

1 John 2:1-6

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[0 : 00] We turn to this passage this evening. We address together what is one of the most vexing problems that we, if we are Christians, have to struggle with on a daily basis.

And that is the problem of sin, and not only the need to acknowledge and confess our sin, which we are called to do, but more significantly to actually deal with our sin.

In the language of the Apostle Paul, he says we are to not ignore sin in our lives, but rather we are to put it to death. We are to take drastic action. We are to deal with it in such a way that it does not dominate us.

It does not control us. It doesn't become the pattern of life for us. But we know only too well from experience that no matter how hard we try, it's often a losing battle that we're fighting.

That even sins that we thought we had come to terms with and laid to rest have got a nasty habit of resurrecting and taking us by surprise and bringing us back into old ways that we fled from and of which we are greatly ashamed.

[1 : 04] Even the Apostle himself, Paul, in Romans chapter 6, with typical Pauline candour, speaks quite openly about he, as a gospel minister, he, as an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, struggles on a daily basis with sin that fills him with inner sadness and from which he longs to be free.

He says the good that I would, I do not, and the evil that I find myself doing, and he rounds off that section by saying what a wretched man I am, who will deliver me from this body of death.

And that's the issue that the Apostle John is taking up among other things here in his first letter.

One John that was written probably when he was an old man, perhaps in his mid-80s or later.

Written probably in the aftermath of persecution that had swept through Asia Minor. And that had caused him to move out of Ephesus, where he had been based for some time since the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70, and where he had been ministering.

But a range of things had begun to happen in that area. Not least, various false teachings had arisen. Some of them early forms of what came to be known as Gnosticism.

[2 : 28] Don't worry too much about the title attached to it, but basically it was a mixture of Greek philosophy and pagan mysticism combined with Jewish and Christian elements.

And it expressed itself in this belief that A, the body, that which is physical, is evil and of no consequence. Therefore it doesn't matter what you do with your body.

The spirit is all that matters. So having a spiritual awareness of God and spiritual communion with Christ is all that is significant. And then flowing out of that, because of their view of the body as being something evil and something that will not last into the future age.

Therefore, deeds done in the body are of no consequence. And he has spent the first chapter of this letter, probably not a letter in the traditional sense as addressed to a particular congregation, but rather a circular communication that he put around a group of churches in the region around Ephesus, to address this issue that was infecting so many churches at that time in that area.

And he, on the one hand, reaffirms his credentials as an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, someone who had been authorized by the risen, exalted Lord to proclaim the message that Christ himself had entrusted to the apostles, guarded by the apostles, and then proclaimed as the gospel that would reach the nations and begin to build and establish the church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[4 : 00] So he has been addressing those things, and he has addressed in particular those who had denied that we are sinful by nature and we are guilty of sin in practice, which surfaced in some expressions of his false teaching, but also issued a word of comfort to those who were genuine Christians, genuine believers, who were struggling with their own sinfulness.

And he reminds them that if we confess our sins, he, the Lord Jesus Christ, is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all our unrighteousness.

But having spoken of that assurance of pardon, that wonderful assurance of pardon, that I'm sure you've heard read as part of your liturgy on a regular basis here in Ealing Presbyterian Church, it's fascinating to see the way that this old man's mind turns next.

There are aspects of 1 John that bear all the marks of an elderly man whose mind has begun to wander a bit. So it's actually quite hard to keep track of his train of thought and where he's going with his teaching.

That's what makes 1 John such a difficult book to preach. But at the same time, he was sharp as a razor in other ways. I had the privilege as a student at Westminster Seminary many years ago of being there when Cornelius Van Til was still alive.

[5 : 30] Cornelius Van Til was one of the greatest defenders of the Christian faith of the 20th century, a very significant thinker, a man who influenced many, many students and men who were preparing for the Christian ministry.

And when I got to know him, he was an aging man and his mind had begun to wander, but he still loved to have students around to spend an evening with him and to discuss things with him. But he always spoke in half sentences because of the state of his mind. So you had to fill in the blanks. But it was amazing when you did fill in the blanks, how sharp he was in his ability to understand and process things.

And when it came to praying at the end of the evening, which he always would do, he was absolutely lucid and utterly fluent when it came to prayer. And in that sense, when we think of this aging saint who is writing this, one of the last letters to be written that would comprise the canon of the New Testament, there is an incredible lucidity to the way his mind is working.

And he anticipates a wrong implication that would be drawn from his final statement in chapter 1, namely that if we have such wonderful forgiveness from the Lord Jesus Christ, if we simply confess our sins, then the inference could be drawn.

[6 : 48] Well, it doesn't really matter if I sin. And really, in many ways, he mirrors what the Apostle Paul says in Romans chapter 6, verse 1, where after spending chapter 5 in Romans, arguing that it is by grace that we are saved, free grace, grace that pardons all our sins because of the finished work of Christ and the way it's applied in justification.

That Paul then says at the beginning of chapter 6, what shall we say then in response to this? Shall we continue to sin that grace may abound? He pauses and then says, may it never be.

If you're thinking in that way, then you really haven't understood grace. If you think that the freedom of the forgiveness that we have by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ gives us license to go on sinning, then we really haven't grasped the dimensions of that grace.

Because the grace that promises free forgiveness is by no means cheap grace. It came at an extraordinary price. The cost, the price of the blood of Jesus Christ shed upon the cross for sinners. As Peter says in his first epistle, we are not redeemed with silver and gold, but rather we are redeemed by the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ himself. All this leads to John's second stated reason for writing this circular letter that will go out round the churches.

[8 : 23] My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. He's already said that his first reason for writing was that our joy, the joy of all the people of God would be complete.

But now he goes on to tease it out further by saying that the people of God would turn away from thoughtless, mindless, sinful practices.

It's hard to overstate the relevance of this to the church of our day. Because in so many churches and in so many Christian circles, grace has been cheapened.

In a survey done not that long ago in the student world and in Christian unions in the student world, it came to light that significant numbers of students who are heavily involved in their local Christian unions see nothing wrong with sleeping with their boyfriends or with their girlfriends.

They see no inconsistency between making a profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and professing to be his followers and then behaving in a way that is absolutely no different from the immoral approach to sexuality that is shared by their fellow students in these institutions.

[9 : 45] And I dare say that's symptomatic, not just of what happens in the student world, but what happens to such a great degree in the world of the church as well. that we can make easy professions of faith to be the followers of Christ verbally, but to be able to demonstrate that consistently in the way that we live, that is a different story.

So the question comes, well, how do we deal with sin? How do we actually address this issue that lurks within each one of us as that hidden enemy within that needs such drastic action to be put to death?

There are some Christians who would argue the answer is that you simply catalog sin, that you draw up a list of the great taboos, the things that are so obviously wrong.

I grew up in an era of the Christian faith in Northern Ireland where that was very much the case, that there was a kind of list of things that if you were a Christian you did not do. which was terrifying in one way and made you stand out as being quite different from your peers in another way, but in another sense, it was actually quite liberating because that catalogue of what was counted sinful was by no means exhaustive.

There were all kinds of sins that you could slip in under the radar and think, well, I don't do that. It's not on the list, so I'm safe. And it's easy to read the Ten Commandments like that.

[11 : 14] That you can read the Ten Commandments at a very superficial level and say, you shall have no other gods before me. I'm safe. Don't make any idols or images.

I'm safe. Don't take the Lord's name in vain. I'm safe. That you can read it, go through them one by one and say, well, I haven't broken that command. But if you begin to read the commandments in light of the way that Jesus explains the commandments in the Sermon on the Mount, that murder has its roots in hatred, that adultery has its roots in lust, that you begin to realize that you simply cannot go through that list of commandments without saying at the end of them, guilty on all ten counts, my Lord.

But if truth be told, there is no one in this building this evening who has not broken every one of those Ten Commandments, perhaps even in a single day.

So, the answer is not simply to try and catalogue the sins that may or may not be possible for us to commit. But interestingly, what John does is something quite different.

Rather than trying to identify all the different permutations of sin, he says, I want to point you to Christ. And if you begin to see Jesus Christ as he really is, who is the very embodiment of grace in all that it entails, if you begin to see the Lord Jesus Christ as he really is, then there is no greater enabler and persuader to get to grips with sin in your life than a consciousness of him.

[12 : 46] And four things come to light very quickly. First of all, he points to Jesus, first one, as the one who stands by us. when we sin. The one who stands by us when we sin.

Having explicitly stated it, that he is writing in order to urge genuine Christians to take sin seriously and to do what's necessary to deal with sin in their lives, he reminds them of what happens when we do sin.

But if anyone does sin, he says, we have an advocate with the Father. Or as the NIV says, someone who speaks to the Father in our defense. The key word in that statement is what he describes as an advocate with the Father.

Sometimes we might think of that in today's legal terms as being someone who would be a defense lawyer, someone who would speak on our behalf in the language that he uses. It's actually the same word that he uses in his gospel, John's gospel, in the upper room discourse of the Lord Jesus Christ to speak of the Holy Spirit as the paraclete.

That's the transliteration of the Greek word that's used in that passage. Sometimes it's translated comforter, sometimes it's translated strengthener, sometimes it's translated counselor.

[14 : 03] There's a range of different meanings, but basically it meant somebody who would appear alongside another person who had either been accused of wrongdoing or who was caught up in a lawsuit and was afraid of standing alone before the judge.

And the person accused, the person caught up in the lawsuit could bring an advocate with them, this person, who could at the most basic level be their best friend, just there for support and encouragement.

More often it was somebody who was an individual of standing, a person who had some recognition in the community, whose very presence would carry weight and therefore being able to have a person of that stature standing alongside you when you were on trial.

Then it would improve your chances of being acquitted. And so as our sin, even as Christians, has an impact upon our relationship with God and we find ourselves standing before God as the one who is not merely our Father, but the one who is the judge of all the earth, the one who is a pure lies and to look upon sin, the one who cannot ignore sin, even in the lives of his children, how do we stand before him?

How do we look him in the eye when that's the case? John said, well actually God himself, the one that we have offended, has provided that person, that advocate, for us.

[15 : 34] That we don't have to go looking for our best friend on earth to stand by us. We look to the best friend from heaven that we have been given, even the Lord Jesus Christ, our elder brother, our great high priest.

And he is distinctively described in the language of John as Jesus Christ, the righteous one. He uniquely, as the God-man, is the righteous one, the ultimate righteous one, by virtue of a life that has fulfilled all righteousness.

He has lived the perfect life, utterly free from any trace of accusation. But he is also, with that perfect life, made the perfect sacrifice that God requires to make atonement for sin, to deal with sin, in order that its penalty be paid and its consequences be removed on behalf of sinners.

And that's exactly what Jesus Christ has done for all his people throughout all of time. And so as we trust in him, as we are united to him, he is the one who represents us before his heavenly father.

He is the very embodiment of all that we need as we stand before the God to whom we must give an account. Not in an attempt to twist God's arms.

[16 : 59] Sometimes, Jesus Christ is pitted against the father, portrayed as having to somehow twist the father's arm to persuade him to forgive sinners. As though God the father is somehow reluctant to forgive.

But remember, it was God the father who sent his one and only son. And his one and only son came willingly to be that savior who would be the sacrifice for sin in order to redeem his people. and he stands before the father not saying, father, you really ought to do this. But so that the father can look him in the eye and he can look the father in the eye and realize you are just able to do what you had planned to do all along.

that the father in his love sent the son in order that the father in his grace could bring forgiveness through his son to those who are offended.

Living proof that God is able perfectly justly to forgive us our sins and he is perfectly willing to do so because that's exactly why he sent his son in the first place.

[18 : 15] And when we truly grasp that when it truly begins to sink in that that's what Jesus is doing as he represents us and speaks for us before the father far from making us feel that well sin doesn't really matter.

It doesn't really matter if we do wrong because Jesus is supposed to be speaking on our behalf. It actually makes us even more acutely aware of what sin did and what sin inflicted upon the son in order to bring salvation.

And it should make us hate our sin all the more. Secondly John points to Jesus as the one who died for us. Verse 2 John consolidates and elaborates on all that he has just said about Jesus by adding this statement in the second verse.

He says he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world. Or he is the propitiation for our sins and not only for ours but the sins of the whole world.

Again his words are carefully chosen and were aimed directly at the situation that was destabilizing the churches at that time. And two things stand out in what he says in that single verse. The first is that Jesus is as the ESV puts it the propitiation for our sins.

[19 : 41] That is for those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as he is proclaimed in the gospel not as he was being reconfigured by the false teachers of that time.

He was the one who provides this propitiation for us. Propitiation is one of those big words in the Bible. That it's very easy for people to recoil from and say I have no clue what that means.

It's far too technical. I don't know why it's in the Bible in the first place. And we recoil from it because it seems too difficult to understand. Jeff Thomas from Aberystwyth often pauses that point and says it's fascinating that people say that words like justification, sanctification, propitiation, expiation are too big to understand and shouldn't be in the Christian vocabulary.

Those very same people have no trouble with superannuation, index linked and anything to do with your personal finances. You can learn that vocabulary pretty quickly. But when it comes to our spiritual welfare, these technical terms in the Bible are every bit and even infinitely more loaded in terms of their significance.

And they're worth learning because they guarantee our investment by faith in the Son of God for our salvation. there's a word that's found in the Old Testament to describe the lid of the Ark of the Covenant in the Tabernacle and later in the Temple, which was sometimes translated as the Atonement Cover.

[21 : 08] It was the place where the priest once a year would come and sprinkle the blood of the slaughtered lamb for the Atonement that was being made for the people of God.

The point of application was in the symbolic spot in the architecture of the Temple where symbolically the feet of God would touch the earth.

And it was at that point the intersection between the eternal God in heaven and our sinful race on earth that Atonement would be applied in order to bring forgiveness to the offending parties.

It's a word that can be translated in three different ways quite legitimately. It can either be translated simply as atonement or it can be translated as expiation or it can be translated as propitiation.

Atonement simply means a sacrifice that leads to reconciliation. That's the rendition that the NIV chooses to give it. Expiation is a word that describes the cleansing that is brought by sacrifice to purify the filth, the moral and spiritual filth that contaminates us through our sin.

[22 : 22] and propitiation is receiving God's righteous, the full impact of God's righteous wrath against sin.

Sin does provoke the judicial wrath of God that comes in the punishment that he is required by nature and by character to inflict upon all forms of rebellion against him.

Some commentators argue that the translation expiation cleansing is more appropriate here because in chapter 1 verses 7 and 9 John has been speaking about the need to be cleansed from sin.

But at the same time it's argued that the fact that the role of Christ as advocate is directed towards the Father standing on behalf of the people would suggest that the satisfaction of God's judicial wrath is more appropriate hence the ESV opting for propitiation.

And far from being some kind of arcane biblical doctrine designed to stir debate amongst Christians it's actually intended to comfort and to reassure because there is that sense and we know it not merely because the Bible tells us to be afraid when we sin because of who it is we're sinning against but we actually sense it in our own conscience that when we have done wrong and we've knowingly sinned against God it triggers a fear reaction we are afraid of what we deserve because we know that God is not pleased with sin he is angry righteously angry even when his own children sin but to know that Jesus Christ is the one who is himself the propitiation for our sin means that he has stood between us as those who deserve to be on the receiving end of God's righteous wrath and the

[24 : 29] God who pours out that wrath upon sinners where do we see it when the Lord Jesus Christ is hanging upon that cross that he is in his person bearing the unmitigated and undiluted wrath of a holy righteous God against sinful guilty people and if we know that that wrath has been fully unleashed and fully absorbed by the one who has stood in our place as a propitiation then none of it will come our way Isaiah 51 speaks about those who deserve God's judgment drinking the foaming cup of his wrath to its very dregs who is it that drank the cup of wrath to its very dregs it was God's own son in human flesh as he bore the sins of his people and received the full punishment that they deserved but John stresses this thought further that we might imagine by saying and not for ours only but for the whole world we can almost immediately when you hear that statement we can hear a clamour of

Christian voices trying to qualify or clarify well what does John really mean by that statement he can't mean what it seems to mean there has to be some qualification on the one hand you've got those who claim that Christ died for absolutely everyone regardless of who they are or whether or not they believe and in that sense he has actually atoned for the sins of all the world and by virtue of that statement they are effectively saying there will nobody be in hell that everybody because they have been atoned for their sins have been atoned for will be in heaven or there some put a slightly different gloss and say well the death of Christ was enough for everybody throughout all of history throughout all the world it was sufficient for that but it was only effective for it efficient for those who actually believe it's not time to go into all the arguments here but if you try to fit that with the information that the Bible gives us elsewhere about atonement and about the death of Christ especially it doesn't fit with the wider data that you have in Scripture on the other hand there are those who really want to turn

John's positive statement into a negative statement and they make it their mission in life to say well this actually is not an extravagant statement of the love of God as it seems that really we need to put restrictions on this so they try to redefine the idea of world to confine it to the world of those who are believers the world of those who have responded to the gospel and use it exclusively and not inclusively in the way that John presents it here both views miss the point of what John is saying as well as the context in which it is said the key to understanding his use of world here comes in the two senses that it carries in John's writings the first is that it's a reflection of the cosmopolitan nature of life in and around Ephesus and throughout the Roman Empire at that time remember John had come from the foothills of Galilee from a very parochial corner of the Roman world a very parochial corner of the Jewish world and when he and his fellow apostles were thrust out into this global harvest field after the ascension of

Christ they suddenly found themselves in a whole new world where they were rubbing shoulders with Gentiles where they were interacting with the cross section of humanity that they had never known before and he uses the word cosmos in the sense of cosmopolitan that all manner of life is here all kinds of people exist in this world that we are not just all the kinds of people that we grew up with there in Galilee when we were first following the Lord Jesus Christ Christ's death was not restricted to people of a certain race or from a particular class but for the whole world in all its scope within humanity but John also uses the word cosmos to speak of the world in all its wickedness the world in rebellion against God and all things good and that too adds its own nuance to what was bound up with Christ's death that Jesus Christ died for those who were his enemies

Jesus Christ died for those who were bent on rebelling against him by nature and by choice that Jesus did not die for those who were his friends but as Paul says that while we were yet enemies of God Christ died for us for too often our understanding and appreciation of Christ's death is vague! [29 : 30] and sometimes verges on the mystical and it's only as we take the time and the trouble to unpack some of the technical details that are embedded in the gospel message explaining the mechanics of salvation so to speak that we appreciate the greatness of the salvation that we have through Jesus Christ I'll bring this to the third thing he points to Jesus as the one we delight to obey verses 3 to 5 the force of what John is saying to these churches gathers momentum when he goes on to say in the third verse by this we know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands I said already that the false teaching that was troubling these churches was an early form of Gnosticism and even though I said it doesn't really matter about the title then understand this about the title a key element in that title that was given to this group was the Greek word gnosis which had to do with knowledge and knowing the whole mindset of this group was that we have secret knowledge we have a hotline to heaven we know the secret of getting right with

God and it's not what you apostles think it is that we are the ones who really know God you are the ones who don't know God so as John was raising a question mark over those who claimed to have come to know Christ in this new form of teaching that was coming but hadn't really come to know Christ over against those who are being troubled by this false teaching and are beginning to question well is our version of the gospel the real thing or have we followed the wrong message he said well here's the key test whether or not you really know loaded language the Lord Jesus and again he struck right at the heart of what these false teachers were saying a key error in what they were saying was that the body was evil they despised it and its deeds were unimportant but John categorically refused that view both positively and negatively tapping into something that Jesus said over and over again especially on the last night he was with his disciples before he was arrested and put to death he says if you love me you will do what I command if you love me you will obey me that the evidence of love is not disobedience but submission and obedience the Lord Jesus Christ expressed that as his own living proof of his love for the father John chapter 4 he said it is my pleasure it is my daily bread to do the will of him who sent me that I gladly submit to my father who is my equal and before whom I have no obligation to obey nevertheless in my incarnation and entry into this world and life in this world I gladly do what he has sent me to do and for Jesus very last words almost on the cross was to cry out to the father it is done everything you have sent me to do has been accomplished and so he says unequivocally in verses 14 if you really love me then you will gladly do what

I command you he reinforces this by linking it to the words truth and to the word word no matter how we may try to dodge what Jesus says it is undeniable no matter how you try to package it but then he goes as far as to say in verse 5 but if anyone obeys his word God's love is truly made complete

in him or more specifically that God's love reaches its intended goal or is perfected and that is the goal of bringing about moral transformation in the lives of his people but the lives of those people being all bent out of shape because of their sin and disobedience are transformed into a new obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ remember how Paul puts it in Romans 12 verse 2 do not be conformed any longer to the pattern of this fallen world but rather be transformed through the renewing of your minds by the gospel of the Lord

Jesus Christ and there's the living proof dear friends that if we are really are the followers of Christ if we really do know the Lord Jesus Christ then there will be discernible evidence that we are glad to obey him however imperfectly as an expression of our love for him that brings us to the last thing he points to Jesus as the one who is our pattern for life verses 5 to 6 the section ends with yet another angle on Jesus and by this may we know that we are in him that we walk in the way in which he walked how do we know that we really are in Christ how do we know that we really do have salvation then we will walk in the way which he walked John has already used the language of how a person walks not talking about a sketch from Vonley Python ministry of funny walks but it was one of the Bible's ways of saying describing a way of life a pattern of behaviour and he is saying here that a way of life a person's way of life will reflect what kind of people it really are so here he challenges his listeners to consider the way in which they were walking and who they were really following as they tried to imitate him it was fascinating to see the extent to which

[35 : 30] Christians are shaped by the company they keep by the kind of Christians that they associate with that we have every congregation has got its quirks and idiosyncrasies some are more quirky than others but it's almost impossible to be part of a congregation of God's people for any length of time before you begin to develop those idiosyncrasies you are natural families how often have our children broken free from our family gone off to university or somewhere else they bump into somebody who happens to know their parents and after observing you are just like your parents you are just a mini version of what your mum and dad are that we do reflect our families and the same is true of our local church families so as these Christians were mixing with those who claimed to be Christians but had embraced a different message and were advocating a different kind of

Christian life that was out of step with the apostolic gospel John was saying it will become pretty clear whether you belong to that group who have believed those ideas or whether you stand out from that group because you are actually following the one who is the true pattern for Christian life and Christian living it's a bit like when you go to the Henley Regatta and you watch those racing eights or if you've ever tried rowing as a form of recreation it's a wonderful sport to take up if you want some really invigorating exercise there's a great temptation for the person in the bow of an eight to simply keep in time with the person directly in front of them but if they do that then the eight oarsmen very quickly get out of sync and the boat very quickly gets out of line and worse the reason that the guy at the back of the boat or the girl at the back of the boat not the oarsman at the back of the stroke is that every other oarsman of the boat follows their lead that person is the pattern for what everybody else does so if you're out of step with a stroke the boat gets out of sink in the race and

John is simply saying in the racing eight of the Christian life the one who is the stroke is none other than our Savior the Lord Jesus Christ he is the role model he is the template he is the pattern he is the pace setter so as we keep in step with him together as God's people then we will begin to reproduce his characteristics in all their glory and attractiveness and that's why ultimately he is the only safe role model to follow for the Christian life once again John carefully chooses his language language that he has heard the Lord Jesus Christ himself use on numerous occasions this is how we know that we are in!

whoever claims to live in him or to abide in him must walk as Jesus did if we claim that we are abiding in Jesus where have you heard that language before John 15 Jesus talks at great length of I am the vine you are the branches and whatever branch abides in me is rooted!

in me is drawing its sap from me then that will be a fruitfull! as one the fruit of the vine is evidenced in the vitality the fruit bearing of the branches and it's saying to Jesus is saying that if you're really rooted and grafted in me for your salvation that it is inevitable that you'll produce fruit not just because my life is feeding your life but because my life is shaping your life as well and what you become is a reproduction on earth of what I am Christ is not only the source of our life but its template also so what's John saying about how we deal with sin don't obsess with your sin that

becomes morbid introspection that doesn't mean to say we shouldn't reckon with our sin we shouldn't identify our sin but we should obsess with

[40 : 06] Christ because the more we are focused on him the more we are focused on him and depending upon him the more we will be enabled to deal with our sin somebody once said to me if you want to show that a line is crooked don't point the finger at it and say there's a line that's crooked all you have to do is draw a straight line beside it and it will be self evident that it's crooked what John is doing here is not only drawing the straight line of the perfect life of Christ to show our sinfulness but he is showing the straight line of the life of the Lord Jesus Christ and the death of the Lord Jesus Christ as the one who enables us to deal with our sinfulness because in him we are able to put sin to death and in him we are able to walk the way of righteousness let's pray