



GROWING IN THE LOVE OF CHRIST

Jamin Schneider // August 30, 2026

Text: Ephesians 3:14-21 (ESV)

Big Idea: Everyday faith grows by knowing and living in Christ's love.

Good morning Foothills Family. My name is Jamin...I am the High School Ministry Pastor here at Foothills and I am so glad you're here. If I have not had a chance to meet you, I look forward to doing so out on the patio.

Real quick I want to give a shoutout to the online community. Thank you for tuning in... whether in Cameron Park or across the world... you are a part of the Foothills Family too... so thanks for staying connected!

See growing up I was raised in a Christian household. My parents love the Lord deeply, which I am so grateful for.

They were constantly reading Bible stories to my three siblings and I... praying with us... my mom always had worship music playing in the house. We would do family Bible studies together...

Looking back my parents were constantly modeling Christ for my siblings and I. And from really... as early as I can remember, my parents laid the foundation of faith in my life.

And I think there is a decent amount of you in here that can relate to this.

Born and raised in a Christian household... going to church... as a kid you knew a lot of the popular Bible stories like David and Goliath, Noah's Ark, Daniel in the Lions Den.

You had all those catchy songs memorized and probably still do. You know the song... Jesus loves me... right?

Jesus loves me this I know... for the Bible tells me so... little ones to him belong... they are weak but He is strong.

This was my life. I knew the Bible stories; I prayed with my parents before bed; I sang the songs.

From a young age I knew that Jesus loved me...just like the song says. It was ingrained in my mind.

I constantly heard that phrase growing up... "that Jesus love me".

Now I know that not all of you can relate to my childhood experience. Some of you didn't have that Christian influence at a young age.

But no matter when you get introduced to Christ... whether that is as a little kid, or in college, or when you are 30, 40, 50, 60 whenever...

One of the first things... the foundational things you will hear or see... is that phrase... "Jesus loves you".

And for valid reason.

Its one of the core... and foundational truths of Christianity... the essence of John 3:16... one of... if not the most popular verses in the Bible.

"For God so LOVED the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

It's core to what we as Christians believe... that God, out of love, sent His Son, Jesus, to die for you and me.

The love of Christ—It's foundational. I think we can all agree on this.

We have heard this phrase before... Jesus love you

You cant have a relationship with Jesus and not hear about his Love. They go hand in hand.

The love of Christ is foundational; we can all agree on this.

So of course, it is repeated constantly. Of course you and your kids have that song burned into your memory.

There is a reason you see this phrase everywhere. I see it on peoples' shirts, on bracelets, on hats, on bill boards, and in Instagram bios... people saying Jesus loves you.

It's core to what we believe.

And this is awesome! Spread the name of Jesus; spread the love of Jesus.

But I worry...that the more you and I hear and see this profound phrase... this profound reality of the love of Christ...The more we see it on t shirts... on social media posts... the more we say it even...I worry that it can start to become white noise, rather than the most amazing news you have ever heard.

You ever listen to a song and all of a sudden it becomes your favorite song... so then you play it on repeat, constantly listening to it multiple times a day? Then after doing that for about a week, you start to notice that song no longer sounds that good anymore; like its just not the same. It loses its taste almost.

You know what I am talking about?

It becomes basic, boring, predictable... "oh this again". You become calloused to the reality of what you originally knew was so good.

The constant exposure to that song makes you appreciate it less and less. It makes you take it for granted.

What you once thought was the best song ever, now is getting skipped in your playlist

What a dangerous place to be in as a Christian—for our favorite song, the best news ever, John 3:16, the love of Christ, becoming white noise; skippable.

What a dangerous place to be in, where you hear that phrase so often— Jesus loves me—you see it so often, that you start to appreciate it less and less.

Becoming calloused to the reality of how amazing that phrase truly is.

That Jesus—eternal and sinless, God in the flesh—loves you and me, a sinner, so much that He took on the worst punishment imaginable—death on a cross. And he chose to do that for you.

Amazing. How do you even comprehend that?

But sometimes... if we are honest, we can often view “Jesus loves you” as basic, elementary, entry level Christianity. Like I learned that as a kid; lets move on to something deeper.

Like, the love of Christ; cool. I get that I know the song; I own the shirt. But what about the more “intense” stuff? The deeper, harder to grasp stuff like the eucharist, eschatology, hermeneutics, the spiritual gifts.

And yes it is good to study other topics of faith... definitely. But we can't lose sight of our favorite song.

We can't lose sight of what is most important. The deepest, most profound thing. This reality of our faith—the love of Christ.

In the busyness of life—school starting back up; work is feeling overwhelming; your kids are in sports; you may be going through some health issues right now. Or, life might be great and you really have no worries right now...nothing to complain about.

What ever season of life you are in...and no matter how long you have been a Christian, there is a dangerous temptation to lose sight of what is most important—Jesus and his profound love, and that everything else is secondary.

This is what our everyday faith needs—a constant reminder to make growing in knowing the love of Christ your priority over everything else.

And the Apostle Paul gets this. If you have your Bibles go ahead and open up to Ephesians 3:14...reading out of the ESV.

This passage is a powerful prayer from Paul.

Some context: before, in chapters 1 and 2, he is addressing and encouraging people who are distracted.

See In Ephesians 3:14-21, Paul's prayer is the climax of a section that has been addressing a distraction and problem in the Ephesian church: the division between Jew and Gentile and the temptation to think that one or the other can be saved, not both.

And in the chapters before this prayer, Paul is like no no no. Though you were once far off, you are now brought near. God has torn down that wall of hostility between himself and all people. Both Jew and the Gentile can be saved. These people were distracted by things that they thought were more important than the love of Christ.

And so Paul prays this...look at this.

14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, 16 that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Wow. What a prayer. Let's unpack this.

These people are distracted...and so Paul is on his knees before God, praying for them.

This was not common for Jews to kneel and pray; it was more common to stand.

But Paul kneeling holds great significance. There are only a few times in Scripture where this is seen.

Solomon knelt at the dedication of the temple... 1 Kings... with Stephen at the time of his martyrdom Acts 7... Peter at the death-bed of Dorcas... Acts 9... and our Lord himself in His agony in Gethsemane... Luke 22.

And here is Paul in a deep expression of emotions and earnestness. This posture of humility, desperation...on his knees before the Father, pleading, begging, and out of all the things he could pray for, he prays for what?

He doesn't pray for health or wealth. He could've prayed for literally anything—for God to free him out of prison, unity because the Ephesians really needed that, whatever.

But what does he pray for?

He prays for what is most important—that we may grow to know the love of Christ.

In this prayer we are getting a glimpse into what matters most, not only to Paul, but to God. This is not Paul's truth; this is the Holy Spirit speaking through Paul. This is the Word of God.

It's this posture of begging for his people to know the love of Christ...as it says in verse 19... this is of utmost priority.

When was the last time you prayed a prayer like this on your knees before the Lord saying almighty God, help me grow in knowing the greatness of your love?

What you pray for reveals your priorities friends. It reveals your heart and its desires. It's a window into your soul.

Think about David in the Psalms. When you read the Psalms you get to see some honest prayer; you get to see how David is truly feeling.

From his stress and anguish, saying Lord, where are you? My enemies are surrounding me Psalm 3, to his trust and love for the Lord Psalm 18.

A glimpse into David's heart.

Think about your prayer life. What do you pray for?

If you are being honest, most prayer tends to default to focusing on the secondary—our material things, relationships, jobs, worries.

I am not saying don't pray for these things. I am saying check your heart and what is most important.

If those things are the only thing you are praying for then something is off.

The love of Christ is core. It is foundational. So it's time to start treating it like that.

As Christians—followers of Christ; reflections of Christ. If you bear that title—Christian—you should share the same priorities of Christ.

Your greatest desire in life and in everyday faith should be verse 19. To know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

If each one of us put as much effort into growing in this as we do with our hobbies, our relationships, our jobs; if we put that much energy into

verse 19, the most important thing ever, I guarantee this community—Cameron Park, Placerville, El Dorado Hills—would radically change.

Your life will radically change, and you will start to live how God intended you to.

If there were 1000 followers of Christ truly living this out. Ah man, could you imagine the impact? 1000 Pauls in Cameron Park... imagine that.

Its time to reassess our priorities, and if you're a Christian and your priority isn't the love of Christ. You think its too elementary, boring, it's white noise, you are either ignorant, confused, or just blinded by secondary things.

It's time to get back to the basics.

But what does this mean? Like how do we do this? How do you and I grow to know the love of Christ? How can we grow in something that Pauls says is immeasurable; it surpasses knowledge?

Well first,

To know the love of Christ starts with knowing who you are in light of Him.

Correct posture produces growth.

You will never grow in this if you can never kneel.

Now I am not talking about physical kneeling, but I am talking about the posture of your heart.

Paul comes before God with humility, with dependence, with desperation.

Paul is fully aware that God is King and he is not. So he kneels—an outward expression of his heart posture.

How do you approach the throne? How do you approach the King of Kings—Almighty God?

Are you constantly coming before the king, saying, I need more, more, more—give me health, give me money, resolve my issues, help me get this and that.

Are you treating the King of Kings like a cosmic genie?

Is that what God is to you? A means to an end?

You might not say that out loud, but let's be honest with ourselves. Do your actions say that? Does your prayer life reflect that?

Has your pride and comfort blinded you? Has the devil deceived you and convinced you to think that something could possibly be more important

and of more value than the love of God?

There is only one way to approach the King and that is on your knees, saying the words of David in 1 Chronicles 29:10-14, listen to this... David gets it... this is the posture we are to have:

10 Therefore David blessed the Lord in the presence of all the assembly. And David said: "Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of Israel our father, forever and ever. 11 Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. 12 Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. 13 And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name. 14 "But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able thus to offer willingly?

This posture of humility, saying great are you God and who am I?

Maybe this is where you are at. You are realizing, I got some pride issues. You are more focused on secondary things. You are majoring in the minors and not majoring in the majors.

In other words, you are putting too much emphasis on things that are secondary—majoring in the minors. It is time to get on your knees and humble yourself.

Correct posture produces growth

Second, to grow in the love of Christ is to fully rely on the Holy Spirit.

Us finite beings cannot grasp and know and experience the infinite love of Christ without the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit.

See... anyone can intellectually know about the love of Jesus. There are atheists who have read the Bible cover to cover and understand that God is loving.

Just like the song says...Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so.

Yes, the Bible tells you so. But to truly KNOW the love of Jesus—the agape of Jesus; this unconditional love—is to experience it.

That is what this word “know” in the original Greek here means—
“Ginosko”—which is a personal, relational, and experiential knowing.

The love of Christ is not just intellectual, but it is personal, made possible by the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit doesn't just give us information about the love of Christ. He opens our hearts to personally know it.

And those of you who have a relationship with Jesus, you know what I am talking about.

Like words don't do it justice, on what it is like to experience the love of God.

Going from a wretched sinner walking in evil, living for the flesh, making so many mistakes, feeling so unworthy of God's love. But then to have personal relationship with that love, to feel that freedom and hope and joy, and peace. Words fall short.

This cannot simply be learned in a classroom. You can study the love of Christ. You can memorize verses about the love of Christ. You can sing songs about the love of Christ. You hear sermons about the love of Christ and still need to grow in knowing it.

Paul says in verse 16 and 17 that through the Spirit dwelling in us, we may have the strength to comprehend the breadth and the length and height and depth, to know the love of Christ.

Friends, rely on the Holy Spirit... saying Spirit help me grow in this. Help me grow in a closer relationship and experience with you.

Jesus says in John 14:26, the Holy Spirit is our Helper. So rely on Him to help you grow in knowing the love of Jesus.

Friends... you cannot muscle your way into understanding the infinite love of God.

Instead, in that posture of humility, saying Holy Spirit help me comprehend what I cannot comprehend on my own. Help me know the love of Christ more deeply today. Don't let it become white noise. Don't let me take it for granted. That is a prayer of someone who has the same priorities of Christ. Make that your prayer!

So to grow in knowing the love of Christ—what is foundational and most important in the Christian walk—starts with the right heart posture: reliance on the Spirit.

And third, growth comes by living in the greatness of God's love.

It's living in the reality that you are loved by our perfect and holy God Yahweh. Think about that for a second.

He loves you so much that he died for you; took on the punishment you deserve for your sins.

If you have accepted Him as your Savior. If he is your Father—you have been adopted as his child—God loves you deeply.

And gives you new life. this isn't earned but He freely gives this to us. Ephesians 2:8 "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast." How amazing is that.

After all you have done—every sin you have committed, after every act of anger you lashed out in, after every hurtful thing you have said and thought, after every act of lust you have given into—and he sees all our mess and wipes us clean, makes us white as snow through faith in Jesus. We are forgiven, redeemed, and made new.

That sin that haunts you from the past, that you can't shake from your memory...friends hear this truth! The love of Christ is wider and longer and higher and deeper than that.

You are a new creation because of the love of Christ. Live in that reality.

See yourself as God sees you—forgiven and redeemed.

I know its hard to do sometimes.

You look in the mirror and sometimes you just feel ashamed and dirty. Like how could anyone love me after what I did? You dwell on the past.

And yet Jesus looks at you and says, oh my sheep that has gone astray... you are brought home into the fold. Why do you keep staring down that path I rescued you from?

The old gone the new has come!

To live in this reality of the greatness of Gods love is to fully grasp that you are beloved in the eyes of God.

He died for you while you were actively going against him; while you were still his enemy. That is how much He loves you.

And when you comprehend this reality, you will forever be changed.

You cannot genuinely encounter the cross—the love of Jesus on full display—and walk away the same person.

If you truly encounter the greatness of God's love, you cannot remain unchanged by it.

Paul doesn't end with: "Know the love of Christ...and that's it."

He says: "that you may be filled with all the fullness of God."

The purpose of knowing Christ's love isn't simply that we sit around feeling loved. Rather, the love of Christ fills us and overflows from us. It touches every aspect of our lives. It overflows into your relationships—how you treat your spouse, your kids, your friends, your coworkers.

They should all be experiencing the love of Christ, even if they suck, and are annoying or mean. God's love is greater than that!

It should overflow into how you spend your time, what you spend your money on, what you prioritize, the things you watch, the things you listen too, the things you post.

It should affect the heart behind all you do. Why you want that job, why you want that house, why you want those friends. Everything.

So does it?

Is all you do done out of the love of Christ?

Are you on mission at work? Do you listen to and watch things that bring glory to God? Are you buying that thing as a good steward of your

money?

Paul says we are to be rooted and grounded in love. That is our foundation.

And the foundation affects every other aspect of the building. So does it?

If not... if you don't do everything out of the love of Christ, then maybe your foundation is being built on the wrong things and you need to reassess.

What fills you will eventually flow out of you. Whether that is God or the world. You are what you eat.

Assess your foundation friends. And if the building is cracking—the actions are bad; your “why” behind things is self serving—the foundation is cracking.

Friends, lets get back to the basics—the foundation—the love of Christ.

May your posture in life be that of Paul's—on your knees before the King. May you rely on the Spirit to help you grow.

And if you have not already, its time to start living in the greatness of Gods love and let that flow into every aspect of your life.

As we close, I want to read these last two verses of Paul's prayer:

20 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, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen."

A life filled with the love of Jesus praises him always.

Do the same!

Because how could you not when He has given you everything? He has given you eternal life through His blood on the cross. Praise Him always!

Lets pray.