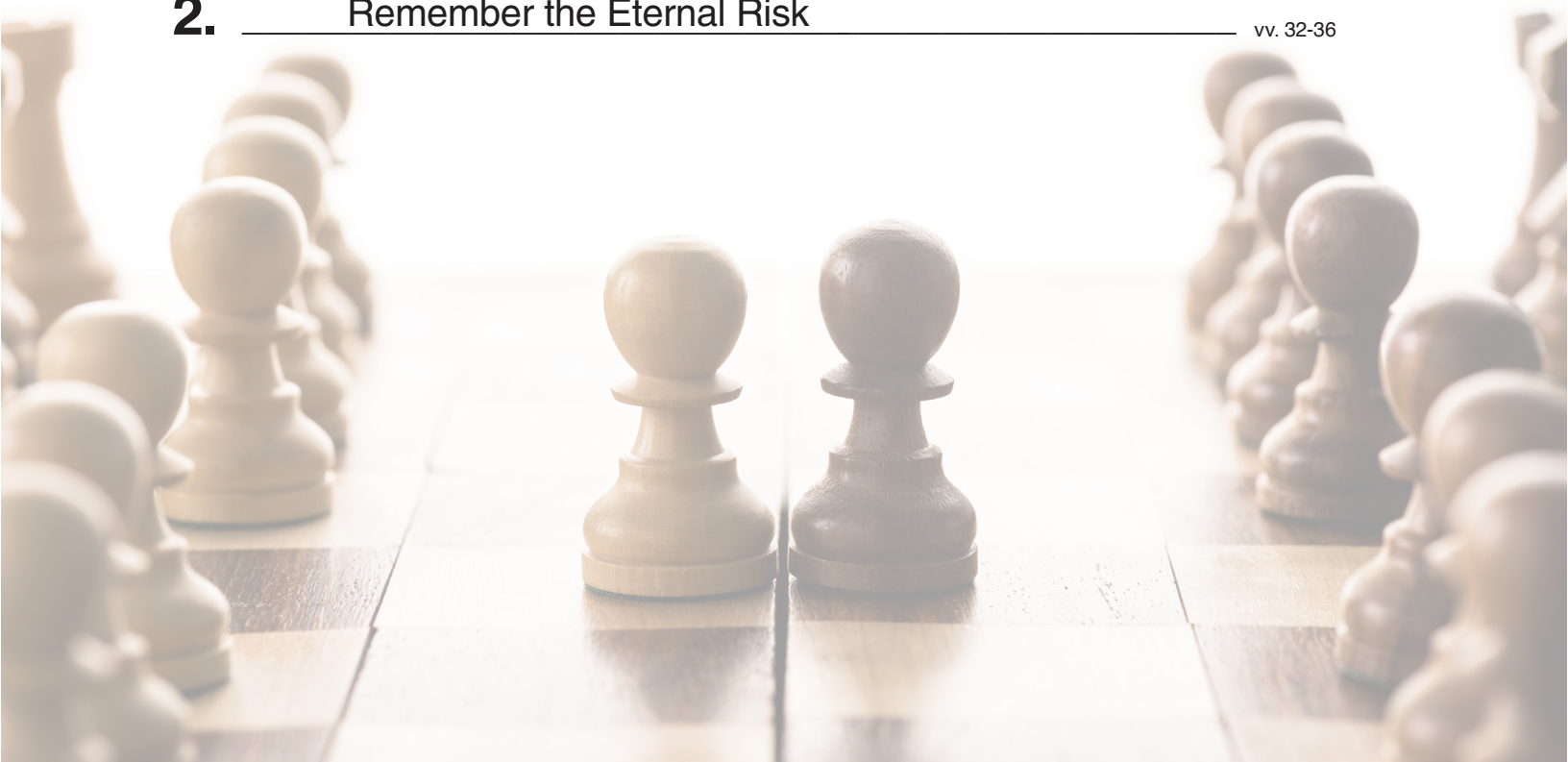


The Competitive Trap

“ How to Protect Against Christian Division ”

1. Keep a "Jesus Only" Focus vv. 22-31

2. Remember the Eternal Risk vv. 32-36



Grow Group Discussion Questions

A grow group is 8-16 people who get together weekly to study God's word and the previous Sunday's message. There is a time of discussion, support, encouragement, and learning how the message applies to daily life. **PCC uses the ESV (English Standard Version).**

HOW DO I JOIN A GROUP?

To learn more or join a group, visit pacificcoastchurch.org/gg/ or sign up at the patio Info Kiosk.

Point #1

- Read John 3:22-31. Why were the disciples of John the Baptist concerned about the ministry of Jesus?
- How did John respond? In what way did he address a divisive and competitive spirit? How does Point #1 relate?
- Why will this always be a challenge in today's competitive world? How does this adjust your perspective?

Point #2

- Read John 3:32-36. Explain what it means that God's wrath "remains" on a non-Christian. How is it lifted?
- In what way does this relate to Christian competition and division? Why will Point #2 provide protection?
- As you consider the root cause of Christian division today, how has Point #2 been lost? How does Point #2 help you?

Daily Devotions

These are provided for mid-week personal spiritual growth. Prayerfully writing out your answers will help you experience real life transformation as you dig deeper into the spiritual truths of God's word and today's message.

A downloadable PDF of this document is also available each week at pacificcoastchurch.org/sermons.

MONDAY // Read John 3:22-28, Mark 9:33-37, 1 Corinthians 3:3-7, Philippians 1:15-18

- Explain the transition that was taking place for John given the arrival of Jesus. Be specific.
- How did John's disciples respond to this change? Why? In what way was their fear creating division?
- How can this same thing happen with Christians today? Give an example. How does this challenge you?

TUESDAY // Read John 3:22-28, 17:20-24, Ephesians 4:1-7

- What does Jesus' prayer in John 17:20-24 highlight about the way Christians and churches will struggle?
- Why will this always be a challenge in today's competitive culture? How have you seen this play out?
- What is really at the root of competitive and divisive behavior? How can you protect yourself against this risk?

WEDNESDAY // Read John 3:29-31, Isaiah 62:4-5, Ephesians 5:22-32, Revelations 19:6-9

- Explain how scripture uses a bride and bridegroom to illustrate the relationship between Christians and Jesus.
- Where does John the Baptist put himself in this illustration? In what way was he correcting his disciples?
- How does this also illustrate the way Christians should relate to one another? How does this help you?

THURSDAY // Read John 3:30-31, Matthew 9:35-38, Hebrews 12:1-2

- In what way are all Christians on the same team regardless of the specific church they may attend?
- Why is this important when it comes to evangelism? How will division prevent this from happening?
- Explain how having a "Jesus only" focus will provide protection. How does this apply to you?

FRIDAY // Read John 3:32-36, 3:18, Ephesians 2:1-7, Hebrews 9:27-28

- What does it mean that God's wrath "remains" on a non-Christian? How does it get lifted?
- Why did John highlight this truth? In what way was this still addressing a competitive spirit? Be specific.
- Pray and ask God how this truth can help protect and unify you with other Christians. Write down the answer.

SATURDAY // Read John 3:22-36, Romans 8:5-8, 1 Corinthians 15:19, Colossians 3:2-11

- As you consider the concerns and fear of John the Baptist's disciples, how had they lost an eternal perspective?
- Why should eternity always be the motivator for every Christian and church? How does it also protect unity?
- What does Christian competition reveal? How has this week's study helped protect you? Be specific.

MEDITATION VERSE: *"He must increase, but I must decrease."*

John 3:30