2 Samuel 13, Twisting everything good

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[0:00] Let me just give a few words of introduction before I read the passage for us this morning. So I'm going to read it to you. We have this conviction that at the heart of our church life together are not your good ideas or my good ideas, but is what God says in his words.

We gather together around what he says in his word, not what I think in my head or what you think in your head. And one really important test of that conviction, whether you're really gathering around the ideas in your head or whether you're gathering around what God says in his word, how do you know whether you believe that?
Well, you believe that by when you come to passages like 2 Samuel chapter 13, you don't skip over them, but you read them and you preach them because you believe that when God says stuff, even stuff which is uncomfortable for us to listen to, still we need to listen to it and pay attention.
And so this morning really is an expression of our confidence that God knows better than we do. And we are looking at 2 Samuel chapter 13, and we're going to be hearing about Amnon raping his sister Tamar.
We're going to hear about Absalom killing his brother. And we're going to do that because we are convinced that what God says is more important than what we think. And so we're going to listen to it carefully.
[1:21] I also want to say before I read the passage that I want to acknowledge that there are people in this room who are directly affected by some of the things that are raised here. Love, hatred, rape, deceit, murder are not things that are alien to us.

And I want you to know that God raises these things for us this morning, not with an intention to traumatize us, but to heal us. And that's his desire in his word. So I want to try and deal sensitively with this material if I can.
But I want us to deal with it honestly and openly too. So let's have a look at 2 Samuel chapter 13, and let me read it to you. In the course of time, Amnon, son of David, fell in love with Tamar, the beautiful sister of Absalom, son of David.
Amnon became so obsessed with his sister Tamar that he made himself ill. She was a virgin and it seemed impossible for him to do anything to her. Now Amnon had an advisor named Jehonabad, son of Shimear, David's brother.
Jehonadab was a very shrewd man. He asked Amnon, why do you, the king's son, look so haggard morning after morning? Won't you tell me? Amnon said to him, I'm in love with Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister.
[2:35] Go to bed and pretend to be ill, Jehonabad said. When your father comes to see you, say to him, I would like my sister Tamar to come and give me something to eat.

Let her prepare the food in my sight so that I may watch her and then eat it from her hand. So Amnon lay down and pretended to be ill. When the king came to see him, Amnon said to him, I would like my sister Tamar to come and make some special bread in my sight so that I may eat from her hand.
David sent word to Tamar at the palace. Go to the house of your brother Amnon and prepare some food for him. So Tamar went to the house of her brother Amnon who was lying down.
She took some dough, kneaded it, made the bread in his sight and baked it. Then she took the pan and served him the bread, but he refused to eat. Send everyone out of here, Amnon said.
So everyone left him. Then Amnon said to Tamar, bring the food here into my bedroom so that I may eat from your hand. And Tamar took the bread she had prepared and brought it to her brother Amnon in his bedroom.

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[3:42] But when she took it to him to eat, he grabbed her and said, come to bed with me, my sister. No, my brother, she said to him, do not force me. Such a thing should not be done in Israel.

Don't do this wicked thing. What about me? Where could I get rid of my disgrace? And what about you? You'd be like one of the wicked fools in Israel. Please speak to the king.
He will not keep me from being married to you. But he refused to listen to her. And since he was stronger than she, he raped her. Then Amnon hated her with intense hatred.
In fact, he hated her more than he had loved her. Amnon said to her, get up and get out. No, she said to him, sending me away would be a greater wrong than what you've already done to me.
But he refused to listen to her. He called his personal servant and said, get this woman out of my sight and bolt the door after her. So his servant put her out and bolted the door after her.
[4:45] She was wearing an ornate robe, for this was the kind of garment the virgin daughters of the king wore. Tamar put ashes on her head and tore the ornate robe she was wearing. She put her hands on her head and went away, weeping aloud as she went.

Her brother Absalom said to her, has Amnon, your brother, been with you? Be quiet for now, my sister. He is your brother. Don't take this thing to heart. And Tamar lived in her brother Absalom's house, a desolate woman.
When King David heard all this, he was furious. And Absalom never said a word to Amnon, either good or bad. He hated Amnon because he had disgraced his sister Tamar. Two years later, when Absalom's sheep shearers were at Baal Hazel, near the border of Ephraim, he invited all the king's sons to come there.
Absalom went to the king and said, your servants have had shearers come. Will the king and his attendants please join me? No, my son, the king replied. All of us should not go. We would only be a burden to you.
Though Absalom urged him, he still refused to go, but gave his blessing. Then Absalom said, if not, please let my brother Amnon come with us. The king asked, why should he go with you?
[5:57] But Absalom urged him, so he sent with him Amnon and the rest of the king's sons.
Absalom ordered his men, listen, when Amnon is in high spirits from drinking wine, I say to you, strike down, then kill him.

Don't be afraid. Haven't I given you this order? Be strong and brave. So Absalom's men did to Amnon what Absalom had ordered. Then all the king's sons got up, mounted their mules and fled.
While they were on their way, the report came to David. Absalom has struck down all the king's sons. Not one of them is left. The king stood up, tore his clothes and laid down on the ground.
And all his attendants stood by with their clothes torn. But Shannanadab, son of Shemaiah, David's brother, said, my lord should not think that they killed all the princes.
Only Amnon is dead. This has been Absalom's express intention ever since the day that Amnon raped his sister Tamar. My lord, the king should not be concerned about the report that all the king's sons are dead.
[6:59] Only Amnon is dead. Meanwhile, Absalom fled. Now the man standing watch looked up and saw many people on the road west of him coming down the side of the hill.

The watchman went and told the king, I see men in the direction of Honorai on the side of the hill.
And the king said, I see men in the direction of the hill.
And the king was sold concerning Amnon's death. Now what I hope has become clear to you over these last few weeks is that the writer of 2 Samuel is trying to give us a portrait of the sinfulness of the human heart.
He started by showing us that David will never be the king that God's people need because of the sin in his own heart. David could only do so much.
So in the story of David and Bathsheba, we learned, didn't we, that sin in the heart of David is essentially irrational in its desire. It would sell out its future for a moment of pleasure.
[8:28] Suddenly for David, what God has said becomes radically less important than what it is that he wants. Sin still does that, doesn't it? Suddenly trades what God says for what we want.

We know that, we feel that, we do that. And though, like David, we do our best to cover it over, and although we might get away with it with the people around us, still we learn, didn't we, in chapter 11, that God sees sin and holds us to account for it.
Then last week, if you were with us in chapter 12, we were looking at Nathan the prophet's confrontation with David, where he tells him this story of the rich man and all of his sheep and the

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poor man and his one very precious sheep.
You might remember that if you were with us last week. And we saw that the connection between that story and what David has done is the selfishness of the human heart. It's the parallel, isn't it? The rich man and David were both so self-interested that they were willing to rob from someone who had less to make sure they had more. We saw that selfish sin, of which we're all guilty, selfish sin cannot be undone, can it, by religious observance.
[9:39] We noticed that, didn't we? We noticed that selfish sin, because by its very nature, religious obedience to earn forgiveness is itself self-interested.

It adds to the problem. It doesn't take away from it. Instead, salvation from selfish sin can only come from the selfless act of Christ our Saviour on the cross. And this week, we come to chapter 13, and we get some more detail on the picture of sin in the account of Amnon and Tamar.
You know, selfish sin, if you like, is now held right under the microscope of human behaviour. And we see that selfish sin takes what is good and twists it into what is evil and wicked.
So that what is good and pure and right becomes ugly, twisted and corrupt. So we'll see in this chapter that love is no longer love. Friendship is no longer friendship.
Family is no longer family. Sex is no longer sex. Justice is no longer justice. And kings are no longer kingly. Those are in the inside of your welcome sheet if you want to track along with those.
[10:49] So let's see those together in the story. Let's start with love is not love. Keep your eyes down on the passage. Amnon here is introduced as David's oldest son in the opening verse. He officially is the heir apparent, the next in line for the throne.

Absalom, who also gets introduced in verse 1, is his younger half-brother, same father, different mother. And there is a son in between them, but he's rarely mentioned in the account, which is possibly because he's died by this point or maybe because his mother is not considered to be an heir.
Now in verse 1, we're told that Amnon loves Tamar, Absalom's sister and his half-sister. The NIV translates it, he fell in love, but falling love is an English phrase.
It's not a Hebrew one. Fell is not there in the original. It doesn't imply that Amnon is the innocent victim of his feelings. He didn't fall into something. You don't have to read much of the passage before you can tell there's something wrong with this so-called love.
In verse 2, Amnon is tormented by his feelings for his sister. He's obsessed with her to the point of making himself ill, so much so that his friend says to him that you look haggard every morning, verse 4.
[11:59] But the big clue, I think, and it comes early that this love is twisted, is when Amnon says that he cannot do anything to her in verse 2. That's why he's frustrated. In other words, his love for Amnon, as he calls it, is sinful because it wants to do what it wants to do.

It is essentially what? Selfish. He's not interested in her. He is interested in his own satisfaction of his own wicked desires.
And those desires are frustrated by Tamar's commitment to remain pure. You see the fakeness of this love again in verse 15, when after the horror of Amnon's actions, we're told that his love has turned to hate.
In fact, if you look at verse 15, it almost stumbles over itself to say hate and hatred over and over. His self-interest is no longer desirous of Tamar, and hate takes the place of love.
Now think about this. I know this is an ugly thing to think about, but the premise of the story is this. It is possible for you, it's possible for me, to have a feeling for someone which you mistakenly call love, which is really nothing more than a lust-fueled selfish desire.
[13:16] A desire which is a wicked twist of love. In other words, our sinful hearts take something that God has made good, love, desire for one another, and we bend it out of shape into something twisted that it was never meant to be.

And what, just think about this for a minute, what are the hallmarks of that kind of selfish love? Well, notice it's not weakness, is it?
You might think this, you see, you might think that fake love, twisted love, is weaker than the real thing, and that that's how you might recognise it. But notice this, Amnon, doubtless, is not weak in his feelings, is he?
This love is strong, but it's fake. It's no less intense than real love. Fake love is obsessive in the passage, it's strong enough to make you ill.

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Its distinctive is not its lack of strength. The distinctness of this twisted love is its self-interest. Concerned only for itself, only what it wants to do, only in having its desires fulfilled.
[14:24] Which is not love, because real love is by definition not a selfish emotion, but a selfless promise. A promise to give itself up for another, not just for the moment, but for the future.

That's how God loves. That's how he's made us to love. That's why at the centre of Christian marriage is a promise of future commitment, not just a declaration of present desire.
You know that, don't you? The promise of marriage is a promise of future commitment, not just of present desire. So I would say to all of us this morning, young people especially, maybe, but all of us, I think, need to hear this, that it is worth registering in your mind somewhere this truth, that not every strong desire that you have for another person is really love.
However strong it may feel, because the sin in our hearts has a tendency to twist love into self-interested desire. And like Amnon should have told that selfish desire to take a hike, but instead he acted on it and love became hate, which essentially is what it was all along.
He hated Tamar from the very beginning because he was only ever interested in himself. So love that is not love. Secondly, friends that are not friends. David's nephew, Jonadab, appears a couple of times in the story.
[15:48] He's there at the beginning, giving Amnon a plan. He's there at the end, telling David that Amnon is dead. Verse 3 introduces him as a friend of Amnon. But again, that turns out not to be the case, or at least not in the proper sense of the words, because Jonadab's craftiness at the end of verse 3 sets in motion the rest of the chapter, leading even to Amnon's death.

Some friend, that is. The evangelist Glenn Scrivener has a YouTube video where he walks through this chapter retelling the story. And he points out that the fate of Tamar here is secured not just by the actions of Amnon, but by the culture around him.
Friends and servants who could have stepped in but chose not to are complicit in Amnon's actions. What he points out is that essentially what you've got going on in 2 Samuel chapter 13 is a culture of abuse, an unsafe place for a beautiful young woman to be.
And so it is today. Friends who are meant to lead us away from sin. Friends who are meant to say hard but true things to us, even risking the friendship itself. Those friends can be twisted, just as they are here.
And they lead Amnon deeper into the sin he should be running from. Let me tell you that the Bible is full of these kinds of warnings. Psalm 1 tells you that there is a way of sinners that is sat in the company of mockers.
[17:15] Proverbs 1 warns you against the danger of sinful men enticing you to do evil. Again, it's worth registering, isn't it, that just as this previous point, that the powerful feelings of desire aren't always to be labelled love because they can be a twist of it.

So it's right that you and I register this morning that not all things that look like friendship are really friendship in the Bible's terms. If those around you are there to help you plan your sin, to lead you in it and leave you in it, they are not friends.
They are a twisted version of friendship. And the sad truth is there are plenty of Jonadabs in the world. And you and I need to be aware of them. We need not to be them.
And we need to be aware of them. Thirdly, family that is not family. We've touched already on the complexities of David's family, which becomes a tangled web of brothers and half-brothers and sisters and half-sisters.
But what we need to notice first is that Tamar is painted in a universally positive light here in the passage. So she listens to her father's instructions in verse 8 to go and attend to Amnon.
[18:25] She's wearing the long-sleeved robe of a virgin princess in verse 18 as a mark of her holiness and purity. She even pleads with Amnon to take her as his wife in verse 13, willing to give herself to him as a wife, even though he only wants to take her for the moment.

But still, the half-brother who should have been looking out for her ends up attacking her. And what should have been a safe place becomes for her a dangerous and destructive place as the beauty and security of family becomes the arena of selfish, sinful desire, incest in the king's family.
Now again, as shocking as this is, it is a sad fact of the sin in our world that families, families which are designed by God to be a place of safety and security for the vulnerable and the weak, can become, because of sin's twistedness, some of the most unsafe places to live.

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And some of you here know the horror of this only too well. Maybe you've experienced it in your own family or you've seen it close at hand. This, if you like, under the microscope of 2 Samuel chapter 13 is the horror of selfish sin and its twistedness.
It's showing you something good designed by God. Family taken and twisted into being the most dangerous place for the vulnerable and the weak, so that children can be abused by their siblings.
[19:51] And it still happens today, doesn't it? Children can even be killed in the apparent safety of their mother's wombs. Family, designed by God for safety, becomes in 2 Samuel 13, under the twistedness of selfish sin, an unsafe place to be.

Fourthly, and maybe most centrally, sex that is not sex. A theologian called Carl Truman says this about the Bible's teaching in sex in his book, The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self.
It says this, It's a brilliant summary, isn't it?
The opposite of sex in the Bible. And it's a brilliant summary of the opposite of sex in 2 Samuel 13. Here, this is not given as a promise of the future.
It's not given as a reflection of a commitment to one another. But instead, what is precious and sacred and designed for the marriage of a husband to a wife is taken by force.
[21:11] And the whole way that this encounter is described is not meant by the author to make it salacious or intriguing. It's instead using Old Testament language, which is meant to kind of conjure up previous stories of such tragedies in the Bible.

Jacob's daughter, Dinah, was violated in Shechem in Genesis 34. And this is what essentially Tamar is saying to Amnon. Listen, Amnon, this has happened before in Israel. Don't do this. Remember where this leads. Remember what happened when all the men in that town were killed.
In verse 12, she says no to Amnon four times.
Even trying to reason with him that it will lead to shame for them both. This is not the sort of thing that should be done amongst God's people. This will make you a fool, Amnon, she says in verse 13. Even offering to marry him, but all to no avail.
And Amnon rapes her. The word the NIV translates as rape in verse 14 comes four times in this passage. Twice it's translated as rape. In verse 12, it's used as the word force.
[22:17] In verse 22, it's the word disgraced. But the twisting of sex isn't just in the act of verse 14. It's all there in the buildup, isn't it? It's the sordid way he gets his moment alone with Tamar.

The wicked desire plotting and planning to get its own way. As Tamar's beautiful innocence paints the backdrop of the darkness of his sin in even more vivid tones.
He even calls her and it's almost like fingers down a blackboard. It's awful, isn't it? In verse 11, he calls her sister. Not so much as a reference to their relationship as siblings, but essentially as a kind of Old Testament endearing words.
Darling, precious. Everything good turned to something bad. Again, you see the horror of it in verse 17 when he calls his servant back into the room and tells him to put her out of his presence and bolt the door.
Notice the way that Amnon is dealing with it here is as if he's in danger from her. Get her out of my sight. Get her out of here and bolt the door. Keep me safe from her.
[23:19] So Tamar leaves, tears her robes, put ashes on her head and cries as she goes. Now, I know this is hard to listen to, especially if, like many of us, you've known something of this abuse personally.

But I think if we're tracking the story now, you should be feeling a deep sense of rage. How dare he? How dare he do this? How could he do this?
How wicked, how twisted. How can something beautiful, someone so beautiful, designed by God for his glory, be treated so poorly?
This is the twisted horror of sin. This is the magnifying glass of 2 Samuel chapter 13. Let me show you, says the writer, how twisted and horrible is the human heart as it takes something good and uses it for itself in a selfish way.
So much so is this the story of the whole chapter that it's not just the wickedness of the action in the moment. It's the disorder, isn't it, of what Amnon is living for and what he longs for.
[24:30] How he goes about the whole thing. And that goes on, doesn't it, all around us, especially in this area of sex. Sin-fueled desire twists what was designed for the marriage of one man to one woman and abuses it as a tool to be used for its own satisfaction, even using force and the twistedness of that, it takes loads of actions that people take.

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Let me say to you, if you're not a Christian this morning, if you don't believe in God, if you don't believe in judgment, you don't believe in moral responsibility of people before an eternal God, then it is really difficult for you to explain the outrage that we all feel as we look at a story like this.
You know, if you ditch God, you ditch all your rights to call this wicked, just along with him. You know, this is just bad luck for Tamar. But if the Bible is true, then the outrage that we feel is because we sense what is being twisted, what was made good being made bad.
And the big question for us then this morning is not so much why would a good God allow this, but why would people who have been made good be so selfish? Where are those desires from?
What hope can there be for twisted people like that? Sex that is not sex. Fifthly, justice that isn't justice. We're going to deal with this more briefly, but it's the story of Absalom comes to the forefront from here on in, really, in the chapters to come.
[25:57] Absalom bides his time, doesn't he, in verse 22 and 23. He waits two whole years before acting, seemingly manipulates the situation to get Amnon away from the relative safety of Jerusalem, and he concocts a plan to kill Amnon.

Now, it's difficult to argue, isn't it, that Amnon doesn't deserve this. He does deserve to die. The Bible is really clear on that. He's ruined Tamar's life. She's living in desolation in Absalom's house. But this isn't justice. This is revenge. Revenge can feel like justice, but again, it is a twist of what is good into something wicked, far less than it should be.
In verse 30, David is initially told that Absalom has killed all the king's sons. And there's a time when that seems to be what's happened. But the brothers come back to Jerusalem by some long way round, it seems, presumably because they're scared, arriving after the initial messenger.
But fulfilling Johanadab's words that only Amnon is dead, because he said that Absalom was getting revenge for Amnon's treatment of his sister. So Absalom adds murder into the chaos and has to flee to Geshur to live in the palace of his maternal grandfather to the north of Israel.
[27:10] He leaves the rest of the family weeping in verse 36. Again, this is a shocking story. But it's worth seeing, isn't it, that this temptation to revenge is really a twist of justice.

Something good turned to something bad. So that longing we have to take matters into our own hands, to try and sort them out ourselves, dreaming about doing our enemies over, about winning that argument with a clever comeback, that is not justice, that's selfish pride.
And notice that it doesn't solve the problem. It makes it worse. You see, Amnon owed an answer, firstly not to Absalom, or even Tamar, he owed an answer to God.
But Amnon stands before the court of God's justice, not Absalom's. And in a way, Absalom is doing what Amnon is doing. He's taking the place of God and taking revenge, and it's not justice.
Finally then, really briefly, a king who is not kingly. If you've been with us through the series so far, this is clearly the backdrop, isn't it? The adultery and murder of our chapter this morning, we've met before in King David himself.
[28:15] Really, this is like father, like son, isn't it? David's weakness is all the way through this chapter. I mean, he surely suspected something, didn't he, in verse 7, when Amnon asked for Tamar to come and cook for him.

Surely he knew something was going on. Then in verse 21, he's told about Amnon's wickedness, but he does nothing. He's furious, but he does nothing. And in verse 25, he's clearly been manipulated by Absalom, who has him wrapped around his finger, knowing that if he shames David into not coming to his party, he won't refuse Amnon, even if the request seems strange to David in verse 26.
Even David's heartbreak at the death of his son at the end of the chapter looks more like weakness, because there seems no commitment to make Absalom answer for his crime, any more than he made Amnon answer for his crime.
In other words, the picture here is a man who has lost control of his kingdom, whose own loose morality has filtered down into his family and makes it impossible for him to say anything.
How can I say anything? David cuts a pathetic shape as king in chapter 13. And it was ever thus, yeah? The warning here of Absalom murdering Amnon and of the king not being kingly, that the warning is this, that whoever you turn to in this world to execute justice will ultimately let you down.
[29:38] Doesn't matter who it is, a political leader, a prime minister or president, opposition leaders, celebrity commentators, in the end they will let you down. A friend of mine is a lawyer and one of the things he does is he helps people get compensation for things that have been done wrong against them.

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I said to him once, we were sat at a music concert that we'd gone to together and I sat next to him and I said, do you know what, does the money ever help? And he looked at me and he went, never, never.
We can't get justice because kings are not kingly and justice belongs to the Lord. And that's the end of chapter 13. Notice that God doesn't even get a mention in 2 Samuel chapter 13.
Instead, it's a shocking picture of the twisting of what is good into what is bad. Sin grips the family of David and the nation of Israel. But there is one more thing I think to say before we close.
These chapters are not only written as a warning, a horror show of the sinfulness of a sin, but also to be a vivid reminder of how much we need a saviour. Listen, I hope you feel this and sense this from these chapters of 2 Samuel.
[30:51] You might feel yourself being on the receiving end of some of the wickedness of 2 Samuel 13. I hope that makes you realise you need someone who can undo that.

And for all of us, we see ourselves tangled up in the wickedness of this sin. Selfish sin is never a problem that everybody else has. It's also a problem that I have, that you have. And we need a saviour, don't we?
We need the selfless act of a saviour. But we need a saviour who will undo the twistedness of our sin, who will turn wickedness into good.
So along comes the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the fulfilment of the scriptures, isn't he? He is the one at the centre of the Bible, the hero of the scriptures. He has come as a saviour who loves with a real love, a love that is not fuelled by selfish desire, but love that is written in self-sacrifice for others.
It's not about what Christ wants for himself, but about what he gives for us, laying down his own desires for the good of another. Jesus comes as a friend that will be a true friend.
[32:03] He'll be a friend that doesn't pave the road to wickedness and draw us away, but one who leads us into righteousness and obedience and goodness. Someone who leads the way to the loving Father, to live for him.

Someone who will say the tough and difficult things to us and say, come, follow me, trust in me, live this way. I will be to you a true friend.
We see in Christ Jesus someone who brings us to a family that's really a family. The real safe place in the world, in the kingdom of God.
Someone who adopts us into a relationship with the Father, who loves us. One who will keep us safe and protect us from all the mess that's around us in the world. We even have in Christ someone who fulfills this most powerful desire of sexual intimacy.
Not so much showing us what it's for in this life, but to fulfill all that sex points to in the closeness of an eternal relationship, which is richer and deeper than even the best marriage in this life.
[33:07] We have in the Lord Jesus someone who brings real justice. Not the revenge of the angry, but a genuine eye-for-eye justice.

When the wicked and unrepentant receive exactly what they deserve. Listen, if you this morning have been on the receiving end of the wickedness of people like Amnon, you can be sure that no one gets away with it.
Justice will be done as people meet Christ as judge. And Christ himself has borne true justice for our sin in himself on the cross.
There's no escaping justice. Either we face it or Christ face it on our behalf. And then we have, don't we, in Christ too, a king who is truly kingly. The good news for us this morning is that the man Christ Jesus, the eternal son of the living God, great David's greatest son, is the one who can untwist the wickedness of our sin and bring us into his heavenly family.
So 2 Samuel 13 is meant to be a shocking chapter. But the shock is not meant to just scare you. It's meant to frighten you, if you like, into the arms of Jesus Christ.
[34:22] The one who loves, the bringer of justice, and the king of kings. Let me pray as I close.
Heavenly Father, we recognize that we live in a world where sin has twisted the good things that you have made into evil things, that we take the blessings of love, friendship, family, sex, justice, kingly rule, and twist them into something for our own ends.

And Lord, we come to you and ask for forgiveness and entrust ourselves to your saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who untwists the sinfulness of our lives and our world and promises a place of true justice, where he is king of kings and lord of lords for all eternity.

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A place where love is really love, where intimacy is really intimacy, where friendship is really friendship, family is really family, justice is done, and you rule and reign through your son, the Lord Jesus.
Heavenly Father, we pray, bring us safely to that place we ask. In Jesus' name, amen. Amen.

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