

Gospel-Centered

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[0:00] If you've got a Bible, let's go to the book of Romans, Romans chapter 5.

Romans 5, we're going to read the first 11 verses of Romans chapter 5. This is the Apostle Paul writing, and he writes to the ancient church in Rome.

And he says this, verse 1. He says, It says, You see,

We talked about newcomer's tea coming up, and it's pretty handy to be new around about this time, because over the next three weeks, what we're doing is a series on our core values as a church that we do from time to time.

This week and in the next two weeks, our three values. If you go onto our church website, you'll see three values there that go alongside sort of our doctrinal commitments, what it is that we believe.

[3:13] The values give us a bit of a shape and say, hey, this is what Union Chapel is about.

Ideally, in a perfect world, I'd love to be able to come to any person who's been a member here for a long time, wake them up at 3 o'clock in the morning and go, what are the values of Union Chapel?

And they go, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, and they hit it perfectly every single time. So work on that practice, and let's see how far we get. We look at the first one, and that is, if you go on our website, you'll see that the first value, it says about the Union Chapel.

What it is that we do is that we are gospel-centered. Now, what does that mean? Is that sort of just like a catchy phrase that some churches use on their websites, but it's rather broad and nebulous. It encompasses so much that it doesn't really mean anything. I want to talk about that this morning. About 17 years ago now, my wife, Robin, and I were privileged to attend a conference in New York City where the main speaker was now the late Timothy Keller, founder of Redeemer Presbyterian Church and the City to City Network of Church Planting.

And I remember him saying at that conference that we live in a really curious age or a curious time right now where evangelicals aren't really sure what the gospel is.

[4:31] We live in a curious time where evangelicals aren't sure what the gospel is. Now, it's curious because the word evangelical literally means of the gospel, as in evangelicals are the people of the gospel.

That's what it means. Now, that was in 2009 that he said that at that conference. Since then, that statement's actually been borne out in research. So in 2020, there was a study that came out in the U.S. that found 52% of self-identified Christians, people would say, I wear the label of Christian, 52% of self-identified Christians believe that their good works will make them acceptable to God in the end equation.

In other words, 52% of U.S. Christians believe that the gospel, that is the central message of the Christian faith is, be a good person and God will accept you.

Now, maybe you are sitting here this morning and you're thinking, is that not the gospel? I thought that's what Christianity basically was, like be a good person and you go to heaven as a reward for that.

And so I want to say, if you are thinking that this morning, then, well, you're in a good place. You're not in a good place necessarily in your thinking about what the gospel is, but you're in a good place in that you're here this morning and you get to hear what the gospel is and what it means to be centered on it.

[6:02] So I want to use those two words as sort of an outline this morning. Gospel and centered. Let's think about the gospel and then let's think about what it means to be centered on it. Here's the first one, the gospel.

I want to, we're going to spend most of our time in that passage that we read, Romans 5, so you can keep that open, 1 to 11. Simple question, what is the gospel?

What is the central message of the Christian faith? Now, if you look down at verse 1, Paul writes to an ancient church in the city of Rome and then what he says is, he says, therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

So we've believed something, Paul says, and that belief has resulted in our justification, that is, in a righteous standing before God.

That's what that word means. And now we have peace with God. And all of this has something to do with Jesus. Now jump down to verse 6.

[7:04] Paul says, This is the gospel.

out of great love for us, God sent his son into the world to die for us sinners so that we might be reconciled to him.

And there are a whole lot of beautiful things that come out of this, that are included in this reconciliation. So we're justified, that is, we're forgiven of our sin and declared to be in a right relationship with God.

We're saved from wrath, it says there, that is God's judgment against sin. We have peace with God. So our sin no longer alienates us in that relationship between the two parties.

And it's all, all of this, everything we've spoken about, all of these benefits are because of what Jesus did. Not what you did, not what I did, not what a minister did, not what a ritual did in a church, but what Jesus did.

[8:41] So I think there now, hopefully you can see the problem with any gospel that says, be a good person and God will accept you. Because any gospel like that, what it does is it takes Jesus out of the center of the picture.

It puts you in the center of the picture. And at best, Jesus becomes like a spiritual coach on the side, a spiritual personal trainer saying, keep going. Ten more crunches and you'll be a real Christian.

But the biblical gospel is not Jesus as your spiritual personal assistant, but Jesus as savior. He saves you.

From start to finish. Your job is just to respond in repentance and faith. Repentance and faith in the gospel.

Repent and believe in the gospel. The gospel is the good news of what Jesus has done to save you, not what you must do to be saved. Have to be crystal, crystal clear on that fact.

[9:42] In fact, inherent in that Christian gospel is the reality that you can't actually save yourself. So if you look at verse six again, Paul says, you see at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.

So we were weak, he says. We were helpless. We were powerless. At the time that God came into this world in the person of Jesus Christ, we humanity were unable to save ourselves.

We were powerless to deal with sin. We were powerless to deal with corruption. We were powerless to deal with all the brokenness that we see and that we experience around us in this world all the time. Now I know that sort of teaching is not particularly popular.

It deals a bit of a gut blow to the notion that we as human beings can sort of overcome our struggles and make a better world if we all just pull together. But I don't think we really believe that anyway.

I don't think we honestly believe that we can do that. One of the books that many of us were made to read at school, I don't know how far back this goes, I don't know if kids today have to read it, was William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*.

[10:53] I think there's a Netflix series out now, a remake of it, I haven't seen it. It was written in 1954. The basic story, spoiler alert for those of you going to watch a Netflix series, but a bunch of school kids end up as the only survivors of a plane crash on a remote island.

They're on this island and what they basically get is the chance to start civilization over again on their little island. And the whole intrigue is to see, well, what are they going to do?

What are they going to build left to their own devices? And what essentially happens is they turn into a bunch of savages. They devolve into killing each other, engaging in really, really primitive behavior.

Now that was William Golding's take on what would happen to us if we all just left our own devices. Very cynical, very sort of pessimistic about the human condition.

What a lot of people don't know is that in 1857, there was another book written by R.M. Ballantyne called *The Coral Island*. And it's basically the reverse of the story of *The Lord of the Flies*.

[12:02] So a bunch of kids get stranded on an isolated island and they do really, really well for themselves. They build up the island. In the book, they introduce civilization to the Polynesian tribes that they meet and they rid the island of all the pirates and everything just goes incredibly well for them.

And Golding read that book and he was like, I actually, I love this book. It's a great story, but it's just a story. I don't think that's how people really work. And so he wrote *Lord of the Flies* in response to that, well in part, in response to that.

Now that book, *The Coral Island*, was written at sort of the peak of enlightenment thinking where everybody was incredibly positive, extremely positive about the human project, about what it was that we were going to achieve together as the human race.

Everyone was looking out at the world at that stage and they were going, look at what we've done. We have thrown off the shackles of religion and superstition. We're growing in our knowledge of science. We're growing in our understanding of medicine.

We're growing in our overall knowledge. We're basically unstoppable. We're going to create utopia here on earth through human progress. And then along came two world wars and the fruit of that was then William Golding's book.

[13:21] See, because I think deep down we know, we know there is something fundamentally wrong with the human race. Deep down we think we are powerless to save ourselves.

Now the Bible comes along and it says, you know that gut instinct that you have, that feeling that you have about us, well it's right. It is spot on. We actually are powerless to save ourselves.

Our final destination actually is destruction and despair if we're allowed to carry on into eternity doing what we're currently doing. But at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Paul says, Christ died for us.

Now look how counterintuitive this love of Christ is, this saving love of Christ is. Look at verse 7. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die, but God demonstrates his own love for us in this.

While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. So here's Paul's logic in that passage. Generally, as a rule of thumb, people don't ordinarily die for just anybody.

[14:41] Very, very rarely will someone die for a person who is reputedly righteous. Some people might die for a demonstrably good person, but Jesus, he's in a different category altogether from the rest of us because he dies for people who aren't reputedly righteousness, they don't have a righteous reputation, and they definitely aren't good.

The passage says that he dies for sinners. So he turns that general rule of thumb on its head. He does something that is totally inconceivable to you and me, something that we would never do.

You know, you watch a lot of those, as I do, a lot of disaster, end of the world type movies. I'm not going to talk about zombies again this morning, don't worry. but when there's always an attempt to sort of save a small fraction of the human population because the world's going to end, put them in a bunker or something under the ground, they always go for the elites.

You see that? The elites get in. The people who have extraordinary wealth or the people who have extraordinary skill or talent. Those are the ones that get shipped off into a bunker.

Now imagine a scene from one of those kinds of movies. Imagine that the plane, the final plane that's going to go to this bunker is now loading up its final passengers en route to the mountains somewhere in Siberia.

[16:09] There's a man who's in that line and he's about to get on board. He is a multi-dollar billionaire but he's also one of the foremost scientific minds on the planet.

Next to the runway behind the fences with guys with machine guns holding them off are the masses. The people all desperately wanting to be on that plane.

The people who are all going to die in some sort of global natural disaster or a nuclear winter or something and they're all crying out, they're desperately like, please take me on the plane, take my child, I want to go on the plane. Now imagine that the billionaire, he goes over to the fence and he sees a young boy and the boy is poor, the boy is dirty, the boy doesn't look particularly healthy and the boy is not particularly smart.

He really, really has nothing going for him but the billionaire comes over to him and he says, you take my place, I'll stay here and you go on the plane.

the infinitely more worthy person takes the hit for the seemingly unworthy person. The person that we all humanly speaking think should be protected, should be afforded honor and status and privilege gives up his place for the person who is of far, far, far, far less consequence.

[17 : 42] Friends, Christ died for us. We are the slightly dull, poor boy in the equation here, if you're wondering. The insignificant.

He died for us. It's not like he just reforms us, it's not like he looks at us and goes, you guys are going to, you guys have got problems, so let me come down to earth and run a couple of seminars on how to be nice to each other, how not to mess up the world.

He doesn't come and just try and reform us. He dies for us. He comes and he dies for us. That is our gospel. The good news of what Jesus our Lord has done to reconcile us back to God.

You can't do the gospel. You can only respond to it. And there are really only two responses you can have. Either you can ignore it, or you can repent and believe it.

That is turn away from a life ignoring God and turn to Christ and place your faith in him to save you. And so I want to say you maybe come to church a lot.

[18 : 58] Maybe you know a lot about Christianity. Maybe you would tick Christian on the census form. But if you do not repent of your sin and trust in Jesus Christ, then you are not by the Bible's definition a Christian.

If you are thinking that your own good works are going to get you into an acceptable standing before God, then you by definition are not a Christian. A Christian is a someone who says, I cannot save myself, throws himself in the mercy of Jesus, says, Jesus, please save me.

Have you done that this morning? Have you trusted in Jesus? Are you a believer this morning?

Now if that's the gospel, how do we stay centered on it, as individuals and as a church?

Here's the second point, the centered word. Here's the problem. What do you do with the gospel after you become a Christian? After coming to faith? The gospel saves, but does it have anything to do with Christian growth?

This is Paul in another part in the book of Colossians. This verse has always meant a lot to me and really shaped my thinking about Christianity, but Paul says to the church in Colossae in chapter 2, verses 6 and 7, he says, So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith, as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

[20 : 25] So you say, well, Paul, how do Christians grow? And he says, well, growth starts with coming to Jesus, but it continues by continually coming to Jesus.

You see what he says there? Just as you received him, he says, continue in him. See, I think maybe if you've been in church for a very long time, you might think that the gospel is really only that thing that makes you a Christian at the beginning.

You had to believe a couple of principles, some of the things we just spoke about, Jesus died for my sins, repent and believe in that intellectually, if you believed that, then you came into the church, you became a member, you got baptized, you came into the church, and that was all that you had to do with the gospel.

That was it. It was the doorway in. Paul says, no, no, no, no, no, no, wait. The way that you came into the faith by believing the gospel is the way that you continue in the faith by believing the gospel. To be gospel-centered then is to realize that belief in the gospel is both the way people become Christians and the way that they mature as Christians, growing in deeper love and obedience towards God.

[21 : 37] See, when you look at the cross of Christ, where Jesus is there dying on our behalf for our sins, when you look at that cross of Christ, you're not just seeing the mechanism by which God makes you a Christian.

You're seeing the very power by which God changes and transforms you into maturity. In fact, that's what Paul says in Romans 1. So let me show you how this works out exactly.

When you look at the cross of Christ, what you're in fact seeing is you're seeing the pinnacle of supreme love, the high point of supreme love in human history.

You're seeing God's very personal, very powerful, very costly love letter to you and to me. The cross is Jesus with his broken body saying, well the father really through the broken body of Christ saying to you and to me in that moment, I love you.

I love you more than you can possibly imagine. Now knowing and experiencing deep love like that must change a person.

[22:49] Knowing and experiencing it must change a person. A deed of true love like that should change us. In the words of the cinematic masterpiece Frozen, only an act of true love can thaw a frozen heart.

You see this in all our best stories, in all literature, so much of our best literature. Think of Jean Valjean in Victor Hugo's Les Mis. I'm not going to say the full thing because then you'll judge my French pronunciation.

But he's this hardened, Jean Valjean is this hardened convict. If you haven't read the book or seen one of the movie versions, he steals silver from a kind-hearted bishop who gives him lodging the night before.

And when the police catch him, they bring him back to the bishop, thinking that the bishop is going to press charges, and the bishop goes, oh no, no, no, no, I gave him this silver.

In fact, here are two candlesticks. These candlesticks will fetch a whole lot of francs, francs, however you say that, as well, and give you a whole lot more money. Why didn't you take these as well? And he gives them to Jean Valjean.

[23:56] And realizing what's going on there, Valjean, in the book, he physically trembles as he starts to understand what's happening to him, in the face of such forgiving kindness.

And the rest of the book, and it's a pretty long book, book, but the rest of the book then follows the complete transformation of a person, all brought about by that moment of incredible grace and kindness, an act of true love.

Now, our greatest literary minds keep reimagining this transformation by love over and over again in fiction. It's in all the stories. It's in Frozen.

It's in a bunch of other stories out there. It's in a tale of two cities. It's in Big Hero 6 or what is, Big Hero 9, Big Hero 6, I can't remember what it is.

It's in all of those stories. They keep reimagining this story of transformation by love in fiction, but what if it actually happens in the real world?

[25:01] What if it could happen in the real world for you? Imagine what the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, that act of love, can do for your heart and for your world if your heart really got hold of it.

The gospel saves us. And the more we reflect on it, the more we apply the depth of the gospel to different parts of our lives, the more we start to become changed by it.

And to the extent that we do that, to the extent that we appropriate the gospel for ourselves, we will be changed. Now you might say, well how exactly do I do that? Three things I want to give you, three things to appropriate that gospel.

Number one, you need the gospel to go from your head to your heart. See, what if you're that person who's sort of grown up in church, you've been to Sunday school, you've been to church service after church service after church service, you know what a presbytery is, you got excited about presbytery meeting this weekend, you've heard the ABCs of the gospel a thousand times, you can pass that test with flying colors, but it doesn't move you, it doesn't compel you to change. See, we have a propensity to lock the gospel up in our heads. That is, we intellectually understand it, but it stays in our head as sort of a set of propositions that we affirm and we agree with, but then nothing more than that.

[26:36] And I want to say that's not actually what this passage is speaking about. If you go back to the Romans 5 passage, look at verse 5, Paul says, hope does not put us to shame because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Now do you see what he is saying there? He is saying God makes his love real to you. The love of Christ to some extent must be supernaturally experienced.

God by his Spirit supernaturally pours that love into our hearts, not into our heads, into our hearts to be experienced.

In other words, sometimes that saving love that we know to be intellectually true, that's why we're in church, we affirm those things, that saving love that we know to be intellectually true becomes manifestly experienced by us in a deep and powerful way.

if there is absolutely no experience of Christ's love in you at all, and that doesn't mean that we don't sometimes go through dark periods where we struggle to sense the presence of the Lord, but if

there is absolutely no experience of Christ's love in you at all, you need to stop and wonder if that gospel penny has dropped, dropped from the head down to the heart.

[28:01] And this is a supernatural work of the Lord. Think about this, when we speak about the gospel, we're talking about something that centers on a historical event that happened 2,000 years ago, which means it is geographically, it is culturally, it is chronologically removed from our present day experience.

That's a lot of distance, right, between that moment on Golgotha 2,000 years ago and your heart right now today. So as much as we might believe it and say, well, I think it happened, and believe that it's got all these wonderful implications for me if I trust in it, what God has to do is he's got to bring it home in your heart.

And God by his spirit has to get it over those geographical, those cultural, those chronological hurdles. Take it off the pages of an ancient book and put it into your heart. Here's one way I've thought about this as I've tried to think about how this exactly happens.

It's a slightly morbid illustration, and that is the subject of death. Think about death. You know that death is a terrible thing.

Every single person sitting here this morning knows that death is a terrible thing. You know intellectually that death in some ways is horrifying, it's terrifying, it's a terrible thing, that you wouldn't wish on anybody whether it were to happen to you or to somebody close to you.

[29:38] But as you sit here this morning, you are not all so consumed by the horror of death that you can't get up in the morning and live functioning lives every day, right? You're not also living under the fear of death, even though intellectually you know it's a terrible, terrible thing.

You're not so living under the fear of death that you're too afraid to go out of this building after the service. You're able to distance yourself from it, aren't you? Emotionally, psychologically.

Even though you know death is such a terrible, terrible thing, you're able to emotionally and experientially distance yourself from it. Until when?

Until somebody close to you dies. dies. And then what happens? Then the experience of death rushes in.

That thing which you know at that point to be intellectually true becomes experientially true in that moment and you cry your eyes out.

[30:46] Now God, flipping this illustration completely around something much more positive. God does a similar thing here. By his spirit, he takes the intellectual truths of the gospel and he brings them home to you.

He makes them real to you so that you don't just know that God loves you. You feel that God loves you. Now you say, well, I want that.

How do I get more of that? Well, it's God who pours his love into our hearts by his spirit. So you don't conjure this up. You pray. You speak to God to work by his spirit.

You pray. You say, Lord Jesus, make yourself more real to me. That is why prayer is such a fundamental part of what it means to be a Christian. Talking to him, saying, you do your work in me. Pray, pray, pray, pray, pray, pray, pray.

But then there's some other things you can do. Two other things you can do. You can nurture the love of Christ in your heart. That's the second thing. The second way you appropriate the gospel is by nurturing the love of Christ in your heart.

[31:55] The gospel is part of a love relationship. Remember, it's based on the premise, we spoke about this at the beginning, but it's based on the premise that there is a broken relationship between you and God.

And so Jesus on the cross, he's not just forgiving you of your sins, he's actually bringing the two parties back together again into relationship. You think about the very beginning of your Bible, where you come across Adam.

Adam and Eve are in the garden, and they have this intimate relationship with God. They walk in the garden, they talk with God. There are no barriers, they're naked, that's not because they just didn't feel like it was a warm climate or something like that, it's because it's trying to show you that there is zero barrier between them, between God.

There's warm intimacy in relationship there. But they sin. Adam sins, it gets kicked out. That relationship gets severely distorted and damaged to the point that they get kicked out the garden, an angel gets put at the door with a big flashing sword saying, don't come back in here, we are not

friends anymore.

more. Now the gospel comes along and it puts that relationship back together. Puts the relationship back together.

[33 : 10] And so like all relationships, all intimate relationships particularly, where we're spending a lot of time with each other in each other's space, it needs work. Even if the Holy Spirit is pouring warm fuzzies into your heart, the relationship still needs work.

Think about marriage. Marriage starts with those warm fuzzies. All the chemistry, all the sparks flying, everything seems kind of effortless at first.

But if you want those warm fuzzies to continue, what do you need to do? You need to put in the work through sacrifice and service to build and strengthen and even grow those affections actually beyond their initial warm fuzzies.

Otherwise, the warm fuzzies dissipate. They go. Now, why would it be any different with the love relationship that we have with God? So yes, God is pouring His love into our heart by His Spirit, but if you're not nurturing that, then please, friends, don't be surprised that one day you wake up and go, hey, I don't really feel the love of God.

How do you nurture it? How do you nurture that relationship? What the Protestant reformers call the ordinary means of grace. It's not rocket science. Regular Lord's Day worship, what we're doing right now.

[34 : 40] Participation in the sacraments. Studying a Bible, prayer, fellowship, spiritual discipline, engaging in activities where the gospel truths are being reinforced over and over and over and over again.

We are not smart people. We need the gospel to come at us over and over again at our senses all the time in different ways and different shapes. You are gospel-centered when the ongoing nurture of the gospel is taking place in your life.

Third thing, the third way you get this gospel penny to drop down into your heart is, and this is maybe a counter-example here, maybe the way we could say it is this, the third reason you don't experience that thing is because we spoil our appetites.

Mothers know best, and now as a father I find myself saying this a lot as well, but maybe you were told, don't eat the sweets just before dinner time, because if you eat the sweets just before dinner time, you ruin your appetite for the main meal.

You get that little hit of sugar, and so you feel full, but you're not really full, and you don't really feel like eating the good food that's in front of you, that will nourish you and build you up and actually make you into a healthy individual.

[35 : 58] You spoil your appetite for Christ's love, and you thereby rob it of its power to change you. When you nurture other false loves, loves that lead you to sin, the sweets.

So when you nurture your pride, or you nurture your selfishness, or you nurture your lust, or your anger, or your arrogance, and there are lots of different ways that you can do all these things, but when you willingly participate in activities or thought patterns that you know are going to feed those particular sins, you put yourself in great danger then of missing out on the feast.

Enormous danger of missing the feast. You need to be looking inside, and you need to be saying to yourself, having a conversation with yourself, you know what, when I look at those sinful desires, as enticing, and as tempting as they are, as much as I feel like I want them and I want to indulge in them, they're actually sweets.

They're just sweets. And there's an unbelievable feast on the other side that I really want, and that I really need, that's going to nourish me, and build me up, and strengthen me.

And I would be the fool of fools to spend my life chasing after the sweets when that feast is on offer. Friends, you will not grow until the broken, bruised, bloodied body of Jesus Christ becomes your bread, and the flowing blood becomes your drink.

[37 : 32] You need the feast. That's what you need. You know, I want the Union Chapel to be a gospel-centered church.

It's because I want people to come in here week in and week out and taste that feast. That's what I want. That's what you should want. We're surrounded by some of the best restaurants in the city here.

Possibly some of the best restaurants in the world here in Cape Town. But I want to say that I think we've got a better meal to offer right here.

Not because we're a particularly spectacular church. We're not. We're pretty ordinary. I could have a mirror up here and you would see for yourself what I see. We're pretty ordinary.

Not because I'm particularly gifted as a communicator. I'm not. I see those eye rolls when I attempt humor. It's not because we have the best programs, the best music, the best Sunday school.

[38:32] None of that. It is because we try to consistently preach and teach the only message that can truly satisfy and fill you up.

That's why. That's why we have a better meal here. In the words of one of the most prolific hymn writers of the 18th century, Anne Steele, Lord, we adore thy boundless grace, the heights and depths unknown, of pardon, life and joy and peace in thy beloved Son.

O wondrous gift of love divine, dear source of every good, Jesus in thee what glory shine, how rich thy flowing blood. Come, all ye pining, hungry poor, the Savior's bounty taste.

Behold a never failing stall for every willing guest. Here shall your numerous ones receive a free, a full supply.

He has unmeasured bliss to give and joys that never die. You can't get a meal like that in any other restaurant in the city.

[39:46] But so long as we stay gospel centered, you will be able to get that here. Let's pray that we do that very thing. Let's pray now.

Father, we want to know, we want to love and we want to cherish the good news of Jesus Christ. We want that love to be all consuming.

That it would be the foremost thought in our minds as we wake each day. That it would be the foremost affection in our hearts as we think about our desires and our passions.

Father, help us to give ourselves to the nurturing of that love through regular worship and fellowship. Help us to avoid the sweets, to steer clear of sin, strengthen us in that fight, Lord, and allow us to have this glorious feast as a result, Lord.

Not just in the new creation when we will eat face to face with you, but even now in the present as we start to experience the love of Christ more and more and taste it and know it.

[41:02] Because this life is hard, Lord. We will struggle, we will battle. Some of us are struggling and battling right now and we need something so much bigger and more nourishing that we can hold on to, that can sustain us, carry us through.

Teach us to hold on to this gospel truth, Lord. Teach us to be truly gospel-centered. We ask this for Christ's sake and his glory. Amen.