

Sunday 9 November 2025



SERMON TOPIC: How marriages and households work best
BIBLE TEXT: Eph 5:22-33
PREACHER: Chris Pretorius
ELDER ON DUTY: Peter Williams
OFFERINGS:
1st Collection: The work of the Church
2nd Collection: Solomon Islands Workgroup

Blessed Are Those Who Wrestle

I was sitting with a friend who felt discouraged by life's ongoing struggles. She remarked about a particular family she knows—a family in a season of health, financial stability, and children who are all walking with the Lord.

"They are so blessed by God," she said, almost wistfully.

Her response made me pause. Does God's blessing always look like an easy, struggle-free life? If so, what does that mean for those in seasons of great suffering and hardship?

The Bible doesn't shy away from stories of wrestling, of tension, of people who refuse to let go of God even when their circumstances seem unbearable. Sometimes, profound encounters with God come during seasons of restoration and ease. Other times, these encounters happen when wrestling with him, and the battle doesn't mean we're any less blessed.

God Is in the Struggle

Like my friend, many wonder where God is in the struggle. But Scripture reminds us that some of the most defining moments in faith happen in the wrestling. In Genesis 32, we encounter the powerful story of Jacob, whose life was marked by conflict, deceit, and struggle.

The pivotal moment of Jacob's life occurs at the Jabbok River, where he has a strange and mysterious encounter with God. Jacob is alone, fearful, and preparing to face his estranged brother Esau after years of tension and deceit. But what happens next is unexpected: Jacob wrestles until dawn with a mysterious figure, later revealed to be God himself. The story continues:

When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he touched his hip socket, and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. Then he said, "Let me go, for the day has broken." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." (vv. 25-26, 29)

This moment of intense physical struggle is no simple encounter; it's an intimate and transformative battle with God. Jacob doesn't come to God in passive submission. He fights. He clings. He refuses to let go. Wrestling with God isn't an act of defiance but of desperation—a fight to hold on to the very One we cannot live without.

Struggle Shapes Us

Jacob's struggle reminds us that a deep encounter with God often comes at a cost. It's one thing to question God out of bitterness, demanding answers from a distance. It's another entirely to wrestle with him—to bring our doubts, fears, and frustrations into his presence and refuse to walk away. This kind of engagement isn't easy. It requires vulnerability, perseverance, and the willingness to be changed.

Even Jesus wrestled in the Father's presence. In the garden of Gethsemane, he cried out, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done" (Luke 22:42, NIV). Jesus didn't avoid the struggle—he entered into it fully. Wrestling with God isn't a mark of weak faith; it's the essence of real faith that's unafraid to engage deeply with the One who holds all things.

Make no mistake—wrestling can leave a mark. Jacob leaves his encounter with God permanently changed. His hip is wounded, and he walks with a limp for the rest of his life. For us, the struggle may not result in a physical wound, but an encounter with God rarely leaves us unchanged. Wrestling with God may require surrendering a cherished dream, taking a risk in faith, or enduring a season of uncertainty. The struggle shapes us, leaving scars that tell the story of transformation.

Don't Settle for Distant Faith

If you're wrestling with God, don't despair. Jacob's story reminds us that the wrestling itself isn't a sign of weak faith—it's the mark of a faith that refuses to let go. Lean into the struggle not to prove your strength but to discover God's. Bring your doubts, your anger, your fears before him. He isn't afraid of them. In the wrestling, we don't push God away; we press into him more deeply than we ever have before.

The struggle shapes us, leaving scars that tell the story of transformation.

Don't settle for a distant faith that avoids hard questions. Don't be afraid to hold on, even when you don't have all the answers. The greatest growth often happens in the wrestling, not in the resolution.

And if you walk away with a limp, take heart—because that limp is the mark of someone who has encountered God and been forever changed.

~ By Katie Polski

www.thegospelcoalition.org



ANNOUNCEMENTS

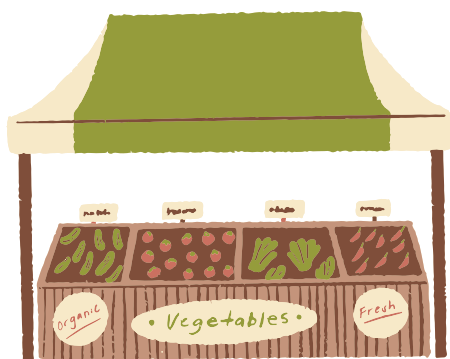
We are delighted to inform you that Riaan Bergh is our new Facility and Maintenance Coordinator.

Riaan, Thank you for stepping into this role. Your willingness to serve and use your gifts is such a blessing to our community.
May God strengthen and guide you as you serve, and may your work bring encouragement and Glory to Him.

For any Facility and Maintenance concerns or queries you can contact
Riaan Bergh at deacons@wpcrc.org.au or 0452 578 665

Church Council meeting is on Tuesday 11 November at 20:00 on Zoom.

If anyone wishes to attend as an observer, please contact
Chris Pretorius or Peter Williams for the zoom details.



An Organic Fruit and Veggie co op runs from our church hall every second Thursday. You are welcome to stop by to purchase fresh fruits and veggies.

Next date: 20 November
9:30 - 12:30 & 16:00 - 18:00

Church Calender

WHAT IS HAPPENING

Friday 7 November 19:30 Super dash Youth Group
Sunday 16 November 10:00 The Lord's Supper
Saturday 22 November 08:30 Working Bee



Calling all Working

22 November

We are planning a church clean up on 22 November and would greatly appreciate your willing hands.

08:30 - 13:00

Please register your attendance on planning centre with how many for catering purposes.

WPCRC-YA TERM 4

A look at Luke

15
Oct

Biblestudy

 70-72 Ennismore Crescent,
Park Orchards

7:30-9:30PM

29
Oct

Biblestudy

 70-72 Ennismore Crescent,
Park Orchards

7:30-9:30PM

12
Nov

Biblestudy

 70-72 Ennismore Crescent,
Park Orchards

7:30-9:30PM

26
Nov

Biblestudy

 70-72 Ennismore Crescent,
Park Orchards

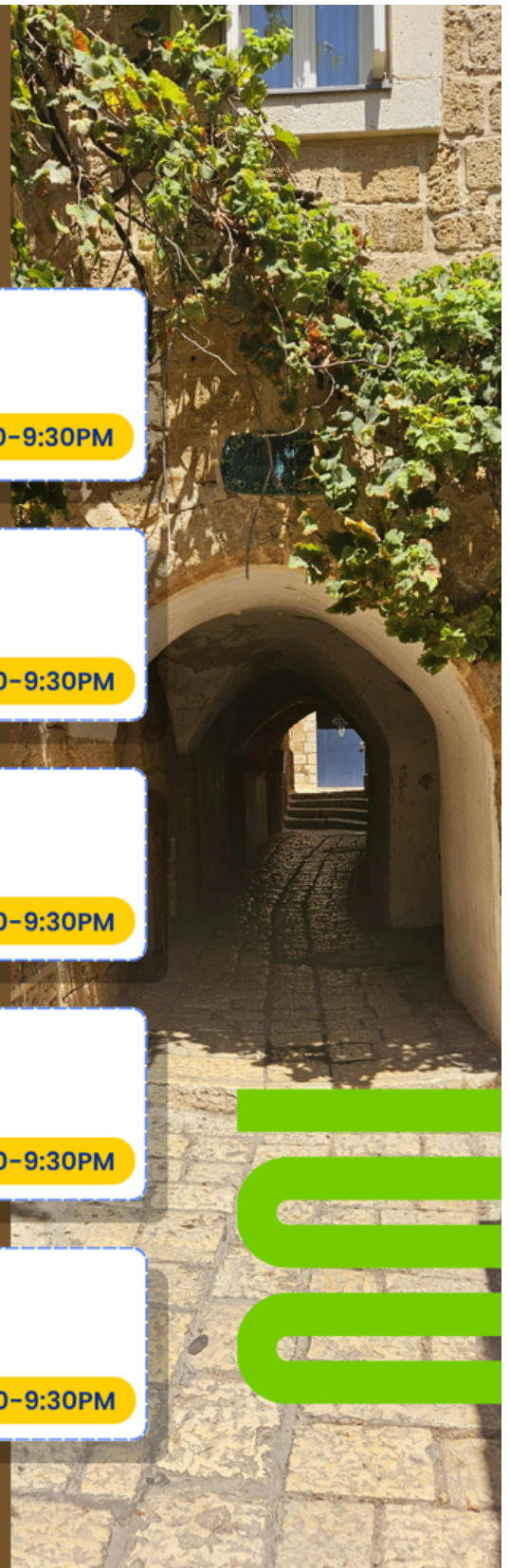
7:30-9:30PM

10
Dec

Biblestudy

 70-72 Ennismore Crescent,
Park Orchards

7:30-9:30PM



TERM 4 **2025**

SUPERDASH

17 OCT	Q&A NIGHT 7: 30 PM @ PRETORIUS HOME
26 OCT	STATE YOUTH SERVICE 5 PM @ ONE HOPE COMMUNITY CHURCH
31 OCT	NO SUPERDASH DUE TO MELBOURNE CUP HOLIDAY (4 TH OF NOV)
7 NOV	BIBLE STUDY: MARK 7: 30 PM @ WONGA PARK CRC
21 NOV	BIBLE STUDY: MARK 7: 30 PM @ WONGA PARK CRC
5 DEC	SOCIAL: CHURCH SLEEPOVER 7: 30 PM @ WONGA PARK CRC TIL 6 TH 12 PM

FOR MORE INFORMATION SPEAK TO YOUR YOUTH LEADERS

Our Giving, an Act of Worship

In our Church we have two offerings every Sunday. The first goes toward the ministry of this congregation. The second offering goes toward various Christian causes. This week our second offering is for Solomon Islands Workgroup.

If you would like to support the work of you can do so by in Church giving - simply add your offering to the bag at the back of Church or by bank transfer -

BSB 063-167. A/C 1015-8356

If using bank transfer please indicate whether it is for the first offering "Sun1" or second offering "Sun 2" in the reference line. Or you can give online via our Church app

<https://wpcrc.org.au/give>

This week's **PRAYER POINTS**

Live a life of prayer, giving glory to God and continually listening for His guidance. Mary C. Neal

Personal **PRAYER POINTS**

As we go into the coming week let us daily pray.

That we will always look to our Lord Jesus so that we will walk in his light and not stray into darkness.

Walk as children of light—for the fruit of the light consists of all goodness, righteousness, and truth –testing what is pleasing to the Lord. Ephesians 5:8b-10 CSB)

Give praise and thanks to the Lord our God for leaving the light of Christ with us through the Holy Spirit so that we may always see the right way.

Congregational **PRAYER POINTS**

Please continue to pray for Ben Palmer as he still struggles with his recovery, pray that the Lord will be his peace, his comfort and his strength as he awaits healing.

Give thanks and praise to God that Lydia Oppermann is recovering from her operation, pray that she will have complete healing.

Please continue to pray for our young people who have sat for or are still sitting for exams, pray that they will know the peace of God whatever the results may be.

Please pray for the PTC women's conference to be held this weekend, pray that God's blessings will flow during the conference and that those attending will benefit greatly.

Local & Global **PRAYER POINTS**

Pray that the church throughout our nation will be moved by the Holy Spirit to shine the light of Christ ever brighter so that many will be drawn to him.

Please continue to pray for the situation in Gaza, Ukraine and the many other conflict regions around the world. Pray that God's peace will reign.

Please pray for our persecuted brothers and sisters in Africa.

The World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) General Assembly turned its attention to one of the most sobering realities facing the global Church, as Joshua Williams, a representative of Open Doors International, issued an urgent appeal for prayer, repentance and solidarity with persecuted Christians around the world. Williams, who serves as director of Africa Services for Open Doors, shared heart-wrenching testimonies of believers enduring violence and displacement in regions where faith in Christ comes at a devastating cost. Referring to an earlier panel on the specific impact of persecution on women, he recounted the experiences of women and girls who have been subjected to repeated violence in conflict regions. "It is horror and hell," he said. "When a village or a family attacks these girls and women and keeps them, rapes them again and again and again, what these women and ladies go through cannot even be imagined."

Williams said such survivors often return home facing rejection. "Then talk about stigma," he said. "Then these girls come back, and they have Boko Haram babies, and then those children grow up as Boko Haram babies." "But I also want to say these women and ladies, they deserve our highest respect. They are warriors of the faith." He said that persecution and conflict are widespread. "This is not happening somewhere in the corner," he said. "It's happening from Somalia right across to the western coast of Africa and in Asia and in many, many countries." Williams called attention to global statistics. "Thirty-five of the conflicts are in Africa," he said, referring to data from 2024. "That is out of the 121 conflicts recorded in 2024 alone. Globally, more than 55 countries are affected. In Africa alone, there are more than 45 million displaced people." He added that "globally, 2024, almost 21 million displaced people" were recorded, emphasizing that while the world focuses on conflicts such as Gaza and Ukraine, "there are more than 121 global crises."

Out of the African conflicts he said, "Of 45 million displaced people – 16 million are Christians. Sixteen million of our brothers and sisters live in the most horrific realities, and the biggest percentage are women and girls, and young ones." Williams referred to the story of Cain and Abel to illustrate accountability before God. "When Abel was murdered by his brother, God came to ask accountability for the life of Abel," he said. "'Where is your brother Abel? His blood is crying to me.'" He connected this with present-day suffering, saying, "The blood of hundreds of thousands is crying to God globally. And one wonders, where is the Church? Where are the people of God?" He said the proper response begins with repentance. "When Nehemiah heard the state of the nation of Israel, of his time in Jerusalem, he broke down before God," Williams said. "He went into the state of repentance and he confessed. He cried to God. He confessed the sin of his family, confessed the sin of his people, his community, and his nation. And so did the man of God Ezra."

Quoting Ezra 9, he said, "When he heard the news of the unfaithfulness of God's people, he tore his clothes, he bathed himself before God, he was broken. And when he started praying, he prayed this prayer in Israel. He said, 'I'm too ashamed to lift my head to you. Our sins are higher than our heads.'" "I am praying for a revival of repentance in the church and in our nations," Williams said. "This one will not go out except by prayer and fasting." He added that churches in Africa, together with partners such as Open Doors, had begun an initiative called Africa, Arise, which calls believers to pray for Christians suffering persecution. "There is a call to the people of God globally and Africa and everywhere to rise up to pray for our brothers and sisters, not only in Africa but in 55-plus nations of the globe," he said. "Not to speak about it, bury it under the cushion, not talk about it as if it'll go away by itself." Despite the stark reality, Williams concluded on a hopeful note by quoting the words of Jesus in Matthew 16:18. "Despite all these challenges," he said, "I will build my Church. Praise the Lord!"

Sermon NOTES

Bible passage:

Date:



Something
that shines
from the
passage



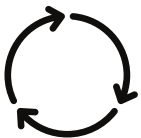
Anything
hard to
understand
or any
questions



Personal
application
for your life



Theme of
passage



How does it
fit with other
passages in
the Bible



Who will you
tell about
what you have
learnt?

Discussion QUESTIONS

- What strikes you most when you read Ephesians 5:22-33 ? What emotions or reactions surface and why?
- How does the picture of Christ's self-giving love reshape the way we think about authority, leadership, and service?
- How is the headship shown in this passage different from worldly power or control?
- What does it look like in everyday life for a husband, or any Christian leader, to "love like Christ loved the church"? What might it cost us?
- How might "respect" (v 33) be practiced in modern marriage without silencing or diminishing a woman's voice? What examples have you seen of healthy, godly respect?
- It has been said that in a Christian Marriage "When feelings thin, vows thicken." How does remembering the gospel enable us to endure and to forgive in marriage?
- Ephesians 6 moves from marriage to parenting and work. How could the principles of sacrificial love and willing service shape our homes, workplaces, and church life?
- Paul calls marriage a mystery pointing to Christ and the Church (v 32). How does that truth comfort singles and widowed believers? What does it teach every believer about our ultimate marriage to Christ?

Helping HANDS

	9 November	16 November	23 November
Preacher	Chris Pretorius	Chris Pretorius	Chris Pretorius
Elder on Duty	Martin	Peter W	Peter W
Prayer Leader	Martin	Janette	Peter W
Music Leader	Brendina	Neil	Nelleke
Children's Talk	Tash	Inge	Nicky
Bible Reader	Karien	Danika	Conrad
Sound	Nic	Nina	Cassie
Visuals	Ene	Salme	Isaac
Broadcasting	Pieter	Christo	James
Sunday School	Lize B, Izelle, Ilze	Lynette, Izelle, Ilze	Ilze, Sarah, Nicky
Coffee	Anke van Pinxteren & Sarah Pretorius	Du Toit Family	Theron Family

Upcoming BIRTHDAYS

HAPPY
BIRTHDAY



November:

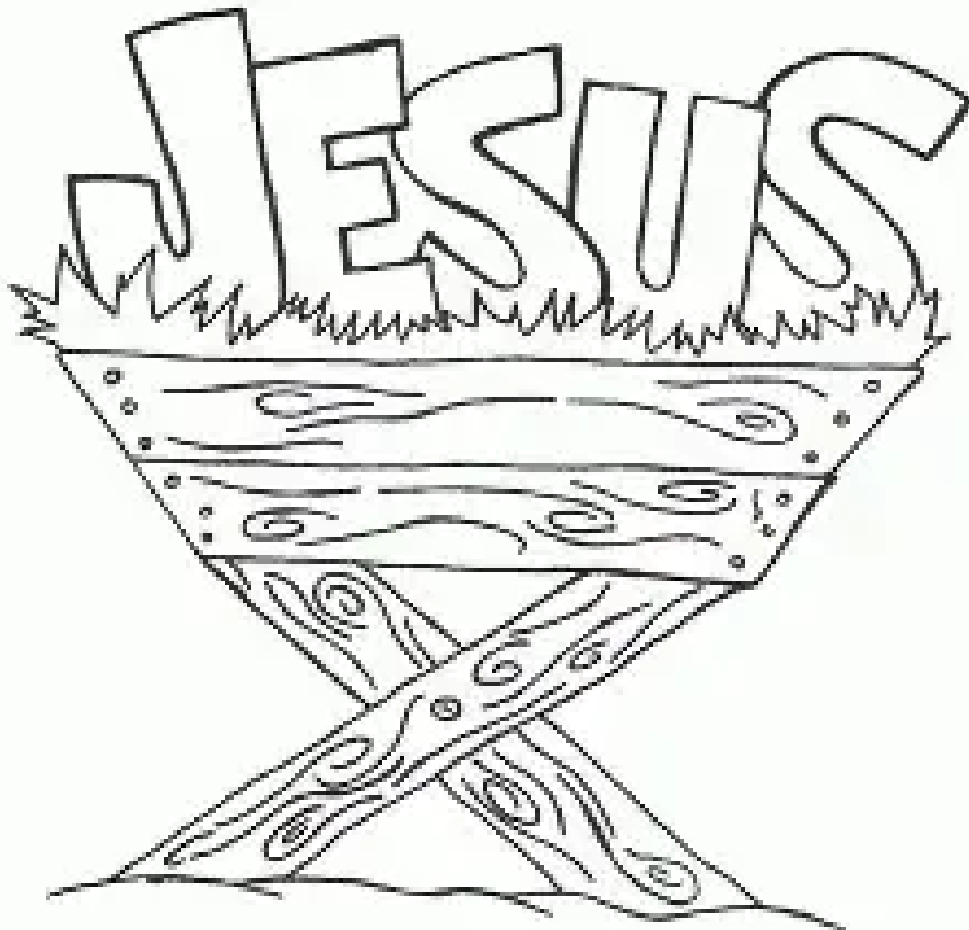
7 - Mila van Wyk
7 - Joseph Ting
8 - James van Veen
9 - Amanda Strydom
11 - Cailynn van der Merwe
14 - Izelle Steenkamp
18 - Rob Miller
28 - Martin Ting

Who Should I Contact?

Pastor:	Chris Pretorius	0423 889 913	pastor@wpcrc.org.au
Chairman of Session:	Peter Williams	0431 500 006	session@wpcrc.org.au
Community Engagement	Jenna Miller	0403 650 398	jenna@wpcrc.org.au
Church Administrator:	Sarah Pretorius	0409 221 277	admin@wpcrc.org.au
Deacons:	Leana van Gent	0452 334 224	deacons@wpcrc.org.au
Music Ministry:	Mia Van Wyk	0420 817 800	
Sound & Visuals:	Cassie Van Veen	0499 230 872	
Children's Talk:	Sarah Pretorius	0409 221 277	
Sunday School:	Sarah Pretorius	0409 221 277	
Youth Group:	Kasha Schubert	0450 012 177	youth@wpcrc.org.au
Young Adults:	Michael van der Merwe	0456 960 424	
Growth Groups:	Chris Pretorius	0423 889 913	
Prayer Chain:	Herman Linde	0411 069 808	
Facilities & Maintenance:	Riaan Bergh	0452 578 665	deacons@wpcrc.org.au
Newsletter:	Leana van Gent	0452 334 224	newsletter@wpcrc.org.au

Children corner

COLORING



... and you shall call his name Jesus,
for he will save his people from their sins.
Matthew 1:21