

# How His Love Shelters the Believer

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[ 0 : 00 ] I have a very, very important announcement at the start and that is that there is a black car outside whose battery is being tested.! The car is ALX9350 and I have a question to go with this. How many of you actually know your license plate?

Okay, that means that there's a fair share of you that are wondering if the black car belongs to you. Our usher would be very glad to take care of that for you if you wish.

If not, afterwards we have jumper cables. Choices are up to you, you know. My humor has gotten me in trouble many, many times. I trust my sister is not unduly troubled by that.

Okay. I love when you sing. But I love to be able to say, open the Bible.

Because were it not for the Bible, our singing would not be well informed. Isn't that right? And apart from the glory of the revelation of the Word of God, encouraged and nurtured by the Spirit of God in the life of the child of God, our singing wouldn't amount to much of eternal significance.

[ 1 : 51 ] I hardly think there's a Sunday that I don't ask you to pray for me. But I gotta tell you, this is a very special Sunday. And the reason for that is this is a very special text.

It really is. We are coming to the core of perhaps one of the passages that I would plead with you to memorize for your own soul's edification.

Let me read it to you. For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father. 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 to you to be strengthened with power through his spirit in your inner being.

So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And 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.

[ 3 : 01 ] And to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. I gotta tell you, I would be troubled if a believer didn't know John 3.16.

Would you agree with me? Well, how's it start? For God so loved the world, right? And I'm not as troubled that you don't have this passage memorized, but I gotta tell you, it's a keeper.

It should be one of those go-to texts that you hold and cherish. And when you find your life unhinged and troubled by the uncertainties and the problems of life, this passage should be one of those that comes forward to comfort and encourage and sustain you in the flood.

And that's what life is like. I would plead with you. You go ahead and say, God being my helper, I'm gonna memorize this passage. By the way, I would encourage you to go on notice with other people.

Do you know what I mean by notice with other people? You go to other people and say, pray for me because two weeks from now, Lord willing, I'm gonna have verse 14 done. And then 15, whatever. You plan it out and you knock it out so that the Word of God is there in your heart as the resource when your day and your life is challenged, and it will be.

[ 4 : 31 ] The title of the sermon this morning is How His Love Settles the Believer. And so I'm going to ask that you join me in praying. I am going to pray for God's help in preaching, and that I'm a faithful messenger of His precious Word.

And I'm going to ask that you would pray that you would attend to the Word of God with the enabling of the Spirit, and that you pray for this person who is standing before you to deliver the Word, that it be done in a fashion that pleases Christ and makes you different.

Father God, we are reminded of what it says in 2 Corinthians, that we have this treasure in earthen vessels, and we are painfully aware of that. Father God, you know our frailty better than we do.

You know the struggles and the inconsistency, the lack of certainty in our affections for you, and you are so merciful to us.

Your love never gives up. And this morning we come and we hold this Word that you have given to us that's a prize. It's a gift. And we hold this Word with confidence, knowing that in addition to having the Word of God, those who are the children of God have the indwelling Spirit that is actively engaged in helping us learn and grow to know more of Jesus.

[ 6 : 05 ] And we want your help this morning. We're so thankful that not only have you granted to your children salvation and eternal life, but you are also at work today helping us change so that we're not the way we were yesterday.

We want to grow. And we ask that your Word would do its work that would have free course and not be hindered. And we pray it in Jesus' name and for His glory.

Amen. Well, I want you to look with me at this passage and pick up there in the latter part of verse 17. It says that you, being rooted and grounded in love.

And you may think to yourself, well, pastor is taking a rather small part of this text. And I confess that. But on good record, I want you to know that there are others that have taken many more sermons to get through just a couple verses in this core part of Ephesians chapter 3.

And so I want you to listen with me and follow along in the passage as we look at this very, very essential truth of just how foundational and how critical understanding, comprehending, appreciating the love of Christ is in the believer.

[ 7 : 20 ] But let me kind of set some background for you because when you see those words and just look at them on the face of it, it says, oh, okay, rooted and grounded, big deal, let's move on.

The words don't mean anything unless we really stop and think, so how important is it to be rooted and grounded? So I want to establish that for you, first of all, by reminding you of the profound weight of human existence.

How easy is it being you and how comfortable are you on occasion with just the heartache of human life? The scriptures really are abundant in explaining to us that life is tough.

Now listen to a couple different passages, if I may here recite. In Job chapter 5 verse 7 it says, as a man is born to trouble, as sparks fly upward.

How many of you have been out camping and noticed that the sparks do what? Judith and I were camping last fall and I had pitched the tent, it's all my fault, I pitched the tent a little too close to where the fire pit was.

[ 8 : 24 ] And later on I noticed that my lovely tent that I bought on eBay had little holes in it. Do you know what the little holes were from?

As sparks fly up, so are troubles to a man. And there it was, I had burned little holes. Thankfully it was in the outer layer, blah, blah, blah. But here's the point, sparks do go up and you better plan for it, it's part of life.

Job chapter 14 verse 1 puts it this way, man is born to trouble as the sparks fly up. You got that? And then again in Job it says, a man who is born of woman is few of days and full of trouble.

Few of days and full of trouble. I want you to look at another passage in relationship to this. Turn back in your Bible if you will to Ecclesiastes. And we're going to pick up in Ecclesiastes chapter 2. Ecclesiastes chapter 2 verse 22 and 23. What has a man from all the toil and striving of heart with which he toils beneath the sun?

[ 9 : 26 ] For all his days are full of sorrow and his work is a vexation. Even in the night his heart does not rest. This is also vanity. And as I come to you this morning I know that I don't tell you anything new.

For you that are seasoned in your life you'd have to admit that life is filled with challenge and uncertainty. And to put it in cryptic or poetic terms rather, you'd have to say that life is all uphill.

It is marked by groanings. It's marked by our tears. It's marked by deep frustrations and disappointments that all of you will carry to a certain degree until the day you go home.

We may find ourselves occasionally thinking that life would undeniably get better if certain things happen to us. You ever catch yourself thinking that way?

I mean, what's the Powerball at right now? Does anybody know? Raise your hand and wave at me if you know what Powerball is. There are no suckers in the crowd. Okay, I got that. I thought it was like \$600 million.

[10:31] Now, I have never bought a lottery ticket. But I have found myself thinking on occasion that if I had \$600 million, life would have to be better.

Now, I admit, I admit that's very carnal and very childish. But I suspicion that looking at some of the smiles on your faces, there are a couple of you that have thought somewhat like that.

You know, if you had a better job, if you had different people to work with. I mean, after all, you know, it's hard to fly like an eagle when you work with... See, you guys have read those signs in people's offices, right?

Okay, and so we've all caught ourselves thinking that we would be happier if our circumstances were somewhat different. But I want you to understand that our problems are significantly deeper than that.

The root causes of human instability and turmoil really lie in other places. And I want you to recognize two foundational truths in relationship to that.

[11:31] For one, we live in a broken world. Why is it that in this passage where Paul says that you would be rooted and grounded in love, why do those words mean anything to us?

It's because you and I live in a broken world. You think back to the passage in Genesis chapter 3, and I'm not going to have you turn there because I think you're fairly familiar with the text.

But you'll remember that immediately after sin entered the garden, God came to Adam and Eve and said, Let me tell you what the consequences of your disobedience and your sin are going to be.

And life became profoundly hard as a result of sin.

And it still is. Now, it is not as bad life as it will someday be, where, as we read in the book of Revelation, God is going to remove some of the restraining ministry of the Spirit of God and expose unregenerate men in particular to the dual burdens of His wrath and the unchecked nature of sin.

But the truth of the matter is that the world is still a hard place. I think back to the passage in Romans chapter 8, verse 22, where it says this. It says, I want you to think with me just for a moment this morning of what Kermit Gosnell was doing there in that abortion clinic.

[13:12] As day after day, He was sacrificing the lives of little unborn children. And those who had managed to escape the terror of that performance eventually had a pair of scissors used to snip their neck and destroy their life right there.

And that's not just one place. That's going on all over. All over. You recognize that we live today in a country that is progressively declining in its moral clarity.

And the things that are happening around us, they remind us that we live in a troubled world. And I want you to recognize that as you look at this condition going on all around us, you recognize it is a broken world.

It's a troubled world. And we live in the middle of it. And it's understandable why Paul would then write that you could be rooted and grounded. There's another thing that makes life hard and unstable.

We struggle with a shrunken world view. We struggle with a shrunken world view. Now, what do I mean by that? Let me put it this way.

[14:19] Instead of being overwhelmed with the right view of God, men and women shuffle to the mirror every day and ask them that little cryptic question from Disney, mirror, mirror on the wall, what?

Who's the fairest of them all? You know what we're really asking? We're asking the mirror, hey, am I really the most significant? And the truth of the matter is, is whether we ask the question or not, you can discover how easily you are connected to that concern by how you respond when things don't go your way.

We live in a day and age where men and women are consumed with themselves. And in our culture, it's a justifiable and understandable behavior.

Now, we do attach psychological terms to this, but in the court of heaven and in Scripture, this is nothing more than false worship and a fawning trust in man.

I want you to turn in your Bible to look at another passage that I think is very significant in relationship to this question. Turn over in your Bible, if you would, to Jeremiah chapter 17. One of the things that goes with pastoral ministry, and I think back over 30 years of ministry and the countless opportunities I've had of encouraging people who are struggling deeply with the challenges of life, I'm reminded that there are forces at play.

[ 15 : 43 ] Individuals either trusting in the significance and supremacy of God or getting wrapped up and consumed with themselves. Jeremiah chapter 17, verse 5 and 6, let me read it to you.

Here's what it says. It says, Thus says the Lord, Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the Lord. He is like a shrub in the desert and shall not see any good come.

He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness in an inhabited salt land. Now, stop and think with me. When we are trusting in man and we're trusting in ourself, undeniably, invariably, our lives are very troubled and uncertain and reasonably so.

Why is that? Because we are not trustworthy individuals in the end. And it's appropriate for us to recognize that there's a reason.

We are thinking the way we are. It's because we have a shrunken worldview. You want to know people who are overwhelmed and anxious, who are greatly troubled by their existence and the problems they face?

[ 16 : 48 ] You are looking at an individual who has that mindset, who fundamentally is struggling with an uncertainty in the God they say they trust in. And when our lives are turned away from resting on the foundation of the character and Word of God, we end up in anxiety and trouble.

Insecurity and instability are the unintended fruit of self-worship and self-consumption.

I want to say that carefully because I think it's important to recognize. Insecurity and instability are the unintended fruit of self-worship and self-consumption.

Let's think now, having recognized the problem of what the Scriptures tell us over in Ephesians 3. And I want you to turn to that passage and just follow along with me as we pick through the lesson that God has here for us. Ephesians 3, verse 17, it says that you might be rooted and grounded.

[ 18 : 05 ] And I want you to recognize that these two words are not Paul's poetic effect. Now, what do we mean by poetic effect? How many of you recognize that sometimes you, or maybe others, say more than needs to be said because you're hoping that in the volume of words there's going to be something good happen?

You just kind of rattle on and you stick one thing after another and there's no really meaning to it. You're just trying to fill in the gaps. That's not what Paul is doing. And the reason we know this is because the Spirit of God never wastes energy and never spouts off just to hear himself spout.

The words are important. The word rooted comes to us from the agricultural world and it refers to the way in which a plant is transplanted and then eventually begins to spread its roots into the soil and begins to take from the soil the nutrients that it needs around.

Over the years I have planted a number of different trees and I recognize that if you don't do a good job, one of the things that can happen two or three years later, you can come there and grab that tree and kind of shake it and guess what you can do?

I've had a couple of bushes that I've planted that I was able to pull out with my own hand. Why is that? Because it had not taken root in the soil around.

[ 19 : 23 ] And Paul uses this word that communicates to us the idea of working the tentacles of those little roots into the ground and finding the stability that they need.

Being rooted is a reference to our relationship with Christ. If you are established and rooted, it really has bearing on your being related to Christ and being attentive to that relationship.

Look over in your Bible if you would to John chapter 15 verse 4 and 5. John chapter 15 verse 4 and 5. So you can kind of look at your life this morning and ask yourself the question, If I know the Lord Jesus, am I abiding in Him?

And as a result of that abiding, do I have this established, settled certainty? And is there a rooted relationship that nurtures me and strengthens me and gives to me stability in the uncertainty of the world that I live in?

I want you to recognize the second word that Paul uses there in Ephesians, grounded, is a word that comes to us from the building trade. I visit people periodically up at Riverside Hospital.

[ 21 : 04 ] And some of you who drive by there or work in that proximity know that they're in the process of building this great big structure, neuroscience. And you know, it's the first place to go if you have a stroke or whatever.

It's a place to take care of people that are sick. Do you understand that before you go up, you better go down? And here is Paul saying to the believer, listen, listen.

You need to be rooted. You need to have a network that establishes your relationship and nurtures that relationship with Christ. And you have to get your strength and your nutrition from the person and the character of Christ.

Secondly, you need to be grounded. You need to be grounded. I think just for a moment of a passage over in Luke chapter 6. And let's turn there if you would.

Luke chapter 6, verse 47 and 48. Luke chapter 6. We could sing a song together on this one, but you don't want me to do special music.

[ 22 : 06 ] I can tell you that. 47. Here we are. I'm sorry.

Ah, there it is. Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like. He is like a man building a house who dug deep and laid foundations on the rock. And when a flood rose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it because it had been, what? Well built.

Hey, listen to me. I don't know your life. But here's what I know. Every single one of you, from what it told us in Job and Ecclesiastes, is going to have storms happen in your life.

Do you understand that? You're going to have heartbreak. You're going to have disappointments.

Things aren't going to go your way. You're going to have things that you were counting on suddenly come to nothing and plans that you had fall apart.

[ 23 : 08 ] And in the midst of that, if you are not grounded in the work and the word of Christ, you are going to be a very fragile and uncertain person.

What Jesus is saying in this passage is that the man that hears the word of Christ and lives by them is a stable man. He's a stable man. Not because the man himself is stable by his own nature, but because he is stabilized because he is resting on the word of God and the character of God.

That's one of the reasons why I care so deeply about your growing affection for the word of God and your ability to hold on to it. When we sing our songs, what would I like you to do?

What's the consistent appeal? I was debating as I was sitting up here this morning listening to Jeff as he was leading us and kind of cross-checking off different Bible verses in my own mind. I was wondering maybe I ought to get up here this morning and say, all right, how many of you are doing that?

And two or three of you raised your hands, so I'll wait until next week because ten of you will raise your hands. That's what I'm waiting for. I want you to have the word where? In your life. Let me tell you something.

[ 24 : 20 ] A test of growth. Listen to me carefully. Here's how you know whether you are making spiritual progress and you're growing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus.

Follow with me. Psalm 119, verse 24. Go there. Psalm 119, verse 24. Let me just recite it to you and I think it's another one worth memorizing.

Your testimonies are my delight. They are my... What? You're not there yet. Some of you who know it by heart don't want to recite it, but let's do it together, okay?

Your testimonies are my delight. They are my counselors. Now, let's come to the test. A test of your spiritual growth and maturity is how quickly the word of God comes to mind when you're thinking what you shouldn't be thinking.

How many of you struggle with thinking things you shouldn't think? One, two, three or four. Okay, the rest of you just got brains that are just hyper spiritual.

[ 25 : 35 ] Now, here's the deal. Just talk a little bit about me. Earlier this week, last week, some things happened to people, to me, and I found myself getting bent out of shape. You know what bent out of shape looks like in a pastor's mind?

It looks just like it does in yours. I was beginning...here's how far it went. I was even beginning to search the scriptures so I could pull up Bible verses that would serve me.

And the Spirit of God got a hold of my life. I am so thankful. And one passage after another began correcting my deviant thinking.

And I was rescued. Psalm 119, verse 24. The scriptures are my counselor.

And if you are growing in spiritual maturity, the break between those dumb, ignorant, foolish, wicked, arrogant thoughts you have and the scriptures is narrowed.

[ 26 : 52 ] Isn't that good? So how are you doing? I want you to understand that if we are going to grow in this matter of being rooted and established, we need to recognize that growing to be settled in the word takes time.

Can I say that slowly? Growing to be settled in the word takes time. Don't you wish it happened sooner? Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah. But you can tell how you're doing at this growth process by how quickly the word of God rescues your stupid, wicked, arrogant, stubborn, belligerent thinking.

Well, let's go on because we're not at the core of the verse. There's more to come. It says here that you being rooted and grounded in what?

In love. Now, stop and think with me just for a moment. And I do want you to know next week we're going to talk about this issue of love in greater detail. But I want you to recognize that Paul begins his prayer over there in verse 14.

[ 28 : 16 ] He says, For this reason I bow my knees before the Father. This is what I'm praying for. I'm asking that you would have prosperity and that you would have a better job and that you would have a new car and that you'd have a nice house so everybody would think you're blessed spiritually.

Is that what he's praying for? No. He's not praying for that at all. He says, Here's what I want. I want you to have the power of the Spirit of God working in your inner man that Christ may dwell in you and that you would be rooted and grounded in his love.

What is the stability of his love? It's really stunning to stop and consider the simplicity of Paul's remedy for the profound challenges that we face in life.

Do you know what most people do when they face challenges today? Honestly? Just ask yourself what you've done. The most common way of facing challenges is not to do what scripture tells us, but what the world tells us.

That's the way it is. And here's what Paul says. He says, Listen, I'm praying that you would be rooted and grounded in love. And so I look at this passage and I'm reminded that at the end of the day the thing that is most significant is the love that he has for us.

[ 29 : 49 ] Last Wednesday, I was out there in the lobby and I picked up one of our bulletins that had the stories of two different individuals who are suffering for their faith, one in Pakistan and the other in Iran.

And I found myself praying for them and my first prayer was, Lord, would you protect them and would you release them? Yeah, appropriate.

But as I continued to pray, I found myself also praying, and Lord, would you please let them know where they are in prison, that they're loved by you. That your love hasn't changed.

That your love is actively at work in their lives in prison, just as it is in my life. And as I said that, I reminded myself of a couple different passages, one in Romans where it says, Guess what?

All things work together for good. You know, Paul says that I want you, I want you to understand that you are rooted and grounded in his love.

[ 30 : 57 ] And so let's kind of break that down into two different pieces. Let's talk about the fact that his love is unfailing whether we feel it or not. It's true.

Because of the work of Christ and the character of Christ. His love is unfailing whether we feel it or not. I've said this repeatedly.

That on numerous occasions in the process of counseling and ministering to individuals, I wish, because in our current culture, everything we hope for really comes in the form of a pill.

Do you realize that? Give me a pill. That's got to help. And I've often thought to myself, I wish I had little pills that were actually the distilled love of Christ.

And I could take one of these every day. You'll feel better. And Paul says, I want you to be rooted and grounded in love.

[ 31 : 56 ] And his love is unfailing whether we feel it or not. It's true. Because of who Christ is and because of what he's done for us, the work of Christ points to his atonement and his intercession.

And he's praying for you. And he's praying for you. He doesn't get better than that. The character of Christ refers to the fact that he is the Son of God and he cannot lie and he doesn't change his mind. He will not go back on his covenant and he will do all that is necessary to get the job done. That's encouraging, isn't it? But I can also tell you that sometimes it can be a little sobering.

Judith and I are in the process of raising another little puppy. The last dog was going to be our own, our last one until this last one died and then we have a new one. You know how that goes.

And this little puppy, when she goes on a walk with me, strangely enough, I'm in charge. She isn't. And if she doesn't come when I want her to come, guess what happens to the leash?

[ 33 : 02 ] I just keep on walking. And I'm putting 195 pounds to the process. She weighs six. And it's a process for this little puppy to learn.

You know, she's out there. I'm saying, come on. Come on. And that's the way some of you are, right?

You're all over the thing. And he's just, what's he doing? He's pulling you along, isn't he? How much fun is it to be pulled along? It's not fun. You see, Jesus loves us whether we realize it or not.

And he's not going to change. But there's a second thing I want you to see in this. Paul says there in Ephesians, rooted and grounded in love. I want you to understand that there is the objective part of his love, but then there is the second part, which is the kind of the discovery part or the experiential part.

We will grow to feel more secure as we grow in knowing the depth of his love for us. That's one of the reasons why, actually, hear me out here, being an older believer is better than being a younger believer.

[ 34 : 17 ] Why is that? It's because the older you grow in the faith, the more experience you have behind you that he is good. Isn't that right? Now, I like being young.

And there's part of me that would like to be young again, at least physiologically. You know, getting out of bed in the morning and having a lot of things talk to me about how they didn't feel like it when I was 30.

You know, it's like, live it with it. But here's the deal. The more you grow in grace, the more you appreciate the certainty of his love. Let me have you look with me just for a moment to a passage in 136, Psalm 136.

If you want to understand how important understanding the love of God is in the life of the believer, recognize the value of repetition as an indicator.

Psalm 136. And by the way, things we say over and over again generally are things we want to be certain, that our hearers understand clearly, right?

[ 35 : 27 ] Give thanks to the Lord for he is good. What's the next part? For his steadfast love endures forever. Give thanks to the God of gods for his steadfast love endures forever.

Give thanks to the Lord of lords for his steadfast love endures forever. That's kind of the starting point to this passage. Then in verse 4, for he alone who does great wonders for his steadfast love endures forever.

And on for 26 verses. There is one part that is repeated 26 times. Is that repetition or not? What's the answer? Yes.

Can anybody think of any other passage that has this much repetition on any other theme? I don't think of one. What's that tell us? The Spirit of God believes it's profoundly important for you to understand that his steadfast love endures forever.

I was thinking about that song. And I'm not very good with words to songs. But there's something about... Come on, help me out here.

[ 36 : 32 ] You know which song I'm thinking about, don't you? Okay. His love never gives up. Something blah, blah, blah. Help me out, Tim.

Say it again loudly. Stand up, please. He's a youth leader. Timothy, help me out. Say it loud. I like this song.

Your love never fails and never gives up and never unwell. Is that good? Amen. Thank you, Tim. That's what comes with being a youth leader. You get called on moment's notice, you know?

I gotta tell you, God never changes. Christ's love is absolutely certain. And the spirit of God wants you as a believer to be overwhelmed with that.

Let's talk about how we make progress in it. How do we grow in appreciating experientially the love of Christ? Now remember, objectively in the court of heaven, whether we feel like we're loved or not, God hasn't changed and he loves us anyway.

[ 37 : 45 ] We've got that part, don't we? But we want to talk about how do we feel a little bit more loved on a regular basis? Because we do need to feel that. Here's a way. First of all, daily time in his word and prayer will help you grow in understanding his love.

Often in my office when I'm talking with people whose lives are unhinged a little bit, and I'm sympathetic, one of the standard questions I ask is, talk to me about your devotional life.

Huh. I haven't read the Bible in months. I haven't prayed in months. Oh, you feel like he doesn't love you?

Surprise. It's not his problem. You've created this. And I've got to tell you, if you want to grow in appreciating his love and you're sitting there kind of wondering, can I get a pill or can I do it the other way?

I want to tell you, get in the word. Secondly, I want to encourage you to recognize that it's wise to meditate and put every thought about the cross and our salvation in focus because that will strengthen your sense of his love.

[ 39 : 09 ] Listen to me. You can't control some of the thoughts that you think for the moment that you think them. Would you agree with that statement? But you can control what you choose to think about repeatedly.

And the scriptures encourage us. Make every thought of the cross and your salvation the thing that strengthens your sense of his love.

Third, here we go. Choose to obey his loving directions. Remember what Jesus said in the scriptures? If you love me, what? What?

Let me say it again. If you love me, keep my commandments. Now, by the way, why does he give us his commandments? Does anybody have any idea?

Secret. Because his commandments are a reflection of his absolute perfection and wisdom, for one thing.

[ 40 : 10 ] They're also the means of his bringing blessing to us. I mean, you understand this? God poured manna out on the ground and he said, din din time, but you have to get up before sun's up.

Because if you didn't, what were you doing? You were on a Weight Watchers program long before it was invented. Okay? And God said, and by the way, the Sabbath is a real big thing to me.

So, when Friday night comes, you can gather two loads, you know, for two days in a row. But if you do it on any other day, what's going to happen to leftovers? This was before refrigeration too.

What's going to happen? You are going to be sorry. Here's what it says in 1 John. It says, and his commandments are not burdensome.

There is not a single thing that he has ever instructed his children to do that has not been for their benefit.

[ 41 : 11 ] Fourth, deliberately choosing to engage in loving his people and his mission. Will increase your sense of relationship and security.

I got to tell you. I went home last night absolutely pumped. I was fired up. And I just love watching, what did I call them, Kevin, the ants at work?

Remember that? Kevin laughing and Christy have been working all this food for all day and whatever, weeks or whatever. And towards the end of the evening, it was about 8.30, he was sitting out there in a chair, finally taking a break.

And I said, now the ants go to work. That was when all the ladies have cleared out. And then the men descended. It was just, I was just eating it up. I love it. I got to feeling inside like I'm involved in something bigger than Tim Knoyer.

Huh? There's some of you that, I'm not going to get involved. I don't have time for that. Yeah, I got, you know, and you kind of, so what's wrong?

[ 42 : 23 ] So the critical question is this, this morning. Do you have the stability and security that Paul says is found in the love of Christ?

That's a question. Paul's praying. He says, listen, I want you to enjoy this. I want you to understand being rooted and grounded in love. Do you have it? I got to tell you, if you're drinking from the stream of living water, you got it.

The storms of life will batter you. They're coming. They're there already. But you know what? I'd like to recite the poem against Tim, but you know, his love never gives up.

He never gives up. And so, here's my appeal to you. Number one, I want you to ask yourself this question objectively and honestly.

Do I know Christ as my personal savior? I'm not talking about you know the history. I'm talking about the fact that in order to know Christ as our personal savior, we have to be willing to hear the words of Christ that tell us that all men stand justly condemned before a holy God and judgment is what we deserve.

[ 43 : 48 ] And yet, God sent his son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to be the sacrifice for our sins and he died on the cross to pay the penalty for my despicable and wicked heart.

And I came to Christ by confessing I am a sinner and I stand condemned and I believe Jesus died for me and I want what he has done for me applied to my life.

So, are you here today and know Christ as your savior? Or are you one of those individuals who's so full of yourself at this point and the spirit of God's tapping on your heart and saying, man, the reason you're so anxious and uncertain and terrified of the prospect of your eternity is because you do not know Christ as your savior.

And this morning is the day to trust in him. And if you're here this morning and know Christ as your savior, let me tell you something.

The spirit of God wants you to be happy and settled in the love of Christ. I love that passage in Galatians where it says we are the circumcision.

[ 44 : 53 ] I know I've cited it before. But it says we're the circumcision that what? Worship God in spirit, rejoice in the Lord Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. So, are you going through life kind of skipping along and thankful that he is your savior and that he loves you and you're looking forward to the day that you see him?

Or are you kind of slogging along, along with the rest of the lemmings in life, just uncertain of where it all ends up, unhappy? No, no, no. Here's what it says.

Keep yourself in the love of God. Let's close in prayer. Precious Father, this morning as we think together of what your word tells us, we recognize that the purpose of opening the scriptures is to put us on the spot of saying yes or no to God.

There are some here today that need Christ as their personal savior. It is my plea and the plea of every believer here this morning that today would be the hour of salvation and that the heart that has been resistant to the sweetness of the hope of eternity and the Lord Jesus Christ would confess and believe and be saved.

There are believers here today, Lord, that have bought into the world's line and lies. Their lives are consumed by anxiety, obsessed with things that have no eternal significance.

[ 46 : 29 ] And the remedy is the love of Christ. But, Lord, to get that, such an individual would have to humble themselves before you and ask for forgiveness for drifting away into idolatry and ask you to change their life no matter what the cost.

We ask that you do these things that you might be glorified. In your precious name, amen.