

# The Law of Love Which Leads to Life

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 07 January 2024

Preacher: Stephen Ballingall

[ 0 : 00 ] But we're going to turn now to our readings, and we're in Leviticus this morning. Stephen is resuming his series through Leviticus. We've got plenty of visitor Bibles at the side, at the back.

Please do grab a Bible if you need one. And Leviticus chapter 18 this morning. And we'll be reading the whole chapter.

Leviticus 18 and reading from verse 1. And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, I am the Lord your God.

You shall not do as they do in the land of Egypt, where you lived, and you shall not do as they do in the land of Canaan, to which I am bringing you. You shall not walk in their statutes.

You shall follow my rules and keep my statutes and walk in them. I am the Lord your God. You shall therefore keep my statutes and my rules.

[ 1 : 17 ] If a person does them, he shall live by them. I am the Lord. I am the Lord. None of you shall approach anyone of his close relatives to uncovered nakedness.

I am the Lord. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father, which is the nakedness of your mother. She is your mother. You shall not uncover her nakedness.

You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife. It is your father's nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your sister, your father's daughter, or your mother's daughter, whether brought up in the family or in another home.

You shall not uncover the nakedness of your son's daughter or of your daughter's daughter, for their nakedness is your own nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife's daughter brought up in your father's family since she is your sister.

You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's sister. She is your father's relative. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister, for she is your mother's relative. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's brother, that is, you shall not approach his wife.

[ 2 : 32 ] She is your aunt. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your daughter-in-law. She is your son's wife. You shall not uncover her nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife.

It is your brother's nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of a woman and of her daughter and you shall not take her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter to uncover her nakedness they are relatives it is depravity and you shall not take a woman as a rival wife to her sister uncovering her nakedness while her sister is still alive you shall not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness while she is in her menstrual uncleanness and you shall not lie sexually with your neighbor's wife and so make yourself unclean with her you shall not give any of your children to offer them to moloch and so profane the name of the lord your god i am the lord you shall not lie with a male as with a woman it is an abomination and you shall not lie with any animal and so make yourself unclean with it neither shall any woman give herself to an animal to lie with it it is perversion do not make yourself unclean by any of these things for by all these the nations i am driving out before you have become unclean and the land became unclean so that i punished its iniquity and the land vomited out its inhabitants but you shall keep my statutes and my rules and do none of these abominations either the native or the stranger who sojourns among you for the people of the land who were before you did all these abominations so that the land became unclean lest the land vomits you out when you make it unclean as it vomited out the nation who was before you for everyone who does any of these abominations the person who does them shall be cut off from among their people so keep my charge never to practice any of these abominable customs that were practiced before you and never to make yourself unclean by them i am the lord your god amen may the lord bless his word to us this morning well good morning everyone please do keep

leviticus 18 open in front of you as we go through this passage this morning we live in a society which holds up freedom as one of its central pillars considering freedom as the touchstone of what makes a society good and moral but what does that freedom mean as ever in a sinful world our understandings of good values can be distorted so that they serve the very opposite of what they were originally intended for the people we live among wish to be free to decide exactly who they are how they behave who they have sex with all in the name of freedom and this is rooted in the idea that we can only be free if we reject all outside influence on ourselves any rules that we feel society or the established church families parents even try to put on people only if we reject all that can we be truly free free to be the people we really are and that is the way to life and happiness in this world that's why we see in protests and political campaigns slogans like my body my choice some people are gay get over it stop erasing my existence i'm free to be me me our culture doesn't want any external authority telling us what to do we want to do that ourselves

we want to be god in our own lives so the idea that there is a force or person telling us what we can or cannot do is a very offensive concept because that impacts our world's apparent freedom which really is we know as people who the lord has revealed his truth to is a handing over of your responsibility to your most base and most animalistic of desires it is slavery to the sin that rules and ruins your heart and that's why the legacy of the sexual revolution has been so damaging for our world more than half of marriages today end in divorce the absent father is a far too common feature in the home pornography is everywhere and the average age a child is exposed to it is only 12 years old the rates of sexual violence are increasing teenagers are encouraged to repress their natural bodies to rebel against their created order and mutilate themselves rather than acknowledge the truth of who they are and 10 million babies have been killed in the uk and counting that's what unchecked sexual freedom leads to its legacy is destructive misery is the world a happier place now that it's sexually free i don't think so but here the bible gives a series of boundaries that are to govern sexual behavior the lord says that sex is powerful like the flow of a great river and it needs to be channeled rightly boundaries must be put in place to stop that river from bursting its banks and causing mayhem much of england has experienced that this week i'm sure you'll have seen the pictures and videos on the news when the river bursts its banks and the boundaries are breached disaster strikes so the lord gives boundaries to this great force so that it's used rightly so that life flourishes through respecting those boundaries that's what those boundaries are there for to create a healthy and stable environment for life to flourish god is not some cosmic killjoy out to stop people from enjoying themselves instead he blessed his creatures with the gift of sex it was his idea and he knows its power both to bring joy and to cause misery and that's why it has to be guarded carefully because if the river bursts its banks people get hurt and lives are ruined but let's just pause for a moment and note where we are in the text we're in chapters 18 to 20 of leviticus the holiness code as it's often called and if you ever read through these chapters you'll notice that the order is really quite odd and surprising in chapter 18 if you look at it there are prohibitions on sexual behavior and then in chapter 20 if you flick over there it has a list of punishments for breaking the sexual sins mentioned in chapter 18 but in the middle comes chapter 19 which speaks of how God's redeemed covenant community are to operate within society with loving your neighbor as yourself the high point of that chapter it's a bit strange as chapter 19 seems like an odd interjection about society in the middle of a conversation on sexuality you could read chapter 18 and then flick straight over to chapter 20 without skipping a beat it would actually seem to flow better that way but what Moses is doing here

is deliberately framing loving your neighbor as yourself in chapter 19 between chapters on sexual fidelity he's put the boundary markers of sexual behavior around the laws on loving your neighbor as yourself because true love of neighbor and the kind of society that flourishes well that only occurs where marriage is held in honor and the marriage bed is undefiled as the author to the Hebrews puts it Moses knew that marriage is the bedrock of good and healthy society so these laws and punishments on sexual sin are like the lines of the playing field within which true life can flourish that's what Moses is doing in ordering this section in this manner now chapter 18 let's look at that now it splits into three sections so we'll take each section in turn seeing firstly in the first five verses the purpose of God's law and here we see that the Lord gives these laws to distinguish his people telling them not to take their cues from the outside culture but to choose life in his ways in these first five verses we're given two reasons for the laws on sexual ethics which are both rooted in the repeated phrase throughout this section

I am the Lord or I am the Lord your God the Lord's mark of ownership is on his people and on all people so he alone has the divine right to tell us how to behave he says firstly I am the Lord so don't be like the world look at verse 3 and 4 with me you shall not do as they do in the land of Egypt where you lived and you shall not do as they do in the land of Canaan to which I am bringing you you shall not walk in their statutes you shall follow my rules and keep my statutes and walk in them the Lord's people are not to take their cues from the unbelieving world Israel was between places at that point as they were wandering through the wilderness they had just been redeemed from Egypt and were being taken to Canaan to settle and enjoy life in the land that the God had kept for them and the message is simple you've left Egypt so leave their customs and behaviours behind you you're going to Canaan and don't take on their morals either there's an awareness here that different cultures in the world have different ideas of what is permissible when it comes to sex which is just as true in the ancient world as it is in the modern

[13:40] I won't go into details it would be very indecent to do this but for every single sexual sin mentioned in this chapter there is evidence of it being practiced in Egyptian or Canaanite culture at the time Moses knew who he was speaking to and he knew what their cultures thought was normal and good and the Lord knows how tempting a thing it is when we think everyone's doing it everyone's doing it we can all be tempted to simply follow the crowd that's our default setting to do what the culture around us does and we need to fight against that if we are to live for God and honour him we know that so well don't we particularly in the area of sexual sin in our sex obsessed culture today pornography is rife same sex activity is celebrated and blessed transitioning your sex is championed adultery is common children are killed inside the womb and most children grow up without both their father and mother present if you were to ask someone you know what the world's main values are when it comes to sex it would almost certainly be that of one word consent as long as all the parties involved consent however many parties that is then anything goes everything is on the table as long as everyone consents but friends we cannot be fooled by this we must stand against this and be different from the world around us because the law of consent as much as consent in itself is a good thing to honour it puts ourselves at the centre of what is right and wrong if consent is king then well we are gods we are the moral arbiters of what is right and what is wrong what is permissible what is lawful but the lord says do not be like your neighbours do not be like the world around you don't join in with their sin and don't let their sin poison you infiltrate its way into your church being faithful to the lord means that our values will always jar with those of our neighbours because belonging to god means becoming like him and becoming less like the world from which we have been saved not getting our morals from social media or newspapers or our neighbours but shaping our lives by the transformative word of god which is a direct challenge to our culture secondly from these first few verses the lord says that i am the lord so choose life verse 5 if a person does them these rules he shall live by them he shall live by them and here the lord is saying that fullness of life is found in following his ways he's not saying that following these laws leads to salvation itself don't misunderstand that but that the life of blessing is found in following his path the best life you could ever live is lived in obedience to him because these laws are not meant to curtail life but to enable it to flourish like the boundaries of a river channeling it in the right direction avoiding disaster and destruction out there but letting it flow beautifully and if you care to look into any statistics on child well-being the truth that these laws lead to life are undeniably true whether you judge it by a child's mental health their educational achievement their likelihood to have their own stable family as adults their likelihood to stay out of prison and several

other areas the best thing you can do for a children is follow these laws and give them a stable home to grow up in with their father and mother married we know don't we that the best place for a child is in home where both parents are present and both submit to the Lord Jesus that leads to fullness of life but not only that as this verse does look forward to eternal life also because in submitting to God's law that path leads to eternal life in his name so the obvious implication is choose life choose to live in the light of God's law rather than the darkness of the world around us that only leads to death that language used here is very evocative of lady wisdom in proverbs calling people to choose life by following the Lord and it's an appropriate image to use as lady folly is often pictured as a temptress who with her sweet talk and seductive ways promises life and fulfillment but her way only ever leads to death as warm and inviting as her house looks the dead bodies are underneath the floorboards listen to some of proverbs 5 with me where he speaks of the forbidden woman for the lips of a forbidden woman drip honey and her speech is smoother than oil

but in the end she is bitter as wormwood sharp as a two-edged sword her feet go down to death the sexual scene of this world promises much it promises excitement self-discovery and satisfaction that you can finally be your true self you can finally be free and satisfied or get that thrill that you thought you were missing but we need to know that these are lies and they always lead to death whatever short-lived thrill it delivers will ultimately lead to death and destruction exchanging eternal life for cheap passing thrills so instead we are to keep on choosing life in god's law of love and trusting him that his law of love is the way to life to true life in this world let's now turn to the laws themselves in verses 6 to 23 where we see the playing field of god's law the playing field of god's law and here we see that the lord has created sex solely for marriage between one man and one woman anything outside of that particular relationship is to be rejected this section splits into two with verses 6 to 18 focused on incest and 19 to 23 on dehumanizing sexual perversions so verses 6 to 18 focus on the issue of unsuitable sexual partners and we won't spend too long on this but these laws are here to protect women they are not sexual objects to be used in whatever way the head of the household pleases but are to be honored as family given to you by god to love to protect to nourish to care for to bring them up in the fear and nurture of him and essentially this section says that all female relatives closer than cousins are off limits for sexual relationships summed up by verse 6 uncovering nakedness the term that this section uses is a euphemism for sexual relations and this includes in-laws or members of your step family as well as broad relations in a culture where the head of the house had sway and authority there is

plenty of evidence that they could demand certain acts from their household members and in our modern world there is far too much evidence that suggests very tragically that the most dangerous place for young girls to be is in their own homes if a woman or girl is to suffer from sexual sin it is likely to be from someone in her own family so as the lord gives these laws he is protecting the weak and saying to leaders of households that the women in their care are not to be used as they like in the words of the end of verse 17 they are relatives it is depravity the heads of the family do not have the right to use their relatives for sexual relations even if it's par for the course culturally even if it's what everyone else around you is doing as is very much the case in Egypt with their incestuous royal families who are setting the moral tone for the whole nation then verses 19-23 focus on destructive and dehumanizing sexual behavior the camera starts to zoom out further than just focusing on the family and thinks more broadly about prohibitions for all people and we'll work through them one by one so verse 19 menstrual uncleanness which is all about worship in Israel if you came into contact with any blood be it from a man or a woman then you were unclean before the

Lord and unable to approach the tabernacle in worship it was wrong to approach a woman when she was bleeding as it would make that man unclean too and he would have deliberately made himself unable to worship the Lord in the tabernacle he was deliberately barring himself from worshipping the Lord that's why it wasn't done in those times because as hard as it is for our culture to believe there are things in life that are more important than sex and worshipping the Lord is chief among them verse 20 adultery adultery is a form of destruction it's not the fulfilling and exciting thing that is painted out to be by our world but it delivers death and misery proverbs 6 says that he who commits adultery destroys himself and we know that don't we you never have to look back far in the news cycle to see how destructive adultery is the man who finds a woman who really understands him finally or who offers the excitement that he doesn't look to his wife for anymore he always leaves a trail of destruction behind him as big a smile as there is on his face there is a weeping family behind him and Jesus goes even further than this in the sermon on the mount he shows that the law was only the beginning point he said that desire in the heart that your thoughts were to be cut out to as that was the first step along the path towards adultery in our world adultery is quite reluctantly accepted we acknowledge that it causes pain but more and more couples are okay with their partner's sexual infidelities or are living in open relationships or in the church young adults may choose to sleep with their partner because they think well we're going to get married anyway so why wait everyone else is doing it or perhaps closer to home they gladly or one partner secretly invites pornography into their relationship with a new sexual partner every day of the week at the click of a button both men and women invite those partners into their relationship all the time and it only ever feeds itself gaining more of an appetite you can't appease sexual desire with sexual sin those appetites grow with time it is a beast which grows and which is never satisfied it always wants more more more until it destroys you following the

Lord's law of love means saying no to these things even if everyone else around us is doing it we are saved to be different from the world around us not to become like them but to display the fullness of life that honoring the Lord brings verse 21 child sacrifice Moloch was a detestable false god of the Ammonites and he was worshipped in Canaan at the time his exact nature is quite hard to pin down but he seems to be a false god who granted favor in various fields and was appeased by fire and the most detestable of all these acts of worship to him was to sacrifice your child hoping to gain favor in your business your crops your family by giving up the life of a little one it's a truly heinous thing to consider yet it's a practice that takes place every day in the UK and the world over except we don't call it sacrifice we call it health care we don't call him Moloch we call him the idol of self of freedom of choice of opportunity even mercifully we've spoken about this as a church before and as a whole our eyes are open to the sin of abortion particularly thanks to the work of [ 27 : 42 ] Brethos please do come to that conference at the end of the month if you've never heard of that before but every day people are giving their children to the fire of Moloch they don't burn them but they take pills which destroy them in their wombs the place where they're meant to be safest of all they take their children to the altar of Moloch and give them up in sacrifice for favour but call it time to study to get your degree to grow up to have a better life to get on the career track and it's only right that we as the Christian church stand against this horrible sin it won't win us friends in this world but that is not our aim in fact being distinct from the world will often mean that the world will hate us for us will tell us that we are unloving for this that we are on the wrong side of history but the Lord will honour those who honour him so let us continue to honour him in this verse 22 homosexuality and this is probably the most debated verse in the whole book of Leviticus which is tragically ironic because its message is clear and impossible to misunderstand in any way unless you are doing so willfully we'll spend a little bit more time on this and I'll say three brief things about this verse firstly

Leviticus appeals to creation you shall not lie with a male as with a woman it's rooted in the design that God has for his human creatures and the rest of the Bible affirms this view men are not sexually compatible with men just as women are not sexually compatible with women they are designed for each other to correspond and complement one another in Romans 1 Paul describes the homosexual act as contrary to nature the implication is to choose life means not to rebel against your own design secondly the lack of specifics within the homosexual prohibition shows that across the board it is sinful you can see through all the laws on heterosexual relationships and there are many that there is evidently a right and God honoring way to have sex within that framework within these boundaries there is a right place to enjoy the great gift of sex however the total lack of further explanation for homosexual activity shows that the Bible considers it sin whatever form it takes even if it is apparently loving or our culture celebrates it or even if it's blessed by the established church the possibility of any kind of homosexual activity being blessed well it's not even entertained thirdly

Leviticus treats ritual laws differently from moral laws which are eternal always applying to people it's sometimes said that if a Christian is against same-sex activity but still eats prawns then they're just homophobic and inconsistent that we are picking and choosing laws that suit our own personal brand of bigotry but that is a very childish way to handle God's word and instead we need to be sensitive to the way the Bible treats itself and recognize the way that different laws apply today if you look at ritual laws like food laws then the remedy for them is that you wash and you wait there's no punishment there's a remedy wash and wait washing at the end of the day or the end of the week you are clean and this was specific to worship at the tabernacle this food cut you off from approaching the tabernacle that's why when Jesus came and fulfilled all of that tabernacle and temple ideology he declared all foods clean he fulfilled all the ritual laws so they don't apply anymore in the same way but when it comes to eternal moral laws such as these a very different set of punishments are issued chapter 20 outlines that clearly you can read it later yourself you're either cut off from the community or put to death the rest of the bible upholds these laws and Jesus does not repeal them there is no and Jesus declared all same-sex activity clean moment which you would need for something this clearly laid out in scripture and he had opportunity to say it it's very convenient that many churches today think that this verse which is so culturally provocative is the one which they think doesn't apply anymore not the verses on bestiality or incest but the one which wins them plodits from the pagan world even though it makes zero biblical sense to apply it that way and this is exactly what the lord warned Israel of don't be like the Egyptians don't be like

the Canaanites don't be like the Glaswegians just because everyone else is doing it doesn't mean you should join in you are called to belong to him above any other and for the sake of our brothers and sisters who do struggle in this area we need to stand firm on this truth for their sakes to affirm them in their faithfulness to the lord as they choose life in his name the loving thing for us to do is affirm the faithfulness of our brothers and sisters who struggle in this area yet are counting the cost and carrying their cross just as the lord jesus called them to lastly in verse 23 bestiality and this seems too grim to think about but it displays the utterly dehumanizing element of sexual perversion to engage in any such behavior it reduces humans who bear the image of god themselves to mere animals and it fundamentally blurs the distinction god made between humans and animals well this section has not been an easy listen has it it confronts the sin of man and of our culture directly and makes us wake up to the mess of the world we inhabit our world 21st century glasgow is a place where sexual sin reigns and it seems to be taking this chapter as inspiration for what to do next rather than how to live well the lord is clear that sex is exclusively for marriage between one man and one woman as he sets the boundaries for sex he's ensuring that his people flourish and are protected from the harm that they would cause themselves sex is powerful we know that our world knows that that's why our world is so obsessed with sex and we need strong boundaries if we are to stop it from overflowing and causing misery to others thirdly we'll see in verses 24 to 30 the purity of god's people the purity of god's people and here we see that the people of god are to stand against the sins of this world in the public square yes but particularly within the church of christ his pride the whole passage has a particular focus on the community of believers but also has all humanity in its scope look at verse 24 with me do not make yourself unclean by any of these things for by all these the nations i am driving out before you have become unclean and the land became unclean so that i punished its iniquity and the land vomited out its inhabitants the canaanites were vomited out of the land for their sexual sin the odd thing here

is that this is covenantal language used to people who never knew god never claimed to know god being vomited out of the land is the final covenant curse that the lord sends as the canaanites found out to their shame and that teaches us that everyone is in relationship with the lord they either submit to and love him or they reject and hate him and so that makes it right that these are sins that the church of christ is to graciously speak out about in our culture today our culture as godless as it claims it is as independent as free as it claims it is it still answers to him it still answers to the lord it is still in relationship with its maker and will be vomited out by him if it does not repent so surely it is the most loving thing for the church of christ to continue to speak out about this today always done graciously always gently never eagerly we need to come from the knowledge of being sinful ourselves and speak out against the sin of this world we personally are not the judges of this world but we are the messengers of the judge sent out to proclaim his offer of peace of forgiveness of life in his son that he so kindly and generously offers so our gospel will always be as the lord jesus preached repent repent and believe repent and believe repent of the sin that is destroying you now and will only lead to death turn back from your sin and come back to the lord jesus who offers you his grace we cannot and must not remove the element of repentance from the gospel we share for a gospel without repentance is no gospel at all it's not good news for anyone that is the church's call and we know how unpopular we will be for this we know that this is the aroma of death to some but that it is the aroma of life to many and we know too that others who profess to know christ will tell people not to repent that they are fine as they are that they are all god's children that he made them this way so surely the loving thing to do is affirm and believe that is the gospel of the false church today after all affirm and believe they may use the language of love in their arguments but true love speaks up when someone is walking their way towards death and destruction true love leads to life life lived in the presence of god both now and forever friends we must be those who embrace the call of the gospel who embrace the law of love that the lord has given to us because we know that through him is the only way to life the call of the gospel must go out and we as the church are given the privilege of preaching this to the world but as well as preaching to the world outside the church we must preach this gospel inside the church too verse 29 for everyone who does any of these abominations the persons who do them shall be cut off from among their people so keep my charge never to practice any of these abominable customs that were

[ 40 : 14 ] practiced before you and never to make yourselves unclean by them i am the lord your god leuiticus is clear that anyone inside the covenant community is to be cut off removed exiled for their sin if they continue in it and refuse to repent you know we all know how tempting it is to follow along with the sin of the world but the lord knows that it is far more tempting to go along with the sin

of the person sitting next to you in the pew that's why these punishments are so serious and severe it is far more tempting to go along with the person who still professes to know and love Jesus who sings the same songs is in the same growth group serves in the same ministries displays all the trappings of religion and yet lives in sin and ignores God's law sexual sin inside the church is far more damaging than sexual sin outside the church that's why we must be serious about sin in the life of our church that's why if we know of inappropriate sexual relationships they cannot go unchallenged in the hope that the guilty party repents they are not to be ignored not to let fester even if that person is crucial in their ministry or a respected member of the church family the nettle must be grasped and that person must repent or leave otherwise that sin will spread and the church will be vomited out of the land what a sobering warning that is for every one of us here but this is not a message for us to use as a stick to be other sinners with outside or inside the church instead the repeated target of the

Lord's message in these chapters is first word of verse three you verse four you verse five you verse six none of you you Tron church are the target of this passage friends we are the primary target of this passage the Lord wants all people to be holy but most of all he wants you to humbly submit to him in faith do not think for a second that we are incapable of breaking these laws it would be a terrible thing if anyone in this church came away from this message feeling smug and satisfied in themselves I'm not like that I don't struggle with that can you believe what he does what she does what they're tempted towards can you believe what this generation does the great cry of faith in this passage is not thank the

Lord I am not like this but God be merciful to me a sinner because each of us in this church and everyone in the church of Christ the church he has chosen to be his perfect pure and spotless bride is a dirty sinner the Lord sees right through the picture we present on a Sunday he sees right into the desires of our heart and he knows the destruction that we would cause without his grace holding back the flood of sin we would allow to go forth and cause ruin he knows and yet he calls us to his gospel of transforming grace the Lord has not called a holy people to himself he has called a sinful broken messed up people and made them holy in his son the

Lord has called a people to himself who need chapters like this preached to them regularly if you're sitting here this morning knowing that you fall short in these areas then call upon the Lord for his mercy and remember that every one of us shares that same backstory of a sinner saved by grace coming to the Lord in our sin and shame that's what we bring to the table for every Christian that has ever existed is only a sinner saved by the grace and love of the great God who loves us remember what Paul said to the Corinthians who are guilty of sexual immorality and homosexual activity and such were some of you but you were washed you were sanctified you were justified in the name of the Lord

Jesus Christ and by the spirit of our God friends this message is all drenched in the great grace of the gospel a gospel for sinners like you and like me none of us can sit here and feel satisfied in ourselves pointing the finger at them over there for how they are acting while being dangerously unaware of the sin in our own hearts we are all sinners whose place here in the Lord's family is granted not on our faithfulness but on the merit of another and so none of us are barred from approaching the Lord for grace so confess your sin and repent towards the Lord know the life that comes from walking in his ways for the Lord has not saved us to be like the nations around us he has not saved us to live in sin to blend in with the world around us because everyone else is doing it but he has saved us to be his wonderfully exclusively only ever his and we are to take bearing the name of the

[ 46 : 52 ] Lord seriously so as we close friends we need to go forward knowing that these rules are not to be ashamed of but these boundaries that the Lord gives are for our blessing and for everyone's blessing for life in his name if we want to have life abundantly then it is found in honouring and belonging to the Lord Jesus Christ it's not found in unchecked unlimited freedom which causes misery but within the boundaries of blessing that our maker and saviour has granted us which protect all people because when the river bursts its banks misery and destruction follow and since we know that we need to be bold in both preaching that gospel and in living that gospel ourselves for the Christian is to live the same gospel which they were saved by repent and believe let's not hide away these chapters of the

Bible let's not be ashamed of these laws but know that these which the world hates so much are the aroma of life so let us remember that the Lord's way following his rules and blessings leads to life

both now and forever so today choose life in him let's pray gather amen  
Thank you.