

(14) A Study in Ephesians.

“Live a Life Worthy of Your Calling”

Rooted and Grounded in God’s Unfathomable Love (3:17-21)

May Christ dwell in your hearts through faith; *and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend* with all the saints what is the width and length and height and depth, and to know the *love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled to all the fullness of God.*

He Loved Us Then; He Loves Us Now

- We visualize a white board where all our past sins have been erased, and we get another chance...
- We then awkwardly, full of guilt and shame, return again and again to grovel for yet another...and another...and another chance...(How he must roll His eyes, grimace, and complain of His embarrassing, wayward child to the angels...)

Romans 5:6-10

For while we were still helpless...Christ died for us...having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. So, if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, **much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.**

Isaiah 43:1

This is what the Lord says, He who is your Creator...the One who formed you...**“Don’t be afraid, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine!”**

Your Sin Elicits His Mercy, Not His Disgust

Matthew 9:35-36

Jesus traveled through all the towns and villages of that area, teaching in the synagogues and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom. And he healed every kind of disease and illness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them **because they were confused and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.**

Psalms 103:8-15

The Lord is compassionate and merciful, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. He will not constantly accuse us, nor remain angry forever. He does not punish us for all our sins; he does not deal harshly with us, as we deserve. For his unfailing love toward those who fear him is as great as the height of the heavens above the earth. He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west. The Lord is like a father to his children, tender and compassionate to those who fear him. For he knows how weak we are; he remembers we are only dust.

“He’s on your side. He sides with you against your sin, not against you because of your sin.”

(Dane Ortlund, *Gentle and Lowly: The Heart of Christ for Sinners and Sufferers*)

- If we really understood this, and believed it, we could then extend it to others.

Romans 2:4

Don’t you see how wonderfully kind, tolerant, and patient God is with you...**Can’t you see that his kindness is intended to turn you from your sin?**

His Love is Tough

- So Many (Christians, Seekers, and Unbelievers) don't comprehend this aspect of God's Love

- Disappointment
- Unmet Expectations
- Discomfort / Waiting
- Suffering / Loss

Taken to mean He's left you, or He doesn't care or love you, or He's not even paying attention...

Our culture has reduced parenting to providing care...Parents have bought into this...and narrowly define their role in terms of food, clothes, a bed, some quality time...

God's Love Shepherds...not Just provides
God's Love Invests...not just instructs
God's Love Empowers...not just protects
God's Love Empathizes...not just models

This requires so much more effort, time, emotional and mental energy...Only Love pays such a deeply selfless cost.

Hebrews 12:5-13

"My *child*, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, Nor faint when you are punished by Him; For whom the Lord loves He disciplines, And He punishes every *child* whom He accepts."

It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with *His children*; for what child is there whom *his* father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons/*daughters*. Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected *them*; shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? For they disciplined *us* for a short time as seemed best to them, but **He disciplines us for our good**, so that we may share His holiness. For the moment, all discipline seems not to be pleasant, but painful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterward it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble, and make straight paths for your feet, so that *the limb* which is impaired may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.