

Confronting Corrupting Complacency. 1 Corinthians 5.

Limits?

Someone you know says they are a Christian and, but gets drunk regularly every weekend. You approach them about it, and he says he knows he's free and forgiven and it's a great way to get alongside non-Christians.

There's a Christian woman you see at church every Sunday, but her whole life is directed to getting a bigger house, a more expensive car and building her share portfolio.

And you read in the paper about another denomination discussing ordaining, or having already embraced ordaining into Christian ministry, people in active same sex relationships – as the American Episcopalians did when they ordained Gene Robinson on 2003

All of these people are confident that they are good Christians, confident of being saved – but does their behaviour mean their confidence is ill placed?

Can we say to some who claim they are Christian “Your behaviour denies you the right to that name, and, if persisted in, will also deny you salvation”?

Are their behaviours, as well as doctrines, which, if continued with, put people outside the church, outside God's saved people?

That is, are their behavioural limits, boundaries, to membership of the people of God, or does anything go in Christian communities, that we should tolerate, accept, anyone whatever their behaviour as long as they say they are a Christian?

Are there limits, boundaries – and if so

Who says what they are?

Who enforces them?

To whom do they apply?

And why is it important?

We are going to answer those questions this evening by listening to God's apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 5

But we need to recognise this is a conversation we may feel uncomfortable about for all sorts of reasons.

For example, we have been taught that there are lots of behaviours that are no-one else's business, that what consenting adults do in private is just their concern. Do we want to be portrayed as busy-bodies?

And our society doesn't really believe in moral absolutes, right and wrong. There's what's right for you, and what's right for me, and no one should impose their view on what's right on anyone else. To say there is a behavioural boundary which must not be crossed – is just arrogant. Who wants to be thought arrogant?

More – some would say that the language of right and wrong is just used by people in power to coerce others, is a form of moral bullying? And especially where you talk of excluding some on the basis of their sexual activity – you are becoming positively harmful, and may even be breaking the law. Who wants to be seen as a harmful moral bully?

And isn't this judging others, when Jesus himself said 'Judge not or you too will be judged'?

And besides all this don't we all want peaceful lives and to start being concerned about the behaviour of others will surely only bring trouble and grief.

Yet despite the discomfort and risk of being thought intolerant busybodies, arrogant moral bullies, judgemental, of becoming entangled in other people's business, we have to engage with the questions

Are there behavioural boundaries to the Christian community?

Who says what they are?

Who enforces them?

To whom do they apply?

And why is it important?

Shocking inaction reversed vv. 1-5

For it is clear that the Apostle Paul does think the Christian community is one with clear behavioural, moral, boundaries, boundaries that the congregation are responsible to maintain for the good of all.

In fact, he seems shocked that the Corinthians don't also think this.

1 Corinthians 4: ¹⁸ Now some are arrogant, as though I were not coming to you. ¹⁹ But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I will find out not the talk, but the power of those who are arrogant. ²⁰ For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power. ²¹ What do you want? Should I come to you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of gentleness?

5 It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and the kind of sexual immorality that is not even tolerated among the Gentiles—a man is sleeping with his father's wife. ² And you are arrogant! Shouldn't you be filled with grief and remove from your congregation the one who did this?

It appears someone in Corinth is conducting an ongoing affair with his stepmother. It doesn't appear the father, if he is still alive, or the woman were members of the congregation – but the offender was.

Such affairs were known in Roman society of that time, where a second wife might be the same age or younger than an adult son from the first marriage. IF the father had died, they were still regarded as incestuous, and they were condemned, and could attract the severe punishment of banishment.

[Winter

What troubled Paul was the complete lack of response to this state of affairs by the Corinthian congregation, their complacent smugness.

And you are proud! Or Arrogant

Paul is picking up on his description of some of them, of those who thought themselves as influential and important, in chapter 4

1 Corinthians 4: ¹⁸ Now some are arrogant, as though I were not coming to you. ¹⁹ But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I will find out not the talk, but the power of those who are arrogant. ²⁰ For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.

Remember how he had described them, as convinced that they have all they want, as rich, have begun to reign v. 8, as wise, strong, honored v. 10 in contrast with the apostles foolishness, weakness and dishonour

He is not saying that they are particularly proud of this man's action, but he is shocked that it hasn't dented their estimate of themselves as believers who had arrived, as people with more insight than the apostles.

Instead of their complacent pride that did nothing they should have mourned, and acted.

²*And you are arrogant! Shouldn't you be filled with grief and remove from your congregation the one who did this?*

As a congregation they should have been grieved to the heart by this sin – if they had had the insight to understand what it meant for the individual, for the congregation, for the reputation of their saving God

And instead of continuing to accept the one doing this, perhaps because of his wealth and status, they should have acted by putting this man out of their fellowship.

Notice – Paul throughout is addressing, not the man, but the whole congregation.

It is the whole congregation that should mourn, and the whole congregation that should act

Paul now seeks to reverse their inaction, calling for decisive, open, action by the congregation in conjunction with himself as the Lord's apostle.

³*Even though I am absent in the body, I am present in spirit. As one who is present with you in this way, I have already pronounced judgment on the one who has been doing such a thing.* ⁴*When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus, and I am with you in spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus,* ⁵*hand that one over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.*

Even though he is not physically present he is with the congregation in Spirit [1 Cor. 12:28]. Paul, as Christ's apostle, 'in the name of the Lord Jesus', that is with Jesus' authority, has already passed judgment, pronounced sentence on him. And he calls on the congregation to join him in executing that sentence with the backing of the effective power of the Lord Jesus who stands behind His apostles, and who is active in his churches. Together they are ⁵*hand that one over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.*

Pause to make a few observations on what is being described.

Firstly, the sin is open and persisted in, not just a matter of private conversation or rumour. Paul elsewhere, like our Lord, will insist on two or three witnesses [Matthew 18:15-17, 2 Cor. 13:1, 1 Tim. 5:19-20]. The church does not act on hearsay.

Secondly, the action is open and transparent, the action of the whole congregation, not just a private group.

Thirdly, the judgment of the whole congregation is seen as enacting a judgement given through Jesus' apostle and which the Lord Jesus supports and makes effective by His power.

Handing over to Satan [Matthew 18:17-20]

But what exactly is it that they are to do? What does it mean to ⁵*hand that one over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.*

Some have suggested it involves some kind of curse which by some kind of almost magic will ensure the person will die, a bit like 'pointing the bone'.

But the verse does not speak of the destruction of his life, but on his flesh, his sinful nature, and there is no evidence of such kinds of curse formulas.

In line with Matthew 18:17-20 it is better to understand that Paul is telling them they must put the man out of the congregation, that this is a symbolic way of describing what is explicitly described in v. 2, v. 13, and Matthew 18:17.

He is to be made to live and act solely in the realm where Satan, the prince of this world, rules. No longer will there be the warm support and acceptance of living amongst God's people, no longer will he be in the community where Jesus' word rules, where he can hear the gospel read and taught.

The intended outcome is that his flesh, his sinful nature, the nature seen in his self-satisfaction with his own moral judgment against God's, his pride in his own stance, his determination to live to please himself and not do what God says, will be destroyed by this exclusion, hard as it may be. And the goal of this destruction is that he might be saved 'on the day of the Lord', the day of judgement.

The church is to act now to make the reality and danger of his situation plain to him so that he might come to his senses, repent, and be saved at the last day.

Are there limits to behaviour amongst Christians? Are there behaviours that, if persisted in, threaten to exclude someone from having a place amongst God's people?

Yes

Who is expected to maintain them, to act? All of us, the whole congregations.

God expects this action by His people, and the Corinthian inaction is a cause of apostolic rebuke.

But why is it so important? That is what Paul makes clear in vv. 6-8

Why is it important vv. 6-8

1 Corinthians 5: ⁶Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little leaven leavens the whole batch of dough? ⁷Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new unleavened batch, as indeed you are. For Christ our Passover lamb has been sacrificed. ⁸Therefore, let us observe the feast, not with old leaven or with the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Paul uses two related images to bring home both the danger of sin and the necessity of action if we are to be who we are, people saved by the Lord Jesus.

Firstly he says *Don't you know that a little leaven leavens the whole batch of dough?*

The NIV's yeast is a bit modern. Leaven is not quite the same as yeast. Leaven is like sour dough starter. They didn't leaven their flour by adding new yeast to every batch of dough. Rather, they would take a small amount of material from the last batch of dough and place it in the new batch, and the influence of that old leaven would then permeate, go throughout, the new batch. No part of the new batch would escape, and presence of the leaven would determine the shape and character of the whole loaf.

Paul is saying that carrying over into congregational life the sinful lifestyle of our pre-Christian past when we didn't know God threatens the character and identity of the whole congregation. Let behaviours from our old sinful lifestyles, from the world, go unchecked and that will in the end determine the shape and character of the congregation – to be just like the old loaf, the world.

Let, for example, angry abusive speech continue, and you will have a fearful, unwelcoming club, dominated by one or two angry individuals. Let sexual immorality continue and trust will be destroyed, relationships unstable. Let any sinful behaviour continue, and you will be the world, not God's holy people.

⁷Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new unleavened batch, as indeed you are. For Christ our Passover lamb has been sacrificed

So congregation have to get rid of the old leaven. They can't let sinful behaviour, the attitude that lives to please self, that sees oneself in charge of one's life and not the Lord Jesus, be carried over from the past into their common life. Only this way can they be what they really are, that new batch of dough, with our shape and character, our identity, shaped by our relationship with Christ, by being saved by Christ.

And we do have this new identity because we have been saved by Christ – and here Paul introduces his second, related, picture. *For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.*

He is going to draw on the Jewish Passover to reinforce the possibility and necessity of getting rid of, not carrying into our following of Jesus, sinful patterns from the past.

At the first Passover in Exodus 12 the Jewish people were spared from death by the blood of a lamb smeared on their doorposts and lintels when God judged Pharaoh and Egypt by slaying their first born. That judgement was also the means of finally liberating Abraham's descendants from slavery in Egypt and starting them on their journey to the promised land, to their new life as God's people in covenant relationship to God.

The Jewish people were commanded to remember that salvation and liberation every year by celebrating the Passover, by repeating at the time of their liberation every year the meal their ancestors had shared on that night, sharing in eating the Passover lamb. That celebration also marked the beginning of what was called the feast of unleavened bread when they had to remove all leaven, all the old leavened dough, from their houses.

In fact, if anyone ate leavened bread as part of the Passover meal, or in the week after it, they were to be cut off from, excluded by death, from God's people. Eating leavened bread and sharing in the Passover were completely incompatible, and you had to share in the Passover to belong to God's Old Testament people.

Paul is saying to us that we now have a Passover to share in – Christ our Passover lamb has been sacrificed to spare us from death and bring us salvation in liberation from slavery to sin and death and the devil. He has died to make us the people of God, to put our feet on the path to the land of promise, the new heaven and earth.

And it is impossible to have a share in His death and still be leavened with the old leaven of life lived in rebellion to God. The old life where we ignored God's word, rejected God's rule, and lived for ourselves to please ourselves, has to go. It is completely incompatible with sharing in Christ's sacrifice.

⁸ *Therefore, let us observe the feast, not with old leaven or with the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.*

Paul focuses on 'malice and evil/wickedness' as distinguishing features of the old life, malice being the opposite of civic virtue, benevolence, that seeks the welfare of others, and wickedness understood as something that corrupts others.

They must be replaced by 'sincerity and truth', by a transparent commitment to live as followers of the Lord Jesus. Transparent purity, honesty, faithfulness and integrity are to characterise us and our relationships with each other. The death of our Lord Jesus itself speaks of God's abhorrence of sin, of how seriously he take it, and so such sin can have no place amongst those forgiven and given life by that death.

Why take this decisive action against open, continuing sin in the lives of those who claim to be Christians, members of God's people?

It is because persistent sin is the leaven of the old way of life in rebellion to God and it will distort the shape, the character, of the whole congregation, changing it from within to be like the world in rebellion to God, and not the holy people of God.

It is because persistent sin is absolutely incompatible with having a share in the death of the Lord Jesus, who died to liberate us from that slavery to sin and bring us to God, so that we could be His holy people, people given new hearts to do His will.

Believers in Jesus, both individually and collectively, now have a permanent festival to be celebrated throughout their whole lives, a sharing in Christ every day that is always to be characterised by a sincere and genuine following of Christ, having their identity and character shaped by His cross, His death for our sins.

To have a congregational life that is not grieved by sin and does not act to stop it is to have a congregational life that is not founded on the death of Jesus, that has repudiated the wisdom and might of the cross of Jesus – and to repudiate the cross is to cease to be the people of the Lord Jesus, God's people.

But so far Paul had only pointed to one behaviour that is out of bounds, and it has been an easy one to take a stand on for it was behaviour condemned by the surrounding society as well.

Other Behaviours? A needed clarification vv. 9-13

Are there other behaviours, as I have suggested, that put us out of bounds, outside the people of God – behaviours that the church should address even if they are approved by the surrounding society?

Let's listen as Paul clarifies a Corinthian misunderstanding of what he had written to them earlier.

*⁹ I wrote to you in a letter not to associate with sexually immoral people. ¹⁰ I did not mean the immoral people of this world or the greedy and swindlers or idolaters; otherwise you would have to leave the world. ¹¹ But actually, I wrote you not to associate with anyone who claims to be a brother or sister and is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or verbally abusive, a drunkard or a swindler. Do not even eat with such a person. ¹² For what business is it of mine to judge outsiders? Don't you judge those who are inside? ¹³ God judges outsiders. **Remove the evil person from among you.***

It appears they had thought Paul was encouraging them to 'leave the world', for some kind of exclusive Christian community.

That was never my intention says Paul. He knows people in the world are going to keep behaving like – people in the world, people who don't know or honour God. And we will keep mixing with them. Paul is not encouraging Christians to try and enforce Christian standards on non-believers.

Those who were the subject of his instruction, the sexually immoral people they were not to associate with, were people v. 11 'who claimed to be a brother or sister', that is people who claim to be Christians, followers of Jesus, and yet are engaging in sexual immorality.

Paul is not talking here of someone who occasionally falls into a past sin and is grieved by that and hates it, repents and confesses. He is talking of people who claim to be Christian and openly continues in their sin and says 'I'm alright', I'm safe.

Other behaviours [1 Cor. 6:9-10, Gal. 5:19-21, Eph. 5:3-5. Rev. 21:8,, 22:15],

If someone does that, says Paul, keeps on living in disobedience to God's word, perseveres in or starts behaviours in defiance of what God says, the Christian community has to help them see the incompatibility of their lifestyle with their profession of faith in Jesus and their hope of being saved by Jesus by not associating with them.

Paul has a list here v.11, as he does in other parts of Scripture [1 Cor. 6:9-10, Gal. 5:19-21, Eph. 5:3-5. Rev. 21:8,, 22:15], of behaviours which, if persisted in, put you outside the community of God's people.

sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or verbally abusive, a drunkard or swindler.

It's not a random list but one relevant to the Corinthians and their society, and also very relevant to us, for whom these words are written. So let's pause and think about them.

Sexually immoral – Paul will have more to say about this in Chapter 6. Sexual immorality is any sexual activity outside the marriage of a man and a woman to each other. It was very common in Roman and Greek societies, and was accepted as normal – at least for Roman men. It is very common today, but we should remember that our Lord includes sexual immorality amongst those things that come for the heart and defile a person – Matthew 15:19-20

Matthew 15: ¹⁹For out of the heart come evil thoughts—murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. ²⁰These are what defile a person; but eating with unwashed hands does not defile them.”

Greedy – this speaks of a grasping covetousness. Corinth was a very materialistic society where success and status was measured by how much you had, and it was respectable to want and pursue more. That lust for more is pretty common in our society, so much so that we might have trouble identifying the greedy – but a life lived in pursuit of material wealth and luxury, of ever greater consuming, can exclude from God’s kingdom

Idolater – worshipping other gods, gods whose worship was the state religion. Idolatry was honoured and respected, and seen as a source of social cohesion. As we see in chapters 8-10 of this letter, the temptation to continue to share in it, to continue to be included, was very great. Worshipping gods of our own imaginations is still a very real possibility for us.

Slanderer, or reviler – this speaks of those who speak abusively of others, and again in some contexts, rhetorical competitions, or advocacy in courts, it was respectable to run your opponent down

Drunkard – we know drunkenness, and it was a feature of their feasts and the parties that followed them. Christ’s people are meant to be self controlled, always

Swindler – is someone who robs by cheating, who could extort money by overcharging, exploiting shortages,- and Corinth was a get rich quick society.

All these behaviours were present in Corinthian pagan society, part of the old way of life, and were relatively or entirely acceptable behaviours

Our Responsibility [Deuteronomy 13:3, 17:7, 19:19, 21:21, 22:22, 24, 24:7]

And all are incompatible with being Christ’s, and Paul says the Christian community is to make it clear that these behaviours cannot continue to be practiced by those who say they are believers. They are to make that clear by not associating with those who continue these practices, who won’t make a break from the old way of life – not even, says Paul, to eat with them. Meals are an important way of communicating social acceptance, and in Corinth meals were an important part of the social networks of the wealthy, eating with peers important for the maintenance and expression of your social status. Paul is talking about withdrawing from anything that communicates acceptance or approval to the person who reckons themselves a Christian of the behaviour which is sinful.

He is not talking about private judgment, but communicating the community’s judgement that such behaviours put you outside the community of Jesus, and Paul is clear that it is everyone’s responsibility to communicate that judgment. There is to be no confusion in anyone’s mind that those kinds of behaviours that God’s word says makes their profession of faith empty and threatens their salvation are somehow ok, or not important, able to be overlooked.

Again, Paul is not talking about the church trying to force its standards or judgments on the non-Christian society. But he is insisting that there are limits, that there are behavioural as well as doctrinal boundaries to Christian communities, to being a Christian.

¹²For what business is it of mine to judge outsiders? Don’t you judge those who are inside? ¹³God judges outsiders.

Remove the evil person from among you.

To be a Christian and thus part of a Christian community is to place yourself under the rule of Christ, and under the discipline of the standards of God’s word. To be a Christian community is to be committed together to those standards, to confess that those saved by Jesus live by Jesus’ word, together obey all that the Lord Jesus has taught us – and to take responsibility together to maintain the rule of Christ’s word amongst us.

Those outside, says Paul v. 13 – God will judge, and we should remember that. But the church, together, v. 12b, is to judge, set standards of behaviour, for those inside the church. And we must enforce them by excluding from God’s people those who persistently ignore and keep on breaking those standards.

We must *“Remove the evil person from among you.”*

Anything less gives people a false sense of their spiritual state, blinds them to their danger. At the end Paul quotes Deuteronomy without introduction for it self evidently applies to Christian congregations. It was a command given in Deuteronomy to preserve God’s people as God’s holy people, the response the people were to make when confronted by flagrant breaking of the commands of God, an ignoring of the requirements of the covenant which overthrew God’s rule of His people. It was the response that would maintain their identity as the saved people of God, enjoying the blessing of relationship with God, by living according to the Word of God

As in the Old Testament, so in the New. The people of God are responsible for maintaining their identity as God’s saved people enjoying the blessings of relationship with God by removing from their midst those whose behaviour shows that they have repudiated the rule of God’s word, who would rather trust themselves than trust God, and not humble themselves before His judgments.

Confronting our Discomfort

As I said at the beginning, this chapter can make us feel uncomfortable with its insistence on behavioural standards and insistence on our collective responsibility to take action to maintain those standards, to maintain clear limits to the behaviour acceptable in those who call themselves Christian.

We might have thought, where Paul is urging the Corinthians to act against someone whose behaviour the society around them condemned, that Paul was just concerned with PR, with the reputation of the community.

But as the chapter goes on it is clear that Paul is concerned with something much deeper, concerned to maintain the identity of Jesus’ people as the holy people of God, by insisting that to be saved by the death of Jesus we must live our lives relying on the word of Jesus, live guided by His word, by God’s word, not our own desires.

And that means we need to confront whatever might stop us from practicing in our life together what our Lord commands through His apostle here.

Confronting Moral Relativism

So we need to confront the moral relativism that has seeped into our own thinking and sapped our moral vigour. Right and wrong are not just someone’s opinion. They are revealed in God’s word, and we should not deceive ourselves that behaviours God’s word condemns can somehow be ok for us.

Look at the list

sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or verbally abusive, a drunkard or swindler.

Are there any of these you are practicing, perhaps secretly,

Not just slipping up in and then repenting of, grieved and ashamed to have dishonoured your Lord.

But practicing, and telling yourself it will be ok, that there is no need to change, for God accepts you as you are.

You need to repent

Even if no one else knows

Even if the church never acts, or you leave as soon as someone finds out to seek out a congregation that is more tolerant.

You need to repent. Practicing those things that God’s word forbids is not ok.

It is not ok to keep practicing sex outside marriage with your boyfriend or girlfriend.

It is not ok to keep bullying people with angry words

It is not ok to fuel your greed by indulging in gambling

God sees and knows, and it is not your judgment that will prevail, but His; not your word that rules amongst His people, but His

So repent. The sacrifice of Christ our Passover means even your proud insistence in defying God can be forgiven if you will humble yourself, say God is in charge, and cease your sinning.

Confronting our privatised faith

And the rest of us need to repent of tolerating amongst us those who want to keep on doing these things and say they are Christians.

That may make us uncomfortable, confront our desire to live our faith in a way that is acceptable to our society, live our faith as a purely private, personal, matter.

Our Lord Jesus teaches us that our heavenly Father is not willing that one of His little ones should perish.

Matthew 18: ¹⁴ In the same way, it is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones perish.

God has saved us into a family, a community of brothers and sisters, for whose well being we have a responsibility. He expects us to act to preserve their lives by rebuking their sin, by providing no comfort to those who say they are part of God's family but want to keep on disobeying God.

This is not something we can leave to the elders. It is the concern of every believer.

In Matthew 18:15

Jesus first word is to each of us individually

Matthew 18: ¹⁵ "If your brother sins against you, go tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have won your brother.

We have to see we have real responsibility

Which means we will need to confront our lazy lovelessness

Confronting lazy lovelessness

To not act, individually and corporately, is to fail to love

TO fail to love the offender, the congregation, the society in which we live, and our Lord.

Where God's word is so clear that those who practice these sins will not inherit the Kingdom of God, not share in eternal life, inaction is really to say to someone you reckon a brother or sister – you can go to hell, and it is no business of ours.'

There is no love in that

Inaction also shows no love for the congregation, no concern that their life and relationships be shaped by the lifegiving word of God. Inaction will lead to their life being corrupted, their identity lost. Action against open persistent sin, by contrast, preserves the congregation as the people of Christ, as God's temple.

And to act also shows love for our community. What a turn off from the gospel it is when people see those called Christians doing things even they don't approve of. Think of the anger and contempt generated by the protection of pedophiles in churches.

Its also a turn off from the gospel when they are ripped off in business by someone who calls themselves a Christian, or subjected to persistently angry abuse or snide sexist asides by someone who calls themselves a Christian.

And seeing someone who calls themselves a Christian getting repeatedly drunk or having sex outside marriage, living just like them, just confuses them about what God requires, hardens them to the gospel's call to repent.

TO act against sin is to love those yet to respond to the gospel, and to act is to show love of Jesus, for people who call themselves Christians bear His name, His reputation, in the world. We might like to think people distinguish between Jesus and His claims and the behaviour of Christians, but they often don't, especially where they are looking for a reason to not engage with Jesus. WE protect His reputation when we encourage each other to live by His word, and insist that all who carry His name do live by His word. And how could we be indifferent to the reputation of the One who loved us and died to give us life.

So confront your reason for inaction and let's live a life of love by

Being real about right and wrong, that our God sets the standards

By being real about our responsibility to maintain the standards, and to not let our brothers or sisters deceive themselves that they will be safe where they ignore or reject them

And let's live a life that celebrates the freedom, the salvation our Lord Jesus has given us through His death, live a life of wholehearted commitment and faithfulness to our Lord and His rule of our lives by His good word, His word that calls us to love one another as He has loved us.