

Romans 14 :4 – Black or White 3 – 30 June 2013

Well, in GLCC, in Gospel Light Christian Church, we're going through a little series here called 'Black or White' and this is our third sermon in this series and maybe you have seen this video already. But if you're new here with us, we hope you enjoy this little video, as we introduce the third sermon in 'Black or White'.

(Video shown)

'Black or White', that's our series here. And we are really looking at the grey issues of life. You know in life there are many grey issues. Issues that God did not specifically say "No" to, or say "Yes" to, such as eating 'Chai Tao Kway' (Hokkien dialect words meaning carrot cake). God didn't say eating black 'Chai Tao Kway' will make you more spiritual or eating white 'Chai Tao Kway' will make you less spiritual. Because there is no moral value or virtue in 'Chai Tao Kway' itself. It doesn't make you more spiritual or less spiritual. It's a grey area, not specifically forbidden nor commanded in the Scriptures. And we're looking at grey areas of life. It's not just about 'Chai Tao Kway', it really is impacting many areas of your life.

For example, when we started this series a month ago, we looked at the issue of tattoos and it maybe a social stigma in our world today, but you may be surprised that not a lot is spoken about tattoos, specifically in the Bible. And even when it was spoken of, it was spoken of in the context of pagan worship and not about tattoo per se. We also looked at the issue of dressing. There's so many styles, so many colours, all kinds of fashion statements that can be made. But you will be surprised that the Bible doesn't really have a lot of specific commands, or inhibitions, prohibitions with regards to dressing. This is an area where many Christians can exercise freedom. We also looked at the issue of alcohol and many of you are shocked, are surprised that alcohol... now let me say this once again, alcoholism - being drunk, is clearly forbidden in the Scriptures. Nowhere should any Christian be drunk, or be drinking to be drunk. But the issue of just the intake of alcohol itself, is a kind of a black or... not a black or white issue, is a grey area. Now, I'm not saying that we can then drink all we want, but this is an area where Christian liberty can operate. 0:03:14.7

Let me today, bring you to even more examples, alright? Of grey areas that we need to wrestle with or deal with in our lives. Maybe smoking is one. Natural extension from drinking – smoking. Does the Bible say thou shall not smoke? No, but does it mean that we all can smoke? Well, you've got to think again. What about... I don't neglect young people, alright? We have many young people here and those who are

smiling, you are young, alright? You didn't smile, you're not young. Simple distinction. What is this 'World of War craft'? Well, there are lots of young people today, playing computer games, such as WOW - World of War craft (picture shown). Does the Bible say, "Thou shall not play WOW?" Or does the Bible say, "You can play WOW?" Doesn't say that. So how can we make decisions in such areas of life? Now...you don't play WOW? This is another one. Maybe you played 'Dota' (picture shown), I think this is even more popular than er...World of Warcraft now, right? No? I'm wrong? I...I...I...eh...I got this from the youth leader, my goodness (laughter in the congregation). It says, 'Dota - Defence of the Ancients - Part 2'. This is an enhanced version. What about the 'League of Legends'. You know, young people are very confusing. 'LOL', I mean, it can be 'laughing out loud' or 'League of Legends' I don't know what Sean(?) refers to which. But can we play 'League of Legends'? I mean, you and I young people, can we...can we play this? How do I make decisions? How...how can I decide?

What about movies? Movies...can we watch movies today? Can we watch a show like 'Iron Man - Part 3' (picture shown) or can we watch movies like this (picture shown): 'Twilight' - vampires. Bella and Edward, right? Bella, Edward. Can...can we read this Stephanie Meyer's book and watch this movie? What about music (picture shown)? Is it right? Is it alright for Christians to... to listen to 'Oppa Gangnam Style'? Er...watch the MTV? What about the SNSD? The Girls Generation hype. Is it okay to be a fan? To follow the Girls Generation girls? I mean...can I do that? Maybe you're not so Asian oriented, you want American... what about American top 40 songs (picture shown)? Can I follow these artistes? I've no idea who this person is or who they are: Macklemore and Ryan Lewis - never heard before but they are top right now. Justin Timberlake - I've heard before. Pink - I've heard before and Demi Lovato - I've heard before. But...can I as a Christian, plug in to these music? Can I listen to them? Would it be wrong for me to have their names on my iPod, iPhone, whatever? Playlist, can I? You know, parents, you should go and search your children's iPhone, iPod and see... see if you recognize any name? It's no more ??? (Deng Li Jun) (Theresa Teng - a famous Taiwanese Chinese pop singer in the 70's) and ??????? (yue liang dai biao wo de xin) (Mandarin song title meaning The Moon Represents My Heart), alright? (Laughter in the congregation) It has changed, it has moved. You have all kinds of languages: Japanese, Korean... how do you and I decide as Christians? 0:06:50.1

Maybe beyond music or rather along music, let's go a bit more, to going to KTV. Can I go to KTV? Can Christians go karaoke? Is karaoke really 'Kara - ?? (yong yuan) okay? (Mandarin words meaning forever) Does it mean it's right? Wrong? Should I,

should I not? Karaoke, how do I decide? What about this? Mahjong. Mahjong - ??? (you gan yong) – dry swimming. Can Christians play mahjong? Can Christians play cards? ‘Choh Dai Di’ (Hokkien dialect words for a card game), ‘Zee Chap Yee Kee’ (Hokkien dialect words for another card game), right? Poker, Bridge, can you...can we? What about going to casino? Or what about jobs? You want to apply for a job and this job happens to be in a wine brewery. Can you take up that job? Or maybe some of you are lawyers, training to be lawyers and you're already experiencing some ethical, moral contradictions. How do you deal with it? Or maybe you're a doctor and you want to be a gynaecologist, but you have to perform abortions. How do you deal with it? And it can impact many areas of work and occupations today. So my question to you: in so many grey areas, how can you and I decide? How do we make choices? How do I decide if it is black ‘Chai Tao Kway’ or white ‘Chai Tao Kway’? How can I decide if I should go KTV or play mahjong? How can I decide if I should watch ‘Iron Man’ or listen to ‘Oppa Gangnam Style’? How do I make choices in grey areas of life? 0:08:33.9

I suggest to you if we want to make good choices, we got to understand that we have to choose; we have to think; we have to decide. You see, when it comes to grey areas, there are some people who have this mindset - as long as the Bible doesn't forbid it then I can get to do it. In other words, they believe silence means consent, but I suggest to you, this is a very dangerous way to operate. This is a very shaky ground for you to stand on. Imagine your child comes to you and says, “Dad, I realize this is not written in the Bible. I want to try heroin.” “Let me see, son, I know this is not written in the Bible. But this is wrong!” Any parent today that has anything within his skull, would understand silence is not consent for every area of life. There are other principles involved, even if it is not explicitly stated. So silent means consent is not something that we should adopt.

But then there are other people who took... take to another kind of philosophy. It is this: you know, I don't like grey areas. It's really hard for me to manage. I don't want to think so hard, so the way to go around grey areas is to ask my pastor, is to ask the church. Pastor, what do you think? And you take your pastor's applications of principles and you lock it in to be a set of rules and regulations. A list of do's and don'ts for yourself. I suggest that is very dangerous because you deny yourself the opportunity to apply wisdom and because you do not work through the why's and the how's, eventually you may become a person who is very opinionated because you heard an opinion. And you'll get fixed on that opinion and you become opinionated, legalistic, you're without grace and you are inflexible. So you can't see alternative

points of view because you do not want to be challenged about a weak position you have just superficially adopted. 0:10:43.5

So I say, these are not good approaches to take when you come to grey areas. So don't just say, "I can do it as long as it is not explicitly forbidden." Neither do you just say, "Tell me what to do." Because the Bible tells you a biblical balance, right in the middle. It says in Romans 14, verse 5, "One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike..." So there is a difference in opinion. After I've come to know Jesus, should I still observe those religious feasts? Are they inherently more important days than the other, of the days of the year? Some say "Yes", some say "No", but Paul says this is what is important for you: don't just think silence is consent; don't just take on what other people think; let each one be fully convinced in his own mind. He's saying: work this out, think it through, pray it out! Have careful, prayerful, deliberations over issues that are black... that are neither black or white. The grey areas. He says that again in verse 14, "I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself, but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it (is) unclean." (Romans 14:14, ESV) Again the emphasis on thinking, persuasion, that's the word used and the word 'think'. The word 'think' is 'logizomai' (in Greek), which is to 'logicise', to think it out. So the Bible says, when it comes to grey areas, don't just assume everything is okay, don't just take on somebody else's opinions but think it through. Let everyone be convinced in his own mind. 0:12:35.5

The question now, to me, you may have is: Pastor, then how should I start thinking? Where should I begin? How do I even start? How do I look at the many issues of life? How can I look at 'Dota'? How can I look at 'Oppa Gangnam'? How can I look at KTV? How can I look at alcohol? What lens should I use? What framework, what perspective should I have? Today I want to leave you, my whole goal this morning is to give you a pair...not a pair, a set of lenses, by which you can look through the issues of life. Just...that's all, that's all I want. At the end of the sermon, I hope you'll be able to have this perspective, biblical perspective and framework by which you can examine every grey area of life. And it's so easy because it is in these 5 principles that you'd be able to see the grey areas and they are clear. This perspective is to make clear to you what seems unclear, and the 5 principles are all encapsulated in each of these letters of the alphabet. All right, so a principle of C-L-E-A-R and you will play along with me to guess what they are, alright? But once you are able to understand these 5 principles, they are the framework, they formed the lens by what you look at every grey area. So, you ready to start? Let's try.

First principle is the principle that starts with 'C' and if you look at Romans 14, you would get the answer. Can anyone tell me, what's the first 'C'? What? (Response from someone in congregation) Wah, you spoil the game man! Herherher (laughing), you are absolutely right! I thought someone will say 'cash' or no...no... no. The first 'C' is that of 'Conscience'. Absolutely right!

When you come to the grey areas of life, how should I decide? Well, one principle Scripture lays out is that of conscience. What is conscience? Conscience is the moral eye of the soul. It's the voice of your inner being that tells you if it is right or wrong. Have you done something, or have you try or imagine trying to do something and somehow there is a tug and a pull in your heart to restrain you from that? There's a tug and a pull when you want to shout at your mother; when you want to steal something; when you want to lie; when you want to cheat; when you commit adultery in your thoughts. There's something in you that...that cries out to you. It's like an alarm! You know what that is? That's your conscience speaking to you. It's the moral eye of the soul. It's a voice that tells you if it is right or wrong and it is a gift of God. It's a gift from God to keep us from sin. Now, of course, it's not perfect. Since the fall, since Adam and Eve sinned against the Lord, our conscience does not speak out to us as accurately as it should be. It's been hurt by sin. It's not as perfect as it should be. Nevertheless, when the conscience cries out to us, we need to listen to it. So one of the principles by which you decide, can I go to KTV or drink alcohol is: What does my conscience say to me? You see, Martin Luther King said:

“Cowardice asks this question: Is it safe?
Consensus will ask: Is it popular?
But conscience asks this question: Is this right?”

So when your conscience speaks to you, listen to it. Paul says in Romans 14, “Whoever has doubts (he) is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.” (Romans 14:23, ESV) Very simple principle. If in doubt, don't do it! After you have worked through the 5 principles C-L-E-A-R, CLEAR, after you have CLEAR, you have work it through and your conscience says “No”, then don't do it. If it's doubtful, it's dirty for you, don't do it. 0:17:00.7

By the way, different people have their conscience speak to them differently. The way my conscience speaks to me will be different from the way your conscience speaks to you. So what may be right for my conscience may not be right for you and vice versa. But each one of us is responsible to heeding the voice of conscience within us. So

don't do it, because when you go against your conscience, what you do is you hurt it, you wound it, you scar it. And the next time, it is not as sensitive as it should be. The Bible says in er... 1 Timothy: "...the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared..." (1 Timothy 4:1-2, ESV) So these are people who have repeatedly seared their conscience. Therefore, they are now teaching falsehood. So they have... so numbed and wounded, their conscience is not calling out to them anymore. You know what's searing? Searing is to apply a hot iron, maybe to your flesh and it burns. And after it burns, you give it time, it becomes thicken, scared. The next time you hit it, it's not as sensitive anymore. Don't sear your conscience. Can I do this? Can I do that? Well, what does your conscience say? Don't hurt it. It's a gift of God to keep us from sin and if you desire intimacy with God, you value your conscience. So Paul says this is my life, "... I always take pains to have a clear conscience toward both God and man." (Acts 24:16, ESV) I think many people don't live according to conscience. That's why they are where they are today. But Paul says I want to have a clear conscience. So this first principle is vital. And by this one principle alone, you'll realise, taking that first position of saying, "As long as it is not forbidden, I can do it," is destructive to your conscience. Taking the other position, "Just tell me what to do," is also destructive to your conscience. The only way through it, Paul says, is to be fully convinced in your mind. First principle of conscience.

Second principle - 'L'. Anybody? The second principle is... it's actually a very simple one. It's all throughout Romans 14 and it is a principle of 'Love'. Why? Look at what it says. "For if your brother is grieved by what you eat, you are no longer walking in love." (Romans 14:15, ESV) So the matter beforehand is about food offered to idols. Actually eating it or not eating it doesn't make you more or less spiritual. That's not the issue. But if you eat it and your brother who watches you get stumbled by it; he's offended by it; he's grieved in his heart, then don't do it. Why don't I do it? It's okay. No, I don't do it because I love him. That's the principle of 'Love'. You are considering your brothers' affections and thinking. It says here, "By what you eat, do not destroy the one for whom Christ died." (Romans 14:15, ESV) It's a very serious statement, don't you think? This soul is saved by the Lord Jesus Christ. He shed his blood to save him and here you are doing this thing to destroy his faith, tear down his beliefs. So it's not loving to do that and Paul is reasoning with them.

When you're forming your opinions about whether you should do this, go there, be with that person, support that event and so on and so forth. You've to think about the principle of conscience, you've to think about the principle of love. He goes on to say, "It is not... it is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble." (Romans 14:21, ESV) Don't set up things that would trip them

over. Jesus took this really seriously in Matthew 18 and verse 6. If we cause our brethren to stumble, hey, he says it's better for you to have a millstone tight around your neck and be thrown into the depth of the sea. It's as serious as that. So don't do that. Instead of stumbling, let us be building up. Verse 19: "So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding." (Romans 14:19, ESV) So will my drinking build people up or will it tear people down? Will my taking up this job build people up or tear people down? Will my presence in this casino, whatever, build people up or tear people down? That is the question that 'Love' seeks to answer. I like this statement by Martin Luther. He says,

"A Christian man is a most free Lord of all, subject to none.

A Christian man is (at the very same time) a most dutiful servant of all, subject to all."

Profound but true. I don't have to live to please any man. I am my Lord's, I seek only to please him. But at the very same time, I want to serve men, because that's what grace does to a heart, that's what grace change... does to a man. He wants to serve others. So when you have been Gospel-transform, you have this liberty vertically. You know all things are lawful vertically but you don't flaunt your liberty, you don't use your freedom and pride yourself over it and say, "Hah! That's your problem if you're stumbled." No, you are considerate because you make yourself a most dutiful servant of all. The Gospel makes us a community people. We live in a very individualistic society by the way. I've often said that, in the good old days, people lived for the country, for the home, for the platoon. But today we live very individualistic lives. The Gospel, however, changes our mindset, that we will not just think about me, myself and I, but we think about us. We think about brothers and sisters. So in all the decisions you make, make sure the 'L' is there. Is it loving? Would it be stumbling or would it be building people up? Oops...(Pastor accidentally flash the next screen) (Laughter in the congregation) aarrgh...okay. You all saw that but you cannot pronounce that. Okay, never mind.

Okay, the third principle is 'Edification'. This is a blooper, alright? Yes, the third principle is, is it edifying? Now, what is edification? Before I came to church, I've been studying English for maybe 18 years. I've never heard of the word edification. So I... I understand if you don't get this word. It's not often used. But the word 'edification' is to build up, alright? Does this build you up? Does it strength you? Can I drink alcohol? Ask yourself, does it build you up? Can I watch Iron Man? Ask yourself, does it build me up? So all the grey areas, you... you have to check this conscience, love and edification. Why? Because the Bible says so. "All things are

lawful,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful,” but not all things build up.’ 1 Corinthians 10:23. Is it beneficial for your soul? You know God wants you to make decisions that are good for your soul. Does it build you up? 0:24:58.7

Okay, the next one I'm not going to click. C-L-E, the next one is 'A'. What is 'A'? That's the fourth one and it's the principle of 'Addiction'. You see, the Bible says, “All things are lawful for me,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful for me,” but I will not be dominated by anything.’ 1 Corinthians 6:12. Umm... and you can understand this principle. Can I drink alcohol? But the Bible doesn't really say you can't. The Bible just says you can't be drunk, you can't drink to be drunk. Can I drink alcohol? The Bible actually says to some, yah... but does it mean I drink all I want? I drink anywhere I want? Well,

Number 1 - Check your conscience.

Number 2 - Check if you will stumble anyone

Number 3 - Check if this edifies you and...

Number 4 - Check if you will get addicted to it.

Same for smoking. Same for mah-jong. Herher (laughing)...er...it's not a right or wrong, it's personal you see, that's why. And computer games, I believe if you're a young man, you will love to play computer games. I love to play computer games. I love to, I think I still do. I think so. Okay, you may say I'm childish, but I think if it's a good game, it's highly attractive right? Wah... tuntuntuntuntuntun... (gun shooting sound) or goal... or whatever, I used to play the soccer game. I...I love to play them. But there came a point in my life, that I realized, okay I don't think it's inherently immoral or sinful to play the games but I realised I'm spending so much time at the computer terminal that I'm starting to neglect a lot of things around me. And so when the game has run its course. I've been a champion of this league, I cheat so many times until I win and win and win and I begin to be tired of it. I determined not to start another game because I know, if I start another game, it will never end again. Now, that is my own personal application. It doesn't mean then that I assume when you start again, you'll be naturally addicted to it. But that's how I applied it. I checked within myself and I said I can't get past addiction for my computer games, so I said “No” to it. Because I do not want to be dominated by anything apart from Jesus Christ. So it's a personal decision but this is a lens by which we looked through. 0:27:46.9

And the last one is 'R'. 'R' stands for... this one I won't ask you to guess because it's not easy at all and I...I...I put it as 'Reverence'. Will this honour the Lord? Will this

glorify God? It says here in 1 Corinthians 10:31 which we... many of us memorise right? You memorise in Scripture memory. "Whether therefore you eat or drink, or whatsoever you do, you do all to the glory of God." Now, we all memorise that but I say this is a super appropriate text for this subject because 1 Corinthians 10 is exactly about grey areas. It's exactly about whether they should eat the food that is offered to idols. And Paul is saying, now think about this. This is a grey area but whether you eat or whether you don't eat, make sure the underlying principle is: to the glory of God. Not for yourself, not because your stomach's craving or your tongue, your mouth is craving for the 'Seow Te Bak' (Hokkien dialect words meaning roasted pork). No, you're having a higher level of motivation than just food itself. The glory of God.

You say to me, Pastor, this is not very specific. Glory of God, very general. Yah, it is general. But let me say that I think Paul leads us to something a little bit more specific about glory of God. We often stop at verse 31, right? When we come to 1 Corinthians 10, but there's 32 and 33 and 32 says, "Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved." (1 Corinthians 10:31-33, ESV) You say, how can God's glory be manifested? Well, in the way I decide whether to eat this food offered to idols or not, because you impact how the world will look at my Christianity, how the world will see Christ. So I'm enlarging my circle of consideration, not just about myself when it comes to stumbling, I think about my brothers and sisters in Christ and when I think about reverence, about the glory of God, I'm thinking about the multitudes, the world. That's what it is. Grey areas. Would I use my freedom for myself or would I use my freedom for the sake of souls being saved. 0:30:13.6

By the way, it's the same theme in 1 Corinthians 9. Paul, in essence, in 1 Corinthians 9 is saying, "Hey, I'm an apostle. I teach the Bible. I share with you Christ and when I do that I have every right to be supported by you physically." He says, "Hey, when I sow to you spiritual things, isn't it right for me to reap the physical things? I mean, it's legitimate! I have freedom to demand that, really." But Paul says, "I won't. I would rather surrender that freedom to demand that, so that I may be all things to all men that by some means, by all means I may save some." This is what he says in 1 Corinthians 9, verse 19. "For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them." He uses his freedom not to benefit himself but to reach others. Verse 22: "To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some." This is what it means, to do all things for the glory of God. It's not just nebulous, vague, it is

about people. It's about the impact you have on them in the decisions you make.

0:31:39.6

I suggest to you, you need a clear lens to look at the grey areas of your life. You know, last week after I shared about drinking, people maybe...wah...very anxious. Pastor, when you say, "Can ah", our people can go and drink you know? I'm glad none of you walk in drunk today and I'm glad, apparently as far as I know, Novotel Clarke Quay didn't have a rise in liquor sales. But you see that's the beauty of going through a series. I can't cover too much in one message. We have begun looking at the fact of different opinions, the reality when it comes to grey areas is, all of us will see different things in different areas. But today we're looking at the formation of different opinions. How can you and I form the right opinions? Well, you need this framework: C-L-E-A-R. Do it with me again:

C - Stands for? Conscience

L – Stands for? Love

E – Stands for? Edification

A – Stands for? Addiction and

R - Stands for? Reverence

Very good. I...I could have given you 5 'S'. But I think 5 'S' you will forget by next week. So C-L-E-A-R, to see clearly what seems to be unclear in the beginning, and I'll test you 2 weeks time, okay? (Laughter in the congregation) I'll ask individually. Oh no lah, I was kidding but we need this clear lens and with this clear lens, begin to look at the grey areas of life.

Look at... look at tattoos with a clear lens. Eh... Pastor, you say okay ah? Wah, I'll go and do it - I love you. Er...I love... I love Jesus, I tattoo all over my nose, my head, everything, since you say can. Yah...I...I...I did say "Can", but should you? How do I know should I or should I not? Well, what does your conscience say to you? What will other people think? Other members in the church, will they be stumbled? Is this tattoo going to make you more godly and spiritual? 'I love Jesus.' Will you be addicted to it? I hope not. And will this lead to the glory of God, in bringing many more to Jesus Christ? Those are questions you asked. And if at the end of asking this CLEAR questions, you still decide to go ahead or decide not to go ahead, the Lord be with you. I'm not going to excommunicate you for choosing either way, but you are accountable and your brothers and sisters in Christ are responsible to moulding and shaping the way you think.

You see, you can't just say I can do it; you can't just say let... can you please tell me what to do? You got to be fully convinced in your mind. Work it out! Use CLEAR lenses when you look at dressing. Again, I've been approached by members of the church to preach about dressing and how it should be below the knee or right at the ankles and make those guidelines and standards. I find it very hard, but I find it totally liberating to share with you the principles and praying for you that you make the right principles, make the right applications of the principles that are before you. 0:34:58.2

I think about alcohol and it's the same. I should not say more than what the Scripture says, neither should I say less than what the Scripture says and the Scripture tells me what I've shared with you in these 2 weeks of messages. Make your decision. What does your conscience say? What does your brother think? Will this build you up? Are you likely to be addicted to it and will people come to Jesus Christ by what you do? Or don't do? Smoking, computer games, movies, choices of shows you watch, music you listen to, the MTVs you watch, the places you go, the kinds of entertainment you have. This one Chinese New Year very important ah. Chinese new year, this and this will come up alive (picture of mah-jong and cards deck shown), alright? You will really have a decision to make. Can I? Can I not? Should I? Should I not? Casino, the jobs you take up. What is my point? My point is this, think clearly. Think clearly means, think with conscience in mind, love in mind, edification in mind, addiction in mind, reverence in mind.

You see, the Christian life is not a faultless one, it's not a heartless one, it's not the mindless one. The Christian life is where we are renewed in our minds. Remember Romans 12, it all bring... You know Romans 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, it all streams from Romans 12. That we will present our bodies a living sacrifice, that we'll not be conformed to this world, just simply because people say we can, we do it. No, don't be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. How? By the principles of Scripture. That as we are transformed by these principles, as we adopt this lens, we have a mind that is more like that of Jesus Christ. And when you use a lens like this, it leads you into the good, acceptable and perfect will of God. That's what it means, to be a living sacrifice. That's why we started this day... the first song we sang today is, "...every day in everything I do, let it be a Hallelujah." You say how? How can everything, and every day be a Hallelujah to our God? When you start to think biblically and make choices of life biblically. 0:37:29.9

Worship is not just right here. Worship is every day, every time. So later on, after the service is over, when you decide what to eat, where to go, who to hang out with, what

entertainment to pursue, think clearly, let it be a living sacrifice unto the Lord. And you say, why? Why is Christian living so demanding, in that sense? Because it demands your life. It demands your life because Jesus gave you His life. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, you present your bodies a living sacrifice. You know what this means? This means that when you and I, every single one of us, in every area of our lives, we're making God-honouring, biblical, godly decisions. The world will look at this community, this Gospel-transform community and say, "That's a city set on a hill with light." They're so different from us, because their minds are renewed, their minds are renewed because they love Jesus, they love Jesus because Jesus loved them and gave Himself for them. May we, Gospel Light Christian Church shine because we are thinking clearly and living clearly for His glory. Let's bow for a word of prayer. 0:38:53.3

Maybe this morning, you gathered here and you're wondering what the message is all about, and you're glad that God has spoken to you about the grey areas because this is where you are struggling with. There're some choices of entertainment that right here, right now you're doubtful about. There are some things that you are doing, places you are going, people you're hanging out with, that... that cannot stand the scrutiny of principles in Scripture. My friends, this is a great opportunity for you and I this morning to come clean before the Lord. He's not going to come to you like... whack-a-mole just to make you feel bad, but he wants to lead you to a path that is joyous and righteous and life-giving. It's a great time for you and I, as we just take time to consider what God has said, to make, then, the right decisions of faith. To turn... to turn from some of the things we are doing, the things that will honour Him. Think today about Jesus, He did not come to seek His own, He came for you. He came to seek and save that which is lost. He gave His life that you and I today may have life and as you look at the Gospel, may you today be willing to give of your life to Him.

I like to give you just a moment to think through, as the music plays. Some of you are addicted to something. You know you are. It's literally eating your life away. Don't let it continue. It is God's mercy this morning to call us back. Young people, it may be a game, it may be a relationship, it may be a purchase you're thinking about, it's eating you up. I ask today, the mature folks in our church, what kind of example are you leaving for the next generation? It's not just about you, it's about the church. How's your life going to impact the younger ones? How's your life going to impact your children? Is it loving? That's the question. Come to God, come to Jesus. He's full of mercy, full of grace, restores you.

Father, we thank You this morning. What a joy that we are not left, to the ways of the world. The ways of the world will pass away, but he that doth the will of God abides forever. We rejoice we can do the will of God, by the empowerment of your Holy Spirit, by the illumination in our hearts, as we look at the principles of Scripture, we can live for things that last. So help all of us here today. I pray for my brothers and sisters in Christ, that we'll experience the joy of walking in the light, walking clearly. We thank you, we pray all this now in Jesus' name. Amen. God bless.