joy, you were dead, you're now alive. Imagine though, that as you go on, you discover that the cancer is still there and it's coming back a little bit.

You see the marks on your skin and the lumps in your body. What do you do? I guarantee that you don't say, do you know what? Well, I took the cure about 10 years ago so I'm not going to bother with it anymore.

I'm not really interested anymore. Of course you wouldn't. Would you go back? Give me some more of that. I need more of that. I thought then that's what I need but I realize now I need more of it.

Please, give me some more. And that's what's going on here. Sin, wickedness and rebellion is the disease of the human race. We all have it. It will kill us. It will eternally kill us. Christ is the solution.

God the Father in his love and mercy sent his son to die in our place so that we can be forgiven and shown mercy and restored as human beings. Great joy that you don't receive him just once.

[18:55] You need to keep coming back to him and receiving him because we're not perfect yet. And so when we sin what do we do? We return to the cross. We own our sin and with godly sorrow we repent so that that joy is ours again.

And here's the thing. It's as we are humbled by this process of realizing our ongoing sin and turning to God we become less and he becomes more.

We are humbled and he is glorified. And God in his wisdom thinks that you as a Christian this morning are best perfected through a lifetime of being humbled and him being glorified.

That's what he thinks. And so for us as a church we are to be a community of repentance. Why?

Well because the alternative is to be a community of death where sin is just kind of brushed under the carpet and not dealt with and rots away our life together.

That's the importance of repentance, right? The importance of repentance. Let's think about the source of genuine repentance. Come back to verse 10. Godly sorrow brings repentance that leaves the salvation and leaves no regret but worldly sorrow brings death.

[20:08] Now notice with me that godly sorrow brings repentance. It's similar. Verse 11 if you look at it. See what godly sorrow has produced in you. Verse 9 carries a similar idea.

It says that they became sorrowful as God intended. Now we're going to think in a moment about the marks of genuine repentance but let's just think more specifically about what this godly sorrow actually is.

What does it mean to be godly sorrowful for our sin? Paul in writing his letter to the church in Corinth calling out not just the man who opposed him but the whole church who just stood by and watched.

He knew that that letter would make them sad. That was a given. No one likes to have that conversation. But his hope and prayer was that God would be at work in it.

That God would use his letter to convict them of their sin. That God would show them what they've done wrong so that they might repent and make things right. Now listen let me show you two things here.

[21:06] His first assumption is that godly sorrow is essentially it's a work of the spirit. You can be sad at your sin in your own strength but godly sorrow requires a work of the spirit.

And so Paul's hope was not so much in the church but his hope was in God as he wrote. Paul's hope was that God would use his letter to bring about what only God is able to do which is a godly sorrow that leads to repentance.

That's the first thing it's a work of the spirit. The second thing to notice is that you cannot then mature as a Christian without an ongoing Holy Spirit awareness of your sin.

We're going to do this a number of times this morning right? So we're distinguishing between becoming a Christian for the first time and our ongoing growth as a Christian. So when you become a Christian for the first time God by his spirit opens your eyes to see your sin and your need of Christ and you run to him and flee to him.

And the process of growing and going on as a Christian is that you become increasingly aware of your sinfulness and run to Christ for salvation. And so you might hope might you that the Christian life might be different to this.

[22:18] You might hope that the Christian life was growing in a sense of awesomeness. Right? That might have been your preferred version of the Christian life that day by day you'd wake up and think I am more brilliant than I thought I was yesterday.

That is not the Christian life. It turns out that in God's wisdom the road to maturity is marked by sorrow at our ongoing sin. We need to be careful.

Right? Godly sorrow is not hopelessness. It is possible to overdo this isn't it? It is possible to beat ourselves up as if sadness for sin atones for sin.

Christians behave like that sometimes don't they? Christian churches can be like that. You know Christian churches love to make their congregations feel perpetually guilty because you can make them do whatever you want if you can make them feel guilty.

But that's not it here. Rather the point is that you cannot grow in your love for Jesus without at the same time also growing in your knowledge of your need for Jesus.

[23:18] and so as you see your sin you delight that Jesus is the solution and God by the spirit makes you love Christ and hate sin and be sorrowful at it.

I think this is the nub of this for us this morning that the Lord does this work matures you and me as Christians by this is in part by showing us our sin and our ugliness and showing us Christ.

perhaps a wounded friend tells you a difficult truth that you didn't want to hear and so you realise just a little bit more that you are more sinful than you perhaps thought. Now of course that means doesn't it that if you pray to grow as a Christian what you are praying in part at least is that you would be grieved at your sin that you might keep turning to Christ the doctor for our sin.

Let me try and be a bit more concrete about this. How does this work? Let me give you a couple of personal examples. It was pointed out to me a couple of weeks ago I was in a phone conversation with a church member and they said to me listen you were dismissive and defensive over the concerns that I raised with you.

It wasn't particularly easy to hear and actually ironically my instinctive reaction was to be dismissive and defensive of the person on the phone. That was what was going on in my heart. But I realised they were right.

[24:40] They were right. I was sad. Oh Steve why did you do that? Why did you speak like that? And I had to say to them listen I'm really sorry. Shouldn't have done that.

It was me. I was defensive. I was dismissive of your concerns and I shouldn't have been. I was reading this week that this blew my mind. I was reading this week that God doesn't love efficiency. Right? See I love efficiency. I think that the best way to do anything is the fastest way to do anything. But have you thought about the fact that God doesn't love that? God could have created this world in an instant like that but he didn't.

He took time. There was a process. God could make you and me perfect in an instant. Take us straight to glory the moment we come to faith. We might wish he did but he has a process that takes time.

And so I've realised this this week thinking oh your love of efficiency Steve might actually at times be sinful. You need to be sorry for that and repent of that. See God is very patient isn't he?

[25:46] Isn't he? He's not in a rush. And so in our Christian maturity this is how it goes isn't it? We see our sin we have sorrow for our sin we say sorry for our sin and we receive salvation for our sin.

So let me ask you if you're a Christian this morning let me ask you where is God grieving you at the moment? What is it that the Holy Spirit has his finger on in your life?

It's painful you know it don't you? It's probably very sad but let me encourage you not to resist his work his grief is not his final goal salvation is his goal but he takes you through grief that you might be godly sorrowful at your sin that you might repent and receive salvation.

That's the source of genuine repentance godly sorrow finally then let's think about the marks of genuine repentance if you look again at verse 11 you'll notice that instead of repeating godly sorrow produces repentance he swaps out the word repentance for a list of different characteristics so look down at verse 11 see what this godly sorrow has produced in you you expect the word repentance but instead you get a list of seven different characteristics take a look at them earnestness that is a seriousness to not stop until the right thing is being done it's a recognition that this business is important business eagerness to clear yourself not as in a right to sort of argue that it wasn't really you who did it but to put right what was wrong to straighten things out indignation crossness I think here in the context that the offense to Paul anger at its wickedness this was wrong this shouldn't have happened Paul should not have been treated like that alarm wow

I can't believe that Paul was treated like that this is shocking it's almost as if they've woken up to what they did longing again in the context it's longing for relational reconciliation with Paul who left so quickly concern again a concern for Paul readiness to see justice done again a desire to put things right to hold Paul's opponent to account and so Paul concludes that they have proved themselves innocent in this matter not because they proved that they didn't actually do it not at all rather that they have dealt with their guilt in the right way their repentance is visible and real and so they are therefore innocent now in a way those marks are context specific aren't they we're not Paul we're not the Corinthian church but just notice a couple of things notice first how earnest action marks real repentance earnest action marks real repentance if you are really godly sorrowful for your sin you will seek to do something about it not atoned for your sin because Christ alone can do that but seeking to put things right receiving forgiveness and making recompense genuine repentance does not try and cover it up does not try to pretend it didn't happen or pretend it didn't

matter you know if we're serious of repenting of anger or pride or lust or cold heartedness towards the Lord if you are genuinely repentant for those things you will seriously go about action to do something about it and stop you will be earnest about it it will be the most serious thing you are doing if you are serious of repenting about relationship fallout of slander or gossip or tearing others down you will earnestly seek to do something about it to put it right to set the record straight as far as you are able perhaps you can put it the other way around to make it clearer if your sadness at your sin if my sadness at my sin causes me to do nothing other than try and pretend it's not there [29:49] I have not been godly sorrowful for my sin I am worldly sorrowful for my sin and that leads to rottenness earnest action means that genuine repentance is more doesn't it than just saying sorry to God oh how I would love that right oh Steve you were dismissive and defensive when I spoke to you about my concerns oh it's okay I prayed to God about that it doesn't matter anymore it's not that is it we need don't we to be able to say sorry to one another as well as the Lord because it is living out sorry towards the offended person repentance towards God involves recompense towards others it wasn't possible was it for the Corinthian church to say a private sorry for a public wrong to Paul they had to take public action they had to remove the man from the church and in chapter 2 it seems as though

Paul is urging them to bring him back so they don't squash him with unbearable sorrow and then notice so not only does it require earnest action really also genuine repentance is really only visible over time repentance here is not just a quick conversation with Paul it took time and so for us the more serious the sin the more time genuine repentance takes let me try and be clear on this if you if you've been unfaithful to your husband or your wife repentance is not just saying sorry once in a moment it's not just one tearful conversation it might begin there but it will involve more than that it will involve a willingness to be transparent in the years to come to share your messages and show your phone to receive the help that you need from others to work through the struggles that's what genuine repentance will involve it takes time but there's one more mark of genuine repentance I wonder whether you noticed it it's there in verse 10 which I'm going to read to you again as we finish godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret but worldly sorrow brings death here's the final mark of genuine repentance repentance no regret no regret now it doesn't mean I don't think that we don't regret the sin that's not I think the point here it would genuinely have been better had the Corinthian church not treated Paul as it did the regret here modifies the repentance so it's that genuine repentance never regrets that it repented you know it never regrets that it saw its sin and was grieved by it and then repented in a way that's surprising isn't it surely you regret being sad but why doesn't genuine repentance include regret well because it receives the blessing of forgiveness which is more than compensation for the sadness you know you wouldn't regret taking the cure for cancer would you if you had cancer you would delight in it you would be grateful for it and so real repentance walks through grief and sadness but arrives at joy a joy that in verse 4 knows no bounds as it brings salvation that is better than sin the reconciliation was even better let me try and finish with a story that will hopefully land some of these thoughts for us this morning it's a true story

I share it because it's been shared publicly I don't know the person involved his name was Dave and he was the pastor of a church until the point at which his adultery was uncovered and he had to stand down shortly after standing down as a pastor Dave suffered a heart attack and very nearly died and he wrote this a few weeks ago on his substack he wrote this during my rebellious years I both wanted to die and was terrified of dying in equal measure I wanted a way of escape a way out of the web of deceit that I had woven and yet the thought of standing before Jesus without having come in clean was terrifying though I know I would have been welcomed home at that time because my salvation doesn't depend on the extensiveness of my repentance but on the sufficiency of Jesus' life death and resurrection and reign to save me however living with a clean conscience is nonetheless liberating as the ambulance careered towards the hospital scattering cars in all directions my heart was at peace

I did not feel panicked or frightened I felt safe because I was safe my day could have ended in heaven in the ultimate sense for me that would have been perfect literally that my friends is the power of godly grief genuine repentance that leads to clear conscience living before the Lord before whom one day we will stand who alone has a solution for our sin in Christ alone so let's pray that he would give us that godly grief let's just take a moment of quiet maybe the spirit in your own heart is putting his finger on something maybe you want to talk to the Lord about that now may may may

may may Thank you.

[36 : 16] Heavenly Father, we are so, so prone to try and deal with our ongoing battle with sin, with anything other than repentance and faith in Jesus.

Even as Christians, we do that really stupid and dumb thing of just pretending that we're better than we really are because we're afraid you might not love us if you know what we're really like.

And it's stupid, Lord, because you know exactly what we're like. And knowing what we're like, you

love us and sent your son to die for us. And so, Lord, we pray individually and corporately.

We want to have less of our sin and more of Jesus. Please, we pray. May you grow in us this godly grief at the ways in which we offend others and offend you.

That we might, through godly grief, repent and have more of Christ. We pray, please, that you might grow us as Christians.

[37 : 28] That we might be increasingly humble and willing to serve one another. And increasingly persuaded of your glory and your goodness. And so, Lord, we want to pray this morning for anybody who maybe hasn't even experienced the forgiveness of the Lord Jesus for the very first time.

How important that is, Lord. And so, we pray that they might turn to you. And we pray also maybe for an individual Christian who is holding on to something they shouldn't be.

Please, Lord, we pray this morning. May you give them godly grief that they might turn in repentance and receive salvation and wholeness from the Lord Jesus.

In whose name we pray. Amen.