

Rooted And Grounded In Love

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[0 : 00] So today I'm going to talk about being rooted and grounded in love. So I'm going to read a passage from Ephesians.

It's Ephesians chapter 3, verses 14 through 21. I'm going to read this and then I'm going to talk about some other stuff and I'm going to read this again at the end for some contracts.

So Ephesians chapter 3, verses 14 through 21. This is Paul praying for the Ephesian church. For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory, he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his spirit in your inner being.

So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, that you being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever.

[1 : 26] Amen. Amen. I was praying this week about what to share, and I was kind of bouncing around through a lot of different topics, and this is the one that I landed on. And this one statement, being rooted and grounded in love, was what really hit home.

And I think the backdrop is we just planted this church, we're only a couple months in, and thinking about foundations, thinking about building on solid foundations, thinking about foundations of a building being the plumb line and the support and the most important part of the whole building, and thinking about how I just don't think like that.

I think, oh man, it's another day. All right, let's go. All right, next day. All right, let's go. Next day. And I just sort of have this inbox management. I got problems coming in.

I got crying out to God like, Lord, I have my problems, you know, and just sort of keeping up and just not really thinking about eternity, not really thinking about what it is that I'm doing right now and the decision I'm making right now, how they affect this foundation.

And I just haven't really been thinking about it. That's for Josh to think about. He's the church planning, elder apostle guy. He'll deal with the foundation stuff.

[2 : 51] He'll do what he says. It'll be good. That's just not true. It's not reality. And that's what's on my heart is to talk about how being rooted and grounded in love is part of this foundation.

You can just say being rooted and grounded in Christ because that's the substantiation of love. Love is not some Greek philosophical, you know, abstraction about doing good for other people. Love is a person. And that's what he's talking about. That's why he says in verse 17, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. That you being rooted and grounded in love.

Like these go together. There's basically two sides of the same point. So anyway, that was kind of the thought. And then zooming out and applying that thought to our group.

So this is really for mainly for those people who are part of this church planning team coming out of Bellicose, but it applies to Christians generally. So we all get something out of it. Thinking about those people specifically, the thought that has come to my mind while I'm thinking about this foundation is there's a verse in 1 Peter 4 verse 8 that says, Above all, keep loving one another earnestly since love covers a multitude of sins.

[4 : 16] And I think the church we left did a really good job with that. There was an environment of love that covered a lot of sins. Okay. And which is great.

That's awesome. And with every awesome thing, there's like perverse consequences. Right. And I think there's a perverse consequence of having been in a church that's really healthy, that practices love, that covers over a multitude of sins, is that it's your sins.

It's us. Our sins are included in that list of sins that are being healthily, maturely overlooked. And, you know, the, and when I say overlooking sins, when it says love covers a multitude of sins, it doesn't mean it ignores a multitude of sins.

Mature, healthy church love, when it talks about covering a multitude of sins, it's talking about like being long suffering with sinners. All right. It means overlooking offenses, not quick to take offense. Can you believe that person did that man? You know, like that's, that's an immature attitude. A mature loving attitude overlooks. It has a habit of doing this for the sake of Christ. We know that we were forgiven just an insane amount of wickedness.

[5 : 38] And we see that. And in light of that, we're like, you know what? Praise the Lord for the blood of Jesus. I'm not going to be, I'm not going to jump on this. You know, I'm going to pray about it.

Forgiveness, the application of Christ's blood. This is what it means to, for love to cover a multitude of sins. And in a healthy church, this is just ongoing. It doesn't mean ignoring sin and just a hear no evil, see no evil mentality of sin.

No, like we address it. But there's a mature way of addressing it through Christ. And we've experienced that. So anyway, what's the downside? What's the perverse consequence?

If we're immature, we might not know it. Because we've been around a bunch of mature people overlooking our sin for a long time. All right. And sin has natural consequences. The Bible says the wages of sin is death.

All right. So death is the natural consequence of our own sin. Well, if you're in a really good family and a really great support structure, an unintended consequence might be you're protected from the consequences of sin, the death that's a natural byproduct of your sin.

[6 : 45] You don't get it on the chin when you screw up. You know, you got a support structure there. And when you're coming out of a really good church for years and years and years, you might have, and we do, we have huge weak spots that we might not even know about.

All right. And in that church, it didn't really impact things that much. It didn't impact the culture that much. Obviously, it impacts the culture. But it impacts the culture proportionate to our influence in the culture.

But in a church like that, it's not that much. In a church like this, it's huge. All right. So that's the thought.

That's the thought that's been in my mind is if we've been in a good church for a long time, that there might be huge gaps in our maturity that have been hidden, that have been covered over graciously by the maturity and leadership of other brothers and sisters in the place we came from. So kind of digging into that topic a little bit more. 1 Corinthians 13, 11 ties maturity with love. It says, when I was a child, I spoke like a child. I thought like a child.

[8 : 01] I reasoned like a child. But when I became a man, I gave up childish ways. So a church with leaders that are walking in mature love creates a culture of this sin covering in a good way that we can benefit from passively.

We don't need to do anything. We're just there. And so we benefit from all this wonderful fruit that's being created, you know, not created, but is being cultivated by maturity.

Other people being mature for us. Those leaders who are mature in love, they took uncomfortability on themselves to make us comfortable.

You know, they laid down their life, the sheep. And, you know, we may have just been there enjoying it and reaping the benefits of it. And that's great. But it can delude you.

It can delude you into thinking that just because I went to a good church or maybe I listened to good teaching, maybe like my podcast list is full of all the correct teachers, you know. I'm just like, you know, I'm aligned with the right people, right?

[9 : 06] It doesn't mean anything. It doesn't mean I'm a mature believer. It doesn't mean something. It doesn't mean nothing. But Herod rejoiced to hear John the Baptist preach and he killed him. So just because I like to listen to good things doesn't mean anything really about whether those things have landed and produced transformation.

You know, James says, you know, the guy who looks into the law of liberty and then forgets, you know, then doesn't do it. It's like someone who just looks into a mirror and forgets what he even looks like, you know.

It doesn't profit. So anyway, I'm deviating a little bit. But Galatians 2, Galatians chapter 6 verses 2 through 5 says, bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.

For if anyone thinks he is something when he's nothing, he deceives himself. But let each one test his own work. Speaking here a little bit, he's saying, drill down a little bit more.

Test your own work. All right. Let each one test his own work. And then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not his neighbor.

[10:11] For each one will bear his own load. He's speaking to this. He's saying, hey, this is falling after a whole chapter where he's unpacking what it means to walk by the spirit. And he kind of brings it to bear and says, hey, like there can be a dynamic where the people around you are walking by the spirit and it results in just a wonderful, awesome culture.

And you're doing nothing. OK. You're just drafting off of other people in front of you doing the hard work. And it flies under the radar, you know.

And he's he's challenging us to think about this. Think about your own work. Think about what God told you to do. And this this is this is the unavoidable, perverse consequences of having mature believers along with them, immature believers.

All right. And this happened with Jesus, too. And he called this out in the parable in Luke 13, verse 24 through 27. He says, strive to enter through the narrow door for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.

When once the master of the house has risen and shut the door and you begin to stand outside, knock at the door, saying, Lord, open to us. Then he will answer you. I do not know where you come from.

[11:28] Then you will begin to say, we ate and drank in your presence and you taught in our streets. But he will say, I tell you, I do not know where you come from. Come depart from me, all you workers of evil.

So what did their what was their natural response to being said? I don't know you. You're like I was I was in your church.

You were doing ministry. I was like there and you were like I was like one of the I was one of the guys. I was I was in the crowd, man. Doesn't matter. No. And he's speaking of unbelievers here. But we need to test ourselves to see whether we're in the faith.

Are we producing fruit in keeping with repentance? And this can apply to believers as well. When we think about just Christian maturity. We still have a flesh.

Our flesh likes to sin. Our flesh doesn't like to do what God wants us to do. We don't like we don't wake up one morning at a point of sanctification where it's just like, man, I love taking up my cross and denying myself every single day until Jesus comes back.

[12:29] I love it. You know, no. Our flesh is always like, all right. How do I balance this? So I do the bare minimum amount of righteousness with the, you know, the maximum amount of righteousness with a minimum amount of effort.

How do I work that out? You can't. But our flesh thinks you can every single day. And so when we think of Christian maturity, we can apply some of these verses to ourselves and be like, wait a minute.

Am I using the maturity of the people around me to just get by and to coast? It used to work, quote unquote.

It used to work in your old church. It will not work in this because there's just not that many people. Okay. So if you are refusing the work of the Holy Spirit in your life, it has massive impacts on the foundation.

We're trying to go up here. Specifically the foundation of love. So I want to walk through some examples of immaturity that I think apply specifically to our church. Okay. So if you're thinking, is he talking about me?

[13:31] Yes, I'm talking about you. I'm talking about myself too. This is not like, this is a, probably most of these apply to me too. So, you know, I'm not throwing stones, but I kind of, I'm throwing stones at you and me.

So we need to recognize our immaturity. So some examples. Number one, impatience with other people's spiritual progress. I think it's a great one.

This is for everyone who thinks that they're a little bit more progressed and everyone else is kind of trailing behind them. This, this attitude is the mark of a teacher, not a father.

This is the mark of a hired hand, not a shepherd. You are frustrated with other people. What's their problem? Why can't they get excited about it?

Why can't they get a vision for the lost? Why can't they get a vision for, you know, building Christ's church? You know, what's the deal? You know? All right. Do you know yourself?

[14 : 34] Do you know how merciful and patient God has been included? I mean, you're suspended over hell. And he snatched you out of the fire.

Your wit could have been quenched so many times. He didn't do it. He promised he would. Maybe on the other side of the coin, you got lack of patience on one side.

The other side of the coin, you got lack of steadfastness. You might be in a pattern of always looking to other people to fill you up. Rather than going to the one who's the baptizer of the Holy Spirit.

In Matthew 25, I'm not going to turn there, but there's a parable of the ten virgins. Jesus is sharing this parable as kind of a backdrop for waiting for Jesus to return, the last days.

There's ten virgins. Five are foolish. Five are wise. The wise virgins, they bring oil. They're waiting for the bridegroom to come. They take oil with them, with their lamps. And the foolish ones don't.

[15 : 39] The bridegroom comes. It knocks. It's time. The foolish ones, they all wake up. And the foolish ones say, hey, give us this. They go to the wise ones. They say, give us some oil. And the wise ones are like, no, there won't be enough for both of us.

You got to go get it yourself. And they missed it. So that's a thing we do. Jesus rebuked the Pharisees.

He said, you search the scriptures thinking that in them you'd have eternal life. They speak of me and you won't come to me. You refuse to come to me that you might have life. Jesus has not designed his church to be sort of like, you know, one person has the oil and, you know, the Holy Spirit and you go get it by proxy.

That's not how it works. We are filled with the spirit to bear witness to each other about Jesus so that we turn each other to Jesus and we can go get filled up ourself. So lack of steadfastness.

What's the point? What's the fruit this produces, this attitude? You lose steam like that. You know, you didn't hear a positive, encouraging, you know, sermon that week. Oh.

[16 : 43] No. You woke up feeling grumpy. Oh. You need someone to pray for you all the time. You need someone to give you encouraging words. And it's just like, like all those things are awesome, but you're basically living a vicarious Christian life through other believers.

You know. You have the author and perfecter of your salvation who lives in you through the Holy Spirit and who's our bread. And we are appointing each other to him.

Another one is you can't be alone. It's another example of immaturity. And it kind of feeds into that a little bit there. You're just, you know, you don't know what it is to be content alone with the Lord.

So you got to fill your time with other people. And this one can especially live in a church that really emphasizes the body aspect of the church of doing, you know, the kingdom of God and all of life together.

Well, you can hide that sin for a long time before someone picks up on it. You know, this is like, I don't know if you've ever experienced this, but like, or maybe you experience this now.

[17 : 48] You're driving the car and you can't, you can't stand silence. You always got to have something off no matter what. You got a podcast. You got music. You have all those things are great. But if you can't stand silence, you're probably running away from God.

You're probably running away from God. All those things are lawful. But if you can't sit alone with the Lord and you got to fill up your time with content and noise and people, maybe the Lord's trying to get a hold of you, you know.

Jesus went out with the people. He went in with his father. When it was costly to spend time alone, he would pay the cost to spend that time alone.

So, we need to check ourselves, you know. Are we content being alone with the Lord? Or, are we using other people and constant hanging out and constant doing things with, you know, the body to just dull that voice, that still quiet voice who's knocking on the door and said, Hey, I got some things

in your marriage I want you to deal with.

I got some things in the Lord I'm wanting to show you. And you're ignoring it. And you're hiding your immaturity and your sin. Your responsibilities at your job, at work, and with your kids.

[19 : 09] With life together. All right? Lord knows. He searches the heart. Flip side of the coin. You can't be together with other people, you know.

This is more like me. You know, this is my role. You're careful how you hang out with people. You're very calculated. You know, you only got so much relational juice in the tank. You're very keyed in on how much is there, you know.

And so, you mete out your commitments to make sure it never exceeds the amount of, you know, hangout capital you got. Rather than trusting in the Holy Spirit to give us everything we need for life and godliness.

Including love in our hearts and the bandwidth to receive people. Jesus received people to the extent where his family just thought he was crazy. He's like, he's gone out of his mind. That's the grace of God.

He didn't do that as a man apart from the grace of God. He did it filled with the Holy Spirit, full of the enabling power to be open to people. And there are ways of doing this where you're physically present for everything, but you're hiding.

[20 : 18] You're not opening up your heart. It's all activity-based, you know, or ministering-based. These are the people who can really fly under the radar because they're so effective for God.

They share. They minister. They always have a word. And for some reason, you just never find out about their problems, you know. They never confess their sins with you.

You might see they're having some marriage trouble. They're fighting. It's just like, oh, man, I've never even heard what specifically they fight about. I have no idea. Because they're hiding it. It's too embarrassing.

The Lord wants to do away with this stuff. This is, if we walk in the light and see us in the light, we have fellowship with one another. And the blood of Jesus cleanses us from our sin.

We don't got to be embarrassed about our sin because the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin. We're sinners. Similarly, on the same vein, holding people at arm's length. Kind of went into that already.

[21 : 20] Here's another one. Full of good ideas and suggestions, but no hard work to accomplish them. These are like the armchair, you know, prophets, you know. Just like, hey, we should do this.

We should do that. Like, I say that. I have a joke. I say, when someone says we, I say, do you mean in the dad sense of the word we? Because sometimes I say we and I really mean my voice. You know, I mean, you go do it.

We need to do this. And then I need to, like, think about, wait a minute. Am I passive-aggressively telling the other person that I'm saying this to go do it for me? Or do I really mean we?

I mean, hey, I'm throwing out this good idea. What do you think about it? All right, let's work hard together to go do this. So, anyway, this is another side of immaturity.

We should. We should do these things. All right. Think it through. Remember, James 4, 417 says, whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it's sin.

[22 : 20] All right. A lot of times our good ideas, we throw them out there because we want someone else to do it. We see something that's off in the church and we say, hey, that needs fixed.

I don't want to fix it, though. You fix it. It's immaturity. Ownership, maturity, love sees the problem and assumes that's my job.

I need to actually take care of that problem. I'd love to get input. I'd love to get alignment from the rest of the body. Like, hey, what do you think? Is this an important enough problem to go solve?

This is a good idea. But not offload it on them and cause a burden to be upon their shoulders that I should take up on my shoulders. Just another example.

We talked about drafting, but I'm going to drill on that a little bit more. Letting other people lead in hard things and coasting behind them. I think this is a huge one for all of us coming out of Bellicose.

[23 : 21] All right. We had awesome leaders who did hard things and made our life easy and we coasted behind them. And it's easy to hide there by being a good helper. All right.

You're always there to help, but you won't help to the extent that you're leading in difficulty and letting other people draft behind you. And this is this is that next level.

Now we're planting a church. There's no one in front of us other than Josh. He's going to be here for a while. All right. So. It's on us. You know, Galatians 6, verse 3 through 5.

We're going to circle back to that. If anyone thinks he's something when he's nothing, he deceives himself. This is what happens. It's the dynamic. If someone else is going in front of you, they're the leader of the pack, like in a bike race, you know, the one front.

They're taking all the wind and they're working twice as hard and you're right behind them. You're like, man, we're both basically the same. We're doing the same amount of work. We're in this together. No, you're doing hardly anything and they're in front of you.

[24 : 20] So we need to think about that. You know, we need to think about have I become accustomed to that kind of just lazy operation because there's other more mature people around to take it for me.

I know I am. There's another one. Vacation life. This is just living for the next fun thing. This is the American dream. I live for the weekend and we think, OK, we're Christians.

We don't do that. If you're not thinking about and fighting against it, you are 100 percent doing it. You're just doing it. OK, if you don't see that your flesh is oriented towards. Relaxation through vacation.

You know, just applying that as kind of a general principle across life. You know, this can just be like, oh, I can't wait to get home from work and crack open a cold one and watch Netflix. You know, nothing, nothing wrong with beer.

Nothing wrong with Netflix. What am I? What am I using? Julie's like that one plays to you. OK. First Corinthians 10 verse seven.

[25 : 22] It talks about the Israelites. This is when Moses was up on the mountain receiving the law of God. They gave themselves over to making this golden calf and worshipping it.

But it's interesting in the New Testament, when Paul refers back to that, he calls it idolatry. And the the attribute of idolatry he he points to is that they made a golden calf and were worshipping.

He says they sat down to eat and drink and they rose up to plump. That was what they look forward to eating and drinking and playing. That's just their whole life. This is immaturity for a Christian.

You know, this is what Gentiles actually live for. They live for this. We can live for that, too, in practice. Here's another one. It's a little more offensive. Valuing your family, specifically your extended family, over your spiritual thing.

Now, you might say, OK, wait a minute. Divine order. Man can't take care of his own family. How can you take care of the church of God? I'm talking about that's the balance for this. I'm talking about the other side where, you know, Matthew 12, verses 46 through 50.

[26 : 34] Jesus, his mother and brothers come. And they want something from him. They want this this relationship. They want him to come out and do what they're doing.

And he says, who are my mother and brothers? Those who hear the word of God and do it. And this communicates to us our value system as Christians.

If we're born again, we've passed out of our earthly family and into a heavenly family. And we want to bring our earthly family into it, OK? We want them to be born again.

We want them to be part of it. But there is a pull to still operate with this value system where everything's about our family in a way that fights against the law.

You know, I have this with my family. I, like, if we don't think this applies to us, we don't think about it, it for sure does, OK? The way this, the way we're victorious in any of these things is the Holy Spirit brings conviction.

[27 : 32] We recognize it. We repent. And then let the Holy Spirit renew these areas. So, grumbling and complaining that's not as good as you used to have it relationally here at this new church versus your old church.

All right? No doubt. OK? OK. We've had this for a short amount of time. Some of these relationships are more long-lasting. Others aren't. All right? These are the same attitudes the Israelites had coming out of Egypt.

And it's not like Bellicose is Egypt and we're coming out into the promised land. But we got, like, these things still apply. Our flesh has the same reactions. Like, man, it was awesome. These people suck.

Whatever. Those people suck, too. And the Lord did a wonderful work by his Holy Spirit in making love and relationships form over the years that were wonderful.

And, of course, we miss it. But he's going to do the same thing here because Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. This one we got to take by faithful, you know. And we're never going to have that optimism.

[28 : 34] And we're never going to have that optimism with each other and new people that we're on mission to unless we give up that turning around and just being like, man, I wish it was as good as we had.

We'll never get there. Last one is a lack of concern for the lost. You know, Jesus in Matthew 25. Is it in Matthew 25? Yeah, in Matthew 25, he talks about doing things for people who basically can't repay you at all as unto Jesus.

That's our attitude towards loss. We don't say we don't we're not fundamentally motivated to be on mission to people because there's a bunch of sinners who are going to go to hell. That's part of it. It's because it's for Jesus sake.

It's for him. We do it to them. It's under Jesus. And. It's easy to get locked up in our own world, just not have a vision for this.

[29 : 35] I'm especially oriented away, I think, even with my natural giftings, but just my flesh. It's. I need the Lord to help me. To have a heart for people who are lost.

So anyway, this is not exhaustive list. This is just some things I thought of. But the fact of the matter is we can't hide from any of this stuff anymore. You were probably able to hide a lot of that stuff. If you struggle with some of that stuff, you were able to hide it way better in your old church than you are here. Because now it has immediate fruit. You have a pattern of that for a few months. Wow. It really impacts everybody. 1 Timothy 5 verse 24 through 25 says, The sins of some people are conspicuous. That means they're easy to see.

Going before them to judgment. But the sins of others are clear later. So also good works are conspicuous. And even those that are not cannot remain hidden. Maybe at Bellicose you got warned about certain sins.

[30 : 34] Maybe you had people challenge you on certain things. But you never really felt the weight of real consequences. Because you're in this good family.

Propped you up. Well, here you're going to feel it. And other people are going to feel it. We're all going to feel it. I think a good question. Josh has asked this question before. I think it's a great question.

If everyone lived like you, would you want to be part of our church? If everyone in our church lived like you live, would you want to be part of it? All right. My immediate answer to that is no.

There's immediately things I think of like, ooh, no, I would not. If everyone lived like me, like I'm definitely relying on some other people filling in on areas of my own immaturity right now.

Those are the things we need to repent from. So anyway, that's the bad side. That's the, this is the, these are the things we need to grow up in.

[31 : 32] God's plan. What's God's plan? What's the positive? This is the problem. What's the answer to this problem? One is he challenges us to imitate our leaders and grow up to be like them in the things that are according to Christ.

Paul says, follow me as I follow Christ. Um, Hebrews 13 verse seven through eight says, remember your leaders. Those who spoke to you, the word of God, consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. So like all the good things we appreciate about our old church, the leadership and the culture, the thing he's challenging us to do is to recognize we don't have a different Jesus than they have.

We don't. We have the same Jesus. We also don't have a different nature than they have. We don't. We have the same nature. We're still sinners. We're saved by grace. The same God who saved them by grace and worked in them the things that they couldn't do themselves.

He's going to do with us. And the promise is Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. I don't have to look back and be like, well, that's cool for, you know, the Christopherson family.

[32 : 48] But me, yeah. It's not the case. He's the same. It's the same Jesus. Which circles back here to this promise in Ephesians.

I'm just going to read it again. This is what Paul's praying for for the church. For this reason, I bow my knees before the father from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.

That according to the riches of his glory, he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his spirit in your inner being so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith so that you being rooted and grounded in love may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

We've talked about the baptism of the Holy Spirit a lot. I think we just need to talk about it more. Like, he's saying, the reason I'm bowing my knees before God is so that you would be strengthened with power by the Holy Spirit.

There's not a 42-step list to counteract all the points that I went through. God's answer is, be strengthened with power by the Holy Spirit. It's a free gift.

[34 : 01] Okay? You had, our sins were innumerable. You know? You could, they're innumerable. They're massive. God didn't have, like, an innumerable number of solutions that matched the innumerable number of our sins.

He had one solution, Christ. What he did for us on the cross. His blood took care of all of it. In the same way, when we think of our innumerable points of immaturity, God has one solution. The Holy Spirit. God has one solution. That we would be filled and strengthened with the Holy Spirit. That Christ Jesus would live in our hearts through faith. And that he would love people through us.

You know? And so, anyway, I think that's really it. And this is, this is a very simple, it's a very simple truth. It's a very simple solution. But, I think the challenge is sometimes not necessarily that we understand what the solution is.

Is we just don't see that we even have a problem in the first place. Okay? Because our mom and dad, quote unquote, protected us from it. Well, now we're out of the house. We moved out.

[35 : 09] We got to pay all our own bills. You know? You got to pay car insurance now. You know, metaphorically speaking. If you wreck your car, you got to pay for it. We got to pay for it.

Mom and dad aren't going to pay for it anymore. And the Lord's grace is sufficient for all of that. But we do need to take a step back and think about it. I think we really need to take a season.

I think it would be helpful just to pray and say, Lord, all right. I went to an awesome church. That's awesome. But that also means there's probably some gaps.

Other people were taking the load for me. And just say, Lord, what is it? I don't want to be blind to it. We're in the foundation setting stages of our church right now. The culture that we have right now is going to grow.

It's not going to change. It's going to grow. You know? We need to think about that. We need to think about what is the culture that I want? What kind of church would I like to go to?

[36 : 09] Most of the time, it actually just lined up with what the Bible speaks about. Because the Spirit bears witness and says, man, that's what I want. I want a church that preaches the simplicity of Christ. I want a church that preaches the free grace of God that's not a license to sin, that makes us like Jesus.

I want to go to a church that has the power of God present. It's not just talk, but power. You know? I want to go to church where people prophesy. People, somebody comes in, and one of my friends I've been on mission to for a long time, I can't get through.

They come in, and my brother says something, and they just get their book read. That doesn't happen because we're a bunch of smart people. That happens because Jesus is here through the power of the Holy Spirit living in us.

I want to go to a church like that, you know? And the fact of the matter is, if I'm sitting here protecting myself from maturity, it's not going to happen.

We're all just going to keep coasting and just be another hypocrite, a bunch of hypocrites. But that's not what the Lord has for us. A hundred percent.

[37 : 17] Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. I love this last little bit.

I thought about reading this kind of just a benediction, this last two verses, because it really is. Ephesians 3, verse 20 through 21. Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think.

This is awesome. More than all the things that we are asking and that we're even thinking about right now. That's amazing. According to the power of work within us. To him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations.

Forever and ever. Amen. What's in front of us is better than what we liked. Okay? That's not to say this church is going to be better than Belkos. No. They're going to do great. The Lord's going to bless them. For us, though, it's going to be better because the Lord calls to do something different. Way better. All right? He's doing a work in and through us, the church, for his glory. The Lord is jealous for the name of Jesus to be exalted.

[38 : 27] He's jealous for it. And it will be. He says it will. He says, be still and know I am God. I will be exalted. He's going to do it. So.

But let's realize how he's going to do it. Okay? He's going to come in. He's going to clean house. He's going to say, when I'm feeling a little bit picked on by the Holy Spirit, I'm feeling a little bit ouchy because there's an area of my life I protected my whole life.

Somehow. I managed to get by my whole life. And he's pulling up the shades. He's saying, that's got to go. That's falling short of the glory of God. And I'm like, but what about that guy?

Spirit says, what's that to you? You follow me. Spirit says, what's that to you? We need to realize that that's how he's going to work with every single one of us. And that's what produces the culture of love.

That's what produces a foundation of being rooted and grounded in love. He is bringing things into alignment with his son. And that's what produces love.

[39 : 37] You know, laying down our lives for each other. And that's the culture. Like, he wants to set that foundation, being rooted and grounded in that love. And it will grow.

Okay? The house that grows on top of that, we're going to have a culture that is just founded in love. Because we're letting him come in and clean house.

Yes. So, that's really what I had on my heart. I think the Lord wants to let us understand a little bit better where we're really at. And just because we went to a great church doesn't mean you got a whole bunch of maturity by proxy.

Okay? It does mean that in certain areas, but there's probably areas where it's just not the case. And we need to come before the Lord and say, Lord, what do you want?