

Becoming a Person

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[0 : 00] Ephesians 4, beginning at verse 1. I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of your calling, to which you have been called.

With all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, there is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call.

One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.

Verse 8, Therefore it says, When he ascended on high, he led a host of captives and gave gifts to men. In saying he ascended, what does it mean?

But that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth. He who descended is the one who also ascended far above the heavens, that he might fill all things.

[1 : 13] And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for works of ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and to the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure and stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up into every way, into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

Well, may God add blessing to his word, to us, as we receive his word in this context before we get to the message.

So we're going to continue in our praise and then we're going to come back to this in message form. Thank you. Ed, last week, if you've followed this series from the beginning, it'll make it'll make sense in the same way three jigsaw pieces that belong together will make sense because one follows the next one both biblically and logically with great reason.

Biblical reason, of course, not my own. And so, I haven't got time to readdress what has been addressed so far, but hopefully you'll be able to pick up the gist.

[3 : 09] These four messages are simply to address the unity, disunity that's found in the church or a unified disunity which happens when either the leadership doesn't know what to do or doesn't want to do anything about it.

The other options would be that someone in the leadership does want to do something about it but knows that if they do then there'll be further disunity because of the changes that are being made.

So, this leaves the inevitable conundrum of the rock and the hard place in that you have you create disunity if you do something but you're left with disunity if you do nothing.

So, what do you do? And as you've been noticing that week one laid out the problem week two laid out the necessary conditions to address the problem that is to bear with one another in love but that is the only way to move forward.

Then I stepped perhaps on a few toes in talking through the boundaries and why it's difficult in a church to decide who makes the boundary decisions.

[4 : 34] Do the leadership make it on behalf of the parents? Do the parents make it on behalf of their own children? Where is the line drawn? And the moment you draw a line then it's possible for the leadership to overstep it or for to not step up to the line or for parents to overstep it in the other direction.

So, you've got a situation that is automatically very difficult even before you begin to address it you have to think very hard how to address it before you address it.

and the reason for that is thinking through how you will address it and playing all the options out is far less painful because it only happens in your mind than it is to actually play those out in real life in ignorance and experience all the bad decisions that come from that.

So, thinking things through is all that we're doing in these messages. We've not even got on to the stage of addressing them. Okay? All that we're doing is thinking through what it would look like if we were to address them and what needs to be addressed.

Hence why no one feels that any disunity is being created by what I'm preaching on because no one's having their feathers ruffled because no one's saying right now we're going to do this.

[6 : 02] So, these four messages are really thinking the things through. The difficulty comes however okay, like I said in the next year when you actually put these things into practice.

Okay? That's the difficulty. So, all I'm doing here is laying out in thought those trajectories. So, last time we considered just how important it is for a church to bear with one another in love.

That is the necessary condition to do anything in the church. That is the necessary condition to address any issue in the church, to bear with one another in love.

Now, the test of this is going to come, as I said. We've not been tested on whether or not we're able to bear with one another in love because we've not yet got onto the issues that will require or at least expose or that is actually a test to whether or not we can actually do that.

That'll come. In fact, this message might actually be the very beginning of whether or not we're able to bear with one another in love. Now, here's the important thing to point out.

[7 : 18] We are not to test whether or not we can love each other. We are never to test whether or not we can bear with one another in love. There should be no pressure testing existing within the church.

For example, how far can I push a person to see whether or not they'll continue to love me? That should never be happening. So we don't sin against each other on the basis well, I'm going to test that person to see whether or not they can still bear with me in love by me doing something against them.

Now, I know that that kind of thing happens happens in marriages, it happens in other kind of relationships, church relationships, where people take the other person's ability to love them as a reason for pushing against them.

They're going to have to love me, I'm married to them. They're going to have, right? And we use that as a reason for pushing then, and then when it goes wrong, they're not loving.

And what we're going to move on to this evening is, okay, what does that actually, look like if we're going to do it properly? So, love does get tested, but it shouldn't be tested arbitrary.

[8 : 33] It shouldn't be tested to get away with doing what you want to do. Love covers a multitude of sins, but love does not cover up any sin.

Okay? Love covers a multitude of sins, that means it knows how to deal with it, but it never covers up sin. sin. And it's clear that Christians get those two mixed up all the time.

And so it's clear that they therefore then need to be addressed. Okay? Love covers sin in that it knows how to deal with sin, but it never covers it up.

And so when Christians mess that up, okay, it simply adds to the unified disunity that a church has to deal with. the other thing to notice about these messages is that they are teleological, which is one of the first things you learn when you study the Bible.

And all that it means is just a fancy word that people like to use who get paid a lot of money to tell you these words. They have to use fancy words to justify what they're being paid to teach you, right?

[9 : 42] And all that it means is that you teach the Bible with an end point in mind. It has to lead somewhere. In other words, these sermons, hence why I said what I said at the beginning of this evening, have to lead somewhere.

They are set up in order to go from where we are to where we ought to be. So the whole of Scripture, biblical education, is teleological.

In other words, it has the end point in mind. It leads somewhere. And that somewhere is maturity in Christ. Maturity in the body of Christ.

Christ. And so that journey along the way is where our love for one another gets tested. Because like anything that is maturing and not yet already mature, it has the necessary components of not just how to work together, but also how to fall out, because we're not yet perfect.

So we have a combination of both. We have the things that enable us to love one another, but we also have the things that enable us to fall out with one another. A little bit of wisdom would help us to decipher the difference, but love gets tested in those moments, whether or not we can love with each other, love each other, bear with one another in love with each other.

[11 : 06] So we're not yet mature, but we are becoming mature, and the end point is to be mature in Christ. Christ. So at this point we have to notice the distinction, which is clear in scripture, between what a person does and who a person is.

Okay? Now, again, this is something that people are confused about, because it filters into the language. And so people will describe themselves, who are you? I'm a policeman. Who are you?

I'm a nurse. Well, no, that's what you do. Who are you? I'm a teacher. Okay? No, that's what you do. And who are you? I'm a pastor. No, that's what you do.

Okay? And one of the clarities that you need is being able to clearly identify what a person does from whom a person is.

And that's one of the things that's clearly pointed out in Ephesians 4. That we are to become mature in Christ, but we are to do lots of things at the same time. But what we do is not who we are.

[12 : 12] God gives gifts to people, but those gifts don't make the people different. Okay? Those people use those gifts. Okay? But the people are different from what they do.

So you are not your job. Your identity is not your job. Your identity is not your role. Okay? And sometimes we can struggle to find out who we are because all that people know us as is pastor, husband, wife, mother, teacher.

Okay? Their roles, not even they get close to who we are. And so we really need to understand who we are. Because none of those things describe, they describe roles that we do, they describe actions that we partake in, but they don't get to the bottom of who we are.

Not even, not even close. So all biblical education begins by describing and telling what a person is and what a person ought to be.

Now God points this out in the creation. He tells us what man is. He tells us that man was made in his image and then he gives man something to do. He does the same with a woman, a suitable person for Adam.

[13 : 34] Okay? But she too, like Adam, is made in God's image, that's who she is, and then she has this necessary role. You get exactly the same thing in the new creation.

When God wants to change the world, okay, he doesn't change the world by changing roles. He doesn't change the world by changing skill sets. He changes people because he knows that if he has a mature people, he will have a mature set of teachers.

He'll have a mature set of doctors and nurses. He'll have a mature set of mothers and husbands and fathers. Okay? You don't mature as a husband by working on being a husband.

You mature by becoming a mature husband by being a mature man. And then that will work its way through to being a husband, being a father.

Same with the doctor, same with the nurse, same with the teacher. So notice where God starts and then we will know where we need to start as we begin to work our way through these issues.

[14 : 38] So here's the first, the direct object. The direct object. We were told last time in scripture that we're to bear with one another in love.

But you will notice that it contains the direct object. Okay? The direct object is not absent. But too often Christians speak as though there is no direct object.

So we say things like you need to be more loving. Or he or she is a very loving person. Which tells you absolutely nothing.

And it tells you nothing because it doesn't contain the direct object. The reason being is because love has to be directed towards an object. So Jesus says love God.

But now it makes sense. Now it makes sense. I love God. Okay? Love is a verb. Loving is an intransitive verb.

[15 : 39] Which simply means you're in the process of directing it towards an object. So in the church when you have people saying, well, I wish I was more loving.

Or, you know, that person's not very loving. It doesn't tell you anything. Because love is neither good nor bad. You only know whether or not love is good or bad when you fill in the direct object.

That is, what's being loved. So Jesus says love God and love your neighbor. And we know that that's a good thing. But then Jesus says do not love the world. Which means that loving the world is a bad thing even though it uses the word love.

Okay? So even though it uses the word love, to love the world is not a good thing. at least not according to Jesus. So when we're talking about bearing with one another in love, we really need to consider what each other is actually loving.

So if we're loving each other as Christ loved us, that's a good thing. But we're not to bear with one another in love if the other person, okay, is loving the world.

[16 : 53] Okay? We are to bear with them in love, but we're not to copy them because their love is for the world is not a good thing, even though love is involved.

And this is absolutely crucial if we're going to understand what it is to really love like God wants us to love. Jesus does not want us to love the world even though he uses the word love.

Do not love it. Love is neither good or bad until you fill in the direct object. Loving the world is not good. Loving God is. Loving your neighbor is.

Bearing with one another in love in this way is good. But there are many ways to be incredibly loving that are completely wrong. Completely wrong.

But what happens in the world is that now they don't use the word loving so much as they use the word attraction, which again is not a biblical word. the biblical word that ought to be being used is temptation.

[17 : 58] Okay? But what happens is we realize that a word like that exposes too much so we swap out the words so that we don't have to identify or what we're actually doing, what we're actually up to.

So the challenge here is always going to be the object of our love and the purpose of our loving. love. So you want to be more loving?

Great. What do you want to love more? The world? I can't help you with that. In fact, I'm going to encourage you not to do that. Love God?

Okay, let's learn to do it together. Okay? Because that does take some learning. So that's the importance, the direct object. A church that loves, okay, can only be determine whether it's a good loving church or a bad loving church by the objects of the love.

And so when you love more than one thing, i.e. you love God and lots of other things, you then have the added complication of ordering those. But one of the blessings of love, which you find when you have children, for instance, is, you know, the first one comes along and it's not difficult to love the child.

[19 : 18] and then the second one comes along and you immediately think, where's the love going to come from for the next, right? Where's it going to come from? And all of a sudden, the child, you think, actually, there's more and some to spare.

Okay? And when you get to five, you realize, yes. Now, I don't want to test love much further than that, but the point is, is that's how love works. Love is eternal because God is eternal.

And so, there's enough to go around, but what it's directed to is the issue. So, you want to be more loving, or you want somebody else to be more loving? Fill in the direct object.

Don't leave it blank because it doesn't help at all. So, as we move on then, we move on to what it is to become a person. If we're going to love each other, bear with one another in love, then the next thing that follows is what does it mean to actually become a person?

Now, I want to point out there's a clear distinction here between becoming a person and becoming a doctor, between becoming a person and becoming a carpenter, between becoming a person and becoming a mother or a wife or whatever job or identity that might fill in that blank.

[20 : 40] There's a big distinction and difference between becoming a person and becoming one of those things. Therefore, the conundrum that you have or something that has to be understood is that a person can become trained in becoming a teacher or a doctor without ever being trained in being a person.

And we see that all the time. We see plenty of people who are supremely competent competent in their trained professions but completely incompetent in being a person.

Why? Because the world trains people to do something but doesn't actually train people to be people. Scripture does that. What Scripture does is it trains a person in how to be a person.

And so you can have a highly trained doctor that aborts children who hasn't learned for a moment what it is to be a person. Not even for a second.

Okay? This is why you can have business men that can hold down multinational companies but can't keep their family together. Okay? The reason why that happens is not just because of sin but it's actually due as well with the lack of biblical education that trains a person to become a person.

[22 : 05] Now when the church forgets this which the church can easily forget is we get new people in the church and the first thing we want to do is give them a job.

Why? We're making the same mistake as the world does. Now don't get me wrong the church needs trained people as it says here in Ephesians 4 to do the work of ministry within the church.

But too often that happens without ever taking into consideration the training of the person to actually become a person. So they're great in the ministry that they do but then the failing is not in their skill set it's actually in them being a person.

Think about it in terms of a marriage which is always a good illustration because it best illustrates the church. Are marriages good or bad? Is marriage good or bad?

Well you're going to go well whose marriage? marriage. Because you understand that marriage like love doesn't tell you anything. You need to fill in the blanks. And the blanks is who's married to who?

[23 : 13] What is the marriage like? The marriage depends on the people involved. And so you can have a good marriage or you can have a bad marriage. But there is no such thing, marriage on its own, as either being good or bad.

So when a marriage, for instance, begins to experience what I would call trouble in paradise, because that's what it should be most of the time, but we all know that sin can enter in and destroy it and disrupt it.

Where does the fault lie? Well you can't look at marriage and go, this marriage just isn't working for us. No, right? It's, the issue is either me or it's you or it's both of us.

You can't point to the marriage and this institution of marriage, this thing called marriage, that's the problem. Who invented it? That's not the problem. The problem is, is you, because you got married.

Okay? Whatever has gone wrong into the marriage, you brought with you when you got married. And that is exactly the same when it comes to the church.

[24 : 21] What we bring with us is what often causes the troubles much, much further down the line after the honeymoon period. Then it suddenly, then the truth suddenly begins to come out.

And so what happens is we all know we have to go back to sort it out, but too often we go back in the wrong way. And so most people try to sort their marriages out in the same way they rewind a bad movie and play it all over again.

It's going to be better this time. What? It's going to be the same beginning, middle and end. Okay, what you need is a different film. But how many of you sit at home having watched a DVD or a VHS film and go, we got halfway through, this is not very good, and rewind it back to the beginning and play it all over again thinking it's going to be different?

No one. But why is it that when you try to address problems in the church or in marriages or in any type of relationship, that's what happens. You go back knowing that you have to go back before the conflict emerge, but you only go back to the point where before it was apparent.

Okay, it wasn't apparent the first ten minutes into the film that it was going to be a bad film. But all the signs of it being a bad film or the conditions were there at the beginning. What you need to do is you need to go back before the film was even made and make the changes at that point and then bring it in.

[25 : 53] It's the same with people. Okay, it's the same with marriages. Okay, what you bring in is what will turn out further down the line. And that's the true with church membership.

That's one of the issues that you have with church membership. Okay, the doors of our church should be wide open, should be as broad as broad can be, so that anybody, man, woman, boy and girl, can enter into the fellowship and come here.

But the door to membership needs to be narrow. Incredibly narrow. Why? Because you don't marry everyone in the world. Okay, you marry someone who you recognize that this is going to last.

This is going to continue. Okay? It's not just about me being mature, but it requires him being mature. It's not just about him being mature, but it requires her to be mature.

Why? Because marriage means that they get together. Same with church membership. Okay? The reason why you have troubles down the line, and people say, oh, can we not just go back 10 years?

[27 : 03] Can we not just go back 15 years when it was good? All you're doing is going back to a time before the problems were apparent. But all the conditions were there. So, if we're going to address them, we have to address them by going far enough back.

And the way to do that is to begin with people, just like God does. The way to address anything out in any marriage, church, any relationship, is to start with the people.

Because it's the people that either make things immature, or make things mature, depending on their level of immaturity or maturity. So, how do we move forward from that?

Well, we have to learn the right lesson, and we have to learn it at the right time, or we have to retake the lesson at some point. If we don't, the unified disunity continues.

Unified disunity continues. And the reason it does is because the contributions are the same. Nothing's changed. Now, we want the church to be full of people who contribute, but we recognize immediately that there are good contributions, and then there are contributions that are not so helpful.

[28 : 26] And suddenly, it stirs up a hornet's nest, and you've got problems on your hand. Now, that can be caused by immaturity, that can be caused by sin entering in, temptation. Okay, there's a number of things that can actually cause that, but at the end of the day, it's maturity and bearing with one another in love that gets yourself out of that kind of trouble.

Okay? What stops a bad marriage getting worse? Well, bearing with one another in love, knowing that the end, okay, needs to be togetherness, needs to be maturity.

You don't walk away. Okay? Anybody can walk away, but you don't walk away. Okay? So, it's true that we want lots of people to contribute, but we want them to contribute in a way that is mature.

As I said, if you have mature people, then you have mature ministries. Okay? You cannot have a mature ministry without mature people. That will not happen.

You cannot have a mature fellowship that's able to bear with one another in love without having mature people. Now, if we use a slightly different illustration, i.e.

[29 : 36] children, when children are learning to mature, it's not easy. And one of the reasons it's not easy, and I spotted this in myself growing up, and I'm sure you did in yourself, is that you think you're much further ahead than what you are.

Okay? Every teenager, okay, thinks they have the wisdom of a 35-year-old or a 45-year-old. They all think they're further down the line than what they are. So one of the difficulties with dealing with immaturity is being able to point out that your immaturity is not allowing you to see your own immaturity because you think you're more mature than what you are.

And what they want is to surround themselves with a skill set or a dress sense, whatever it may be, without ever learning what it is to be a person.

So what do you do when you want to be older? Well, in the church, it should be a person. I want to be a person biblically understood.

I want to be the type of person that God considers a mature person to be. What do you want to do? Well, police officer, builder, carpenter, work in a shop, whatever it may be.

[30 : 53] Okay? Fill in the blanks. But what we do and what we are is a lesson that has to be learned. So we have to learn the right lessons. I'm going to give you an example. On one occasion, I had to take, whoops, on one occasion there was this child who had to be taken away from the tea table.

Okay? So we follow the basic principle that tea time or any time with the families together should be like the Garden of Eden before sin. Okay? And if anything crops up that is sinful or right, then you get ejected from the garden.

And you get ejected from the garden for the purposes of realizing that it's not so nice out there as it is here and you should desire to want to be back in the garden. So we have this tea time incident where the child has to leave this location for a location that's not quite so nice, all on their own, to learn that lesson.

Well, the child then sat there and pointed out to me that their mom had taught them how to count and that there were 60 seconds in a minute. And I thought, I'm impressed.

The child then went on to say, so how many do I have to count to? And I had to point out to her, that's not the lesson. You're not there to learn how to count.

[32 : 15] You're there to learn how to become a person. But too often, parents can discipline their children in a way that sounds more like a math lesson than it does actually training them to become a person.

How long have I got to be there? Well, you count to 50 and then you can get off. Okay? That's not the lesson. Even though counting may be a necessary skill, you are not training them to count.

You are training them to become a person. And yet too often, these lessons are not understood. So we discipline in terms of a math lesson and then wonder why they're not developing into the type of person that they ought to be.

Well, it's because we're not training them to be a person. We're training them how to count. So understand the right lesson and teach the right lesson. And the same has to apply in the church.

Too often, we deal with difficult people by trying to give them something to do. Okay? But that's not the lesson that needs to be learned. The lesson that needs to be learned is how to be a person.

[33 : 28] And too often, this is not learned because we concentrate on even the necessary skills. It's right that the child learns how to count. We want children to learn how to count.

But the reason you're here is not to do that. The reason you're here is to learn how to reflect in order to repent. So that you may be the person that God wants you to be.

That's the lesson. And that's the lesson that you have to learn. And so in the same way, the only way a church can move forward is to learn the right lessons. But too often, we want to learn how to count.

Too often, we want a skill set. So we give people jobs to do. Okay? We're not training anyone to be a person biblically understood. We're training them to do things.

And that doesn't create maturity. It creates further disruption further down the line. So here's the exhortation as we close.

[34 : 27] We know, hopefully, by this point, what needs to be addressed. We hopefully know why it needs to be addressed. And we should know, at least, have an inkling of how it needs to go forward from this.

Now, that doesn't mean there aren't plenty of questions that need to be asked. There are. But that also means that there are plenty of answers to be given, which there are. They're not missing.

And so, as I conclude now, I want to conclude with the final step. But I want to say that the final step, as these first three, are thoughts.

They're not yet actions. They would love to turn into actions, but at the moment, they're still in there thinking these things through. Hence why no feathers are ruffled.

Scripture makes clear that it is absolutely possible to restore people. It is absolutely possible to restore people who have sinned.

[35 : 30] There's just no doubt about that. But notice how they are restored. Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual, i.e. mature, should restore him in a spirit of gentleness.

Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Okay? Same thing can happen to you that happened to them. So don't think that you're great. Be careful.

Galatians 6.1. I want you to notice in that one verse how God explains the situation. You have two people. One who's fallen into a transgression, and the one who has the job to restore the one who's fallen into the transgression, is the mature one, is the spiritual one.

That's his work. It doesn't work the other way around. So we need the right people in the right positions to be able to spot, number one, what a transgression is, and two, have enough spiritual strength and able to spot their own dangers to temptations to avoid them.

And not come up with this sort of worldly psychology that says something along the lines of, the best people to deal with my issue are those who've been through it.

[36 : 48] No. According to the best person to listen to in the church, is the one who seems to have had an incredibly boring life. He hasn't befallen any temptation.

She hasn't succumbed to any temptation. She manages to get through life, or he's managed to get through life. We're staying pretty close to God most of the time without too many difficulties. That's the person to ask.

Because the one question you want to ask them is, how did you do it? It's not as if you don't live in the same world that I do, but how did you overcome all those temptations?

That's the person that you ought to be listening to, not the person who's got all the experience in the world. They don't know how to avoid temptation, but they can certainly share their experience of all that they've gone through.

But they're not the mature ones. They're the most experienced. But again, look at the experience, not just the fact that they are experienced. The mature ones are those who can restore those who have fallen.

[37 : 53] Now, it's also possible, and this is really important to understand, that the gifts of God to people in the church, his people, are irrevocable. That means that once God gives them, he will not take them away.

He does not take them away. Therefore, as we've seen on TV in America and elsewhere, of pastors that have been caught in more than compromising positions, okay, but yet still retain many of the skills and abilities that they had before their sin.

What falls is not their ability to be able to preach the gospel. What falls is not their ability to be skillful in ministry. None of that falls.

Why doesn't it? Because the gifts of God are irrevocable. Once they have been given by God, they will never be taken away, Romans 11. They'll never be taken. But rather, what falls is the person.

The person falls. Not the skills, but the person. And so the distinction made is not his ability to be able to carry out these skills in the church, but his eligibility to do so.

[39 : 04] That's what's being questioned here. If the person's unrepentant, he's no longer eligible. Now, repentance, of course, is what brings the transgressor back.

But an unrepentant minister who's been caught with his trousers down, okay, which has happened on numerous occasions, okay, is no longer eligible. Okay, not because he's lost all of his skills, okay, because they haven't fallen.

They're irrevocable. But he has fallen. He has fallen. And that's the distinction that has to be made. Final thought then. We want, or at least we ought to desire, desire a church that loves God completely.

We ought to desire a community and a communion of each other where we're able to build one another up in love and never feel embarrassed about calling out a person who's transgressed.

If we really love them, we want to take them out of their transgression and get them back on a close and clean life with God as soon as possible. We don't want to leave them where they are.

[40 : 16] We want them restored. But people who don't want to deal with other people's transgressions is because they're immature. But those who are mature recognize that it needs to be done, not because it's a job to do, but it needs to be done for the person who's failing.

If you really love a person, think about the direct object. Think about what it means to actually love. It means to restore a transgressor in this way.

Now, the way forward is a difficult one, and this is why we've left it to last, the very last message. Unity, disunity will continue, and a unified disunity will always continue when nobody wants to do anything about it.

We can all sit here and go, well, I'll pray about it. Okay? But at the end of the day, somebody has to go and get that person. Okay? At the end of the day, somebody has to do it.

Okay? Now, the one who grasps the nettle, okay, is always going to be the one who's accused of not being very loving, of not being this or not being that. But before God, okay, whatever they are viewed as down here, before God, they've done the right thing.

[41 : 32] Now, that doesn't mean that they're able to restore anybody. Okay? Because restoration depends on the other person coming back to God as well. So, how is this to be taken forward?

And so, with this, I'll finish. In Hebrews 13, it simply says that you are to obey your leaders. Now, if it was automatic to faith, okay, it wouldn't need to be said, right?

But it needs to be said because it's difficult. Okay? Because it's difficult. If I say to my wife, darling, found a babysitter, you know, she'd go, where do you find her?

I said, no, well, you believe it or not, there's quite a few around. We're going out for a meal. She doesn't turn around and say to me, fine, I'll submit to you then. Okay?

It doesn't happen. Why? Because nobody finds submission difficult when it's what you want to do. Submission's difficult because you don't want to do it.

[42 : 40] So, when Jesus says, okay, and when Hebrews says, submit to your leaders, yeah, I'm going to leave. I'm going to walk away.

Well, of course you are because it's difficult. But those who do it do so based on what I said last week. You have to take into consideration the maturity of the leader. But nevertheless, the submission to the leadership is what God calls us to do.

So, you need to understand what I said last week in order to understand what I've just said. Okay? You need to understand what I said last week in order to understand what I've just said.

So, as we move forward, there are two things to consider next week. And with this, I'll finish. I'll finish. Number one, you need to be able to be well-educated enough to see the sacrifices that need to be made.

And you need to be well-educated enough to see the dangers in not making those sacrifices. Okay? You need to be well-educated enough to see the need for making those sacrifices.

[43 : 45] And well-educated enough to see the danger in not making them. And as we do this, even this, we continue to bear with one another in love.

Because if we don't, it will all fall apart. Amen.