

Good morning, family.

How are you today?

Great.

Yeah, it's a wonderful day, and it's a better day because we're in the house of the Lord and with each other.

We're going to read this morning from Proverbs 6, 20 through 7, 27.

Do you mind standing again for one more time for a little bit?

Thank you.

My son, keep your father's commandment and forsake not your mother's teaching.

Bind them on your heart always.

Tie them around your neck.

When you walk, they will lead you.

When you lie down, they will watch over you.

And when you awake, they will talk with you.

For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching a light.

And the reproofs of discipline are the way of life.

to preserve you from the evil woman, from the smooth tongue of the adulteress.

Do not desire her beauty in your heart, and do not let her capture you with her eyelashes, for the price of a prostitute is only a loaf of bread.

But a married woman hunts down a precious life.

Can a man carry fire next to his chest and his clothes not be burned?

Or can one walk on hot coals and his feet not be scorched?

So is he who goes into his neighbor's wife.

None who touches her will go unpunished.

People do not despise a thief if he steals to satisfy his appetite when he is hungry, but if he is caught, he will pay sevenfold.

He will give all the goods of his house.

He who commits adultery lacks sin.

He who does it destroys himself.

He will get wounds and dishonor, and his grace will not be wiped away.

For jealousy makes a man furious, and he will not spare when he takes revenge.

He will accept no compensation.

He will refuse though you multiply gifts.

My son, keep my words and treasure up my commandments with you.

Keep my commandments and live.

Keep my teaching as the apple of your eye.

Bind them on your fingers.

Write them on the tablet of your heart.

Say to wisdom, you are my sister.

And call insight your intimate friend to keep you from the forbidden woman, from the adulteress with her smooth words.

For at the window of my house I have looked out through my lattice and I have seen among the simple, I have perceived among the youths a man lacking sense.

Passing along the street near her corner, taking the road to her house in the twilight and the evening at the time of night and darkness.

And behold, the woman meets him, dressed as a prostitute, wily of heart.

She is loud and wayward.

Her feet do not stay at home.

Now in the street, now in the market, in every corner she lies in wait.

She seizes him and kisses him, and with bold face she says to him, I had to offer sacrifices, and today I have paid my vows.

So now I have come out to meet you, to seek you eagerly, and I have found you.

I've spread my couch with coverings,

colored linens from Egyptian linen.

I perfume my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.

Come, let us take our fill of love till morning.

Let us delight ourselves with love, for my husband is not at home.

He has gone on a long journey.

He took a bag of money with him.

At full moon, he will come home.

With much seductive speech, she persuades him.

With her smooth talk, she compels him.

All at once, he follows her as an ox goes to the slaughter or as a stag is caught fast till an arrow pierces its liver.

As a bird rushes into a snare, he does not know that it will cost him his life.

And now, O sons, listen to me and be attentive to the words of my mouth.

Let not your heart turn aside to her ways.

Do not stray into her paths.

For many a victim has she laid low.

For all her slain are a mighty throng.

Her house is the way to Sheol, going down to the chambers of death.

God bless the reading of his word.

Thank you, Penny.

Thank you.

This passage is a little different than the passage we looked at two weeks ago.

The passage two weeks ago ended with a focus on the fact that sexual sin, in particular adultery, is committed in the eyes of the Lord and that there are eternal consequences for that sin.

Solomon takes a slightly different approach here in our passage

And he looks more specifically at some of the practical consequences, but then also he looks at God's help.

I think he provides a lot of help from God and practical wisdom for us as we fight sexual temptation.

So we're going to look at it a little bit more that way this morning.

But let's pray one more time and ask for the Lord's help as we open his word together.

Heavenly Father,

You are the creator.

You will not only have created all things, but you will uphold all things with the word of your power.

And so, Lord, we come to big subjects like who we are, what we were made for, how we ought to use our bodies, things like that, looking to you for direction and

looking to you for insight into how you made us and what you want for us.

Lord, we pray that you would help us again to see the beauty of your design, but more importantly, the beauty of who you are and how you not only make us, but also redeem us as well.

We pray all this in Jesus' name, amen.

Sex matters to God.

We're told that in the scripture, but also I think we just know this deep down.

that sex matters because sex matters to us.

One of the first things that you notice about people as you're walking down the street is whether or not they're male or female.

And if you can't quite tell, you usually do a double take and try to figure it out, right?

You just gotta know.

Also, I don't think that these ridiculous gender reveal stunts have declined any since they kind of first came onto the scene a few years ago.

Who was it?

Was it Bryce Harper or one of the other Phillies batters that brought out a blue bat for one of his at-bats to reveal

one of his friend's babies.

It's still happening.

People are still lighting their houses on fire with blue fireworks and stuff like that.

Sex matters to us, and it matters to God.

He made us male and female in his image.

Together, in our sexual differences, we image God.

So men don't image God more or less than women do.

It's male and female.

He created them.

He made both of us together to image him.

Also, Paul tells us that marriage was established by God to picture Christ's relationship with the church, with his church, with his people.

So that means that marital love, of which sex is a part, was made to demonstrate how much God loves you.

Christ's love for you is not a cold, platonic love.

It's a passionate and a romantic love.

So sex...

Our sexuality as a part of that picture matters to God.

This is important to God.

One of the things that we see about the book of Proverbs and that we can't help but see and it doesn't escape us

is that God is intimately involved in the day-to-day, right?

He's intimately involved in the little parts of our life, all aspects of our life, and that is because he loves us so passionately and intimately.

So I'm going to talk broadly about sexual sin today as we move through this passage.

Solomon is zeroing in on the sin of adultery, which in that day would have covered sleeping with a man's wife or fiancée, or vice versa, a wife's husband or fiancée.

Or if you're married, sleeping with anyone that is not your spouse.

But we spent significant time two weeks ago addressing adultery specifically today.

And the principles that Solomon's providing here in this chapter and a half do apply to sexual sin broadly.

So we're just going to step back a little bit and look at those broad principles as they apply to all sexual sin.

And as we do that, we're going to see that Solomon helps us to see who sexual sin harms and how sexual sin seduces.

All right, so we're going to kind of break this up into two big chunks, who sexual sin harms and how it seduces.

So first,

Look at who sexual sin harms.

The first person that it harms should be pretty obvious based on the passage.

It harms you.

One of the main themes in the passage is that the sexual sin of adultery will always bring you harm and destruction.

Look at chapter 6, verse 27 to 29.

Can a man carry fire next to his chest and his clothes not be burned?

The obvious answer is no, right?

If he's going to carry fire underneath his cloak, he's going to get burned.

Or can one walk on hot coals and his feet not be scorched?

So is he who goes into his neighbor's wife.

None who touches her will go unpunished.

None who touches her will go

Unpunished.

32 to 33.

Skipping down a little bit.

He who commits adultery lacks sense.

He who does it destroys himself.

He will get wounds and dishonor and his disgrace will not be wiped away.

And then 622 to 23.

I think I meant 722 to 23 at the end.

All at once he follows her as an ox goes to the slaughter or as a stag is caught fast till an arrow pierces its liver.

As a bird rushes into a snare, he does not know that it will cost him his life.

Sex outside of marriage will always have destructive consequences.

We've seen that this week and two weeks ago as well.

But that's not just true of adultery.

That's also true of all sexual sin.

Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 6, 18-20,

Flee from sexual immorality.

Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God?

You are not your own, for you were bought with a price.

So glorify God in your body.

The word for sexual immorality here is pornea, which pretty much covers it all, right?

All sexual activity that is outside of God's design for sex between a husband and his wife is covered under the blanket of that word.

And when Paul says here that sexual sin is against your own body, he means that your body is being used for purposes other than the purpose for which God created it.

So your body is being used for other purposes other than for which the purpose God created it.

So sex was made as a vehicle for a very intimate giving and receiving within a covenantally committed relationship.

When you use your body for acts that are neither giving nor receiving or acts that are a guarded giving and receiving because you have not committed to one another in marriage, you're training yourself to view sex as a means of personal gratification.

God did not create sex to be a means of personal gratification.

He created it to be a means of intimate gratification.

mutual gratification, a language of a loving, giving, and receiving, again, within the covenantal relationship of marriage.

So your sexual sin harms you because it reinforces within you a selfish, distorted view of sex that will have consequences

in your marriage, either current or future.

And it will even affect how you view God's love for you.

Because remember, marriage, of which sexual intimacy is a part, is a picture of how Christ loves his church and relates to his church.

So it harms you, but it also harms your partner.

The same thing that we just described as being true of you is also happening to your partner in the midst of sexual sin.

But chapter 7, verses 4 to 5, alludes to something more sinister happening.

Look at verses 4 to 5 of chapter 7.

Say to wisdom, you are my sister, and call insight your intimate friend, to keep you from the forbidden woman, from the adulteress, with her smooth words.

So if we're to view wisdom as our sister, an intimate friend, it's clear then that the adulteress, the woman that is lusted over,

is not viewed that way or is not that in our eyes, then what is she or who is she?

If we're not viewing her as our sister, an intimate friend, then who is she?

Well, I think Solomon makes it really clear later, way later in the book of Proverbs, in Proverbs 30, how we're viewing her.

He says, "Three things are too wonderful for me.

"Four I do not understand."

Remember last week, if we got a list, the last one is the one that matters, is the one that the other ones are describing.

Three things are too wonderful for me.

Four I do not understand.

The way of an eagle in the sky, the way of a serpent on a rock, the way of a ship on the high seas, and the way of a man with a virgin.

The very next verse says, this is the way of an adulteress.

She eats and wipes her mouth and says, I have done no wrong.

The author here is saying that there's more to sex than the physical act.

And there is something mysterious, even spiritual, happening during sex.

So sexual sin, on the other hand, reduces sin to appetite.

She eats and wipes her mouth.

I've done nothing wrong.

It's just physical.

We're just talking about physical appetite here, nothing else.

What happens, though, when we view sex merely as appetite is

is that the person with whom we're having sex becomes, in our mind, the thing that must be consumed to appease our appetite.

I'll say that one more time.

When we view sex just as physical appetite, what happens in our mind and in our thinking is the person with whom we're having sex becomes an object that is consumed to appease our appetite.



Sexual sin, sex done any other way than that God designed it, will lead to an objectification of your partner, which hurts them, and it also does all kinds of horrific things to your soul as you participate in that.

This is perhaps most true when it comes to pornography.

There's no relationship at all when it comes to pornography.

It's just complete and total

objectification.

Not to mention the real harm, not like it's more important than that harm, but just meaning that it's there and documentable.

The real harm that making a pornography causes.

Yes, pornography is made amongst willing participants, but a lot of times that's not the case.

So sexual sin is harmful to you, and if applicable to your partner,

because it distorts your view of sex into a means of personal gratification, which leads you to objectify those involved.

Now, Solomon mentions one other person that this harms.

And obviously, we haven't mentioned, again, because we talked about this,

It was the emphasis of the message two weeks ago that this is a sin against God, right, and his design primarily.

But Solomon, again, is focusing in on kind of what's going on, what's happening practically kind of on the interrelational level here in this chapter.

So it harms one other person, and it's those who love your partner in verses 6, chapter 6, 30 to 35.

It says, people do not despise a thief if he steals to satisfy his appetite when he is hungry.

But if he is caught, he will pay sevenfold.

He will give all the goods of his house.

He who commits adultery lacks sense.

He who does it destroys himself.

He will get wounds and dishonor, and his disgrace will not be wiped away.

For jealousy makes a man furious, and he will not spare when he takes revenge.

He will accept no compensation.

He will refuse, though you multiply gifts."

Some sins are somewhat justifiable, like stealing bread when you're starving.

People will look at that, and they will generally have compassion on you.

Sexual sin, though, is not one of those sins.

You don't need to have sex like you need food and water.

And the intimate nature of sexual sin produces an anger and a jealousy in those who love and care about the person you're using and objectifying you.

unlike other sins committed against him.

So whether it's a husband's jealousy for his wife or a father's protective anger over his daughter, you'll feel it, and there's no talking or buying your way out of it.

This is one of those things that makes sexual sin so destructive, the rippling effects.

The person you're consuming, either in the flesh or on a screen, is someone's wife, someone's mother or daughter,

or husband, or son.

Pornography is not just a male problem.

The reach of sexual sin is far.

It distorts our view of sex.

It teaches us to commodify our partners, and it hurts those who love us, right?

Love the people involved.

And I think it's at this point of the sermon that all of us either are or should be squirming a bit because all of us have struggled with and still fight sexual sin and temptations.

And that's why Solomon, I think, helps to remind us, gives us this visual illustration to help remind us that God is our ally against sexual sin.

He's so much more than that, right?

He's more than just our ally.

He's our savior.

He's our Lord.

He's our judge.

There's a lot of things that God is in relationship to us.

But he's also our ally against our sin.

Will or William are not a commentator on the book of Proverbs puts it this way.

The difference between, and this is crucial, otherwise you'll hear everything else I've said today as crushing law and just hypocritical, judgmental nonsense.

This is the spirit in which we're coming to this passage.

The difference between

An unconverted man and a converted man is not that one has sins and the other has none.

That's not what we're saying here this morning.

That's not what I'm saying.

I'm not saying that I don't have sexual temptation and sin and struggle, right?

We all do.

But that, here's the difference.

The one takes part with his cherished sins against a dreaded God.

Or one sides with his cherished sins against a dreaded God.

And the other takes part or sides with a reconciled God

against his hated sin.

Whose side are you on, right, in this battle?

Are you on, are you taking the side of your sin and lust, desire, or are you on God's side against your sin?

So God speaks through Solomon here to shed some light on how sexual sin and temptation works.

He gives us a little bit of insight, right, into how sexual sin and temptation gets at us

and how it seduces us into, you know, just like the snare, just like the trap, into something that's really destructive.

First, we see that it finds you, finds us, in a position to be elicited.

Look at chapter 7, verses 6 to 9.

For at the window of my house I have looked out through my lattice, and I have seen among the simple, I have perceived among the youths, a young man lacking sense.

This is how I want to start some talks with some of my kids sometimes.

You know, like when you're in a disciplined situation, you just sit down and say, son, I've seen through my window.

It's this simple, a youth lacking sense out there.

Anyways, passing along the street near her corner, taking the road to her house, in the twilight, in the evening, in the time of night and darkness.

So Solomon, again, he's painting a picture for us.

He's a great teacher, right?

He's a great instructor, and he's painting this picture for us, in particular of a young man venturing to where he knows he shouldn't be when he shouldn't be there, right?

At a time that he shouldn't be there.

This is how sin and sexual temptation, or just temptation in general, works.

we hear about a certain part of town, right?

Or we hear about certain websites and we go just to take a look, right?

I gotta know about it, right?

I've heard about it and curious, I gotta know about it.

So we go and take a look and notice that the young man is alone, right?

He's there in this part of town alone.

So the first decision, right?

The first battle that we encounter that we have to fight is to keep ourselves out of a position

where we might be offered something we shouldn't be finding or seeing anyways.

The first battle we fight is this inching closer to a place where we can be reached by temptation and sin.

So sexual sin finds us in a position to be tempted or elicited.

And then it provides a reasonable justification.

It provides a reasonable justification.

Look at verses 10 to 15.

And behold, the woman meets him, dressed as a prostitute, wily of heart.

She is loud and wayward.

Her feet do not stay at home.

Now in the street, now in the market, and at every corner she lies in wait.

She seizes him and kisses him, and with bold face she says to him, I had to offer sacrifices, and today I have paid my vows.

And now I have come out to meet you, to seek you eagerly, and I have found you.

There's a lot we could say about these verses, but we need to at least note that at that culture and time, sacrifices and vows would be made.

So they'd bring an animal, and some of the fat and entrails, some of the stuff you don't really want to eat, would be burned as an offering to the gods.

And then you would eat some of it with the priest.

And then you would take the rest home for a special meal.

Eating meat was a big deal back then.

So you'd take this meat home.

I'd have a special meal with friends and family.

And in pagan fertility practice, that whole meal and observation would involve sexual activity with whoever was eating the meal with you.

So the adulteress is basically telling the young man that she needs a man to come home with her to participate in the ceremony.

And she's like, woe is me.

I don't have a man here to finish my religious observances.

I'm in need.

And there's all kinds of ways, right?

We can begin to justify intimate conversations, intimate activity that shouldn't be happening.

They needed a ride home, or they just seemed really lonely, or I've worked hard.

It's been a hard week.

I deserve a little distraction.

I remember an elder at our church, Grace,

who worked at a GM plant, and each group was kind of on a machine or at a station, and so he worked with four or five people pretty closely, spent a lot of time with that group.

And he observed a good friend going down a road with a lady there that he never should have been down.

And he said, you know, it just starts.

It starts with somebody sharing some issues that they're having with their spouse at home, have a little conversation, you know, well, I would never treat you like that.

It turns into

taking breaks out in your car instead of in the break room with everybody else, with this person, and just progresses, right?

Progresses and snowballs.

And it all started with just kind of a simple justification.

Well, you know, they needed some help.

They needed some advice.

I'm just trying to help.

When we know there's other ways to help than getting intimately and emotionally involved, we justify it, right?

Sexual sin provides help.

a reasonable justification.

And lastly, it focuses our attention on the immediate gratification, not the long-term consequences.

Look at verses 16 to 21.

I've spread my couch with coverings, colored linens with Egyptian linen.

I've perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.

Come, let us take our fill of love till morning.

Let us delight ourselves with love, for my husband is not at home.

He has gone on a long journey.

He took a bag of money with him.

At full moon, he will come home

With much seductive speech, she persuades him.

With her smooth talk, she compels him.

All of her sensual preparations are to keep his attention in the here and the now.

And if his mind starts to wander a little bit, she assures him there won't be any consequences, right?

My husband's gone.

There's going to be no consequences from this.

You can have immediate gratification right now, have your needs met right now with no consequences in the future.

But ill-gotten immediate gratification

always has consequences as we read in verses 22 to 24.

All at once he follows her as an ox goes to the slaughter or as a stag is caught fast till an arrow pierces its liver.

As a bird rushes into a snare, he does not know that it will cost him his life.

I don't know where you're at in your fight against sexual sin.

Maybe you're right at the gate or maybe you're down the road

And it feels like you're caught in a trap that you'll never get out of.

I want to remind us, before we talk a few practical steps, of the woman that Jesus met that was dragged before Jesus, who was caught in adultery.

In John 8, 10-11, Jesus responded to the crowd who dragged her out there ready to stone her.

And he said to the crowd,

you know, whoever among you hasn't sinned, cast the first stone.

And eventually they all dropped their stones and walked away.

And it was just Jesus and the woman.

And he said this to her.

He said, he stood up and said to her, woman, where are they?

Has no one condemned you?

She said, no one, Lord.

And Jesus said, neither do I condemn you.

Go and from now on sin no more.

Two things to observe here.

When it comes to sexual sin and the confession of sexual sin within the community here, none of us are holding stones.

None of us are holding stones.

All of us are broken sexually, struggle with sexual temptation.

So when someone confesses to sexual sin, our first response is not to heap on, but to provide help and grace.

And this doesn't mean that sexual sin doesn't have consequences relationally, especially within marriages and things like that.

But there ought to be a space within the community to provide grace and to pave a path to restoration.

Second thing to notice is that Jesus says, neither do I condemn you.

We can't condemn each other.

We all struggle with sin.

Jesus could have.

He was sinless, perfect, God himself in the flesh.

She did nothing, right?

She didn't even ask for forgiveness here.

She's just there and needs forgiveness, right?

All she has there before Jesus is her need of forgiveness and he gives it to her.

He says, neither do I condemn you.

And then from now on, sin no more, right?

Go sin no more.

Sin's serious.

It has serious consequences.

We ought not to play around with it.

But there's forgiveness that is free and complete and glorious that leads to real change and freedom from our sin.

So if our hope is in Jesus, there is no more condemnation, even for the worst sexual sinners.

Jesus has taken that upon himself on the cross.

So we fight sexual sin.

We talk about these practical things

from a position of freedom and hope.



We talk about these practical steps that we can take to fight sexual sin out of a spirit of freedom and hope.

And we do this together.

Like I said, we foster a community of confession.

There's consequences for our sin, but those consequences don't define us.

The grace and mercy that we have in Christ defines us.

So we can have strength to get out of those secret sins or to get those secret sins

out into the open where we can deal with them and fight against them because we know that in Christ, we're no longer condemned and that's our identity, right?

Our identity is rooted and grounded in who we are in Christ.

So it's okay not to be okay, right?

It's okay not to be okay.

And it's okay to confess our sin and ask for help and admit that we're not okay.

But it's not okay to stay there.

Jesus says, go and sin no more.

And one of the reasons we confess that we're not okay is because it's true and right.

But we confess that we're not okay so that we can move on.

And we can experience the victory that Jesus has purchased for us.

So how do we sin no more?

How do we sin no more?

Just really quick, some strategies based on the passage.

So we're told about how sexual sin works.

Let's just practically apply that to our life.

First,

Don't put yourself in a position to be tempted, right?

Don't put yourself in a position to be tempted.

Don't be alone with someone of the opposite sex.

Don't be alone on your smartphone.

You have access to just so much junk.

Not only access, but junk is just bombarding us like through social media, through everything on our smartphone.

You don't have to go looking for it.

It comes to you.

So don't be alone on your smartphone.

Lock it up, give someone else the password for downloading apps or accessing the filters on your web browser.

Have somebody else involved in this, right?

You should not be alone without anybody looking over your shoulder or having eyes on your activity on your smartphone.

Nobody is strong enough to handle that.

I'm sorry.

Nobody is strong enough morally.

Nobody has a strong enough will to be alone on their phone and not give in to temptation.

Download some accountability software if you're looking for it.

some help finding some decent stuff.

We've got a few options.

I can help point you in the right direction.

If you need an accountability partner, I'd be happy to be yours.

We've got some other folks that I believe would be happy to walk with you through that as well.

Don't put yourself, as much as you can, don't put yourself in a position to be tempted.

We live in a world where that's impossible, but insofar as it depends on you, don't put yourself in a position to be tempted.

Also, get some godly friends who are with you often and

and know you well, who will speak truth and sanity back in your life and listen to them, right?

Give them permission to say, hey, I think that conversation, that relationship is getting a little too cozy, right?

I think that the way, the time you've been spending with her, the conversation, how those things, the topics you've been covering, I'm just noticing something a little off there

Tell me about it.

And we can, again, listen to that sermon from two weeks ago.

There's some signs about when you need to put some space between you and someone else.

Also, fight to keep an eternal perspective.

These are practical steps.

Putting accountability software on your phone isn't going to solve the problem.

It makes it a little bit harder, but it's not going to solve the problem.

The greatest power that sexual sin has...

is immediate gratification.

It makes us feel like all of our needs and all of our desires are being met right now.

It's a lie, right?

It's a bald-faced lie, and we must, in that moment, remember who really meets our needs and our desires.

We need to remember his plan and his beautiful design for our life and remember the glorious future that he's preparing for us.

Get your eyes off of what's immediately in front of you and look ahead.

Look ahead to what's eternal and what God has for you.

Ray Ortlund, who we've been quoting a lot through,

The book of Proverbs puts it this way.

He says, when a wise man sees a beautiful woman who is not his wife, here is how he thinks.

Yes, she is beautiful.

So, nothing to do with me.

Beautiful and irrelevant.

I'm so out of here mentally.

And that wise man keeps going straight on ahead for Christ into a destiny of greatness.

I think it's a great way to put it.

Beautiful and irrelevant.

Christ has purchased freedom for his people.

He purchased our freedom from lust, from sexual sin on the cross, and he has called us to strive together.

You can't do this alone, right?

Strive together to live out that freedom now.

If you're addicted to pornography, listen, there are resources available to help with the physical and spiritual sides of that addiction, both here within the church and also outside of the church as well.

if you feel trapped in an immoral relationship and you're not sure how to get out or what to do, we and other trained counselors in the area can walk with you through that.

God has given us fellow brothers and sisters, right?

He's given us each other who each of us need the grace and forgiveness of God to help expose our sin and walk in newness of life together.

Don't keep it in the dark.

Ally yourself again with Christ against your sin.

Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, I'm just pleading with you this morning that each of us would not walk away today as one who sees themselves in the mirror clearly and does nothing about it.

Lord, I pray that you give us the grace that you would strengthen us in our inner being and strengthen us in confidence in who we are in Christ to admit and confess our sin.

Lord, would you strengthen our faith in your grace that allows us to confess to these things.

and have it not crush us.

Lord, would you give us the courage to face the consequences of our decision?

Would you give us hope in the gospel again that there is a path forward, there is a way out, or there is a way to be more like you?

That none of us are too far gone, too far out of the reach of your loving arm.

And Lord, would you remind us again of our strong and perfect plea before your throne.

When we feel our guilt and we feel it heavy, Lord, would you remind us that the strong arms of Jesus have already lifted it and are holding it now.

Pray all this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Let's stand and sing together.