

Series Title  
***Adults Only***  
November 13/14, 2010

PRELUDE – Nothing Can Stop You  
Video – He/You  
Worship Song – Draw Me Nearer  
Welcome & Announcements

Feature – “Be OK”  
Transition

“I just want to be OK.” Catchy tune ... and probably as good of a way as any to summarize the two big ideas we’ve been talking about since the second week of September, which are ...

1. Being – or, more accurately, *becoming* – OK by recognizing and dealing with the toxic emotional sludge that, for most of us, is buried deep down inside of us.
2. Becoming OK and then hanging on to that freedom by living an emotionally sustainable life.

We all want to be OK. And the good news, as we’ve discovered in this series, is that we really can.

However, we’ve also discovered that this is not something we can manufacture on our own. Emotional detox and emotional sustainability aren’t just two more “self-help projects.” In fact, one of the things I’ve worried about in this series is that what I’ve been teaching might be taken that way: “if you just *do* all the things on Rick’s list, then you’ll be OK.”

And, so, to make sure that’s *not* the message that’s coming across, we decided that today, before we look at another component of an emotionally sustainable life, we should take a few minutes to remind ourselves that ...

**Becoming and being OK is primarily a *gift we receive, not a goal we achieve.***

Let me say that again: becoming and being OK is primarily *a gift we receive, not a goal we achieve.*

And it’s God who, directly through the Holy Spirit and indirectly through His agents (other people) in our lives – it’s God who offers that gift to us and we respond in faith. He initiates and we cooperate. And that has certainly been my experience over the past four months.

Of course, that’s how it always works whenever God gets involved. As the Apostle Paul wrote to the becoming-OK followers of Jesus at Ephesus:

*Once [upon a time] you were [spiritually] dead because of your disobedience and your many sins.  
Ephesians 2:1 (NLT)*

“You were messed up. You were not OK,” Paul is saying. “You were full of toxic junk that came not just from how other people treated you, but how *you yourself sinned* – how you, yourself, disobeyed God.”

**“But,” Paul continued ...**

*God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, that even though we were dead because of our sins ...*

*... he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's grace that you have been saved!) Ephesians 2:4-5 (NLT)*

"God initiated," Paul is saying here.

**"And you cooperated," he adds a few verses later:**

*God saved you by his grace ... when you believed. [That's how we cooperate – we just respond to Him in faith].*

*So, you can't take credit for this [for becoming OK]; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done ...*

*... so none of us can boast about it.*

It's a gift we receive, not a goal we achieve.

*For we are God's masterpiece ... Ephesians 2:8-10 (NLT)*

I love the imagery that Paul uses: *God's masterpiece*. Paul is saying that we are all broken and messed up but when we put our faith in Christ, God begins renewing and restoring us into creations of astounding beauty ... and he offers us that gift simply because He loves us. *He loves us*.

And if anything has changed in my life, it's happened because I think I understand that more than ever before. And that understanding – that experience – is what has allowed me to respond to God in ways I never have before. If I'm "becoming OK" in any sense of the term, *that's* the reason why. And I want that to be abundantly clear – that all of this starts with the love of God being made real in our hearts.

So, I asked Rob if he and the band would lead us for a few moments into an experience where we can just rest in the love that God offers us in Christ. And as they do, I invite you to open your heart and your mind and let God in.

**Feature/Worship – Still / How He Loves**

Let's pray together.

God, I thank you that even though we're far worse off than we would ever believe because of our sin and disobedience, what Jesus did for us is proof that *You really do love us still and You love us so* – far more than we can ever imagine. So, I pray that regardless of whatever else happens today, we would know that and allow it to heal us and make us new. We want to be OK.

And I pray especially for men and women here who have not yet said “yes” to Jesus as their personal savior. I pray that, in this moment, they would simply say “Jesus, I believe you gave your life for my sins and then rose from the grave so that I could be forgiven and made whole in every way.”

(Some of you need to say that right now - “Jesus, I believe you gave your life for my sins and then rose from the grave so that I could be forgiven and made whole in every way.” Go ahead and say it to God in your heart).

And now, God, as we look at another component of emotional sustainability, help us to remember that it's a *gift we receive, not a goal we achieve*; that You initiate and we cooperate.

In Jesus name we ask, amen.

By the way, if you did just say “yes” to Jesus, you should seriously consider being baptized this Wednesday evening. There's a brief class at 11am this morning that you need to come to. If you can't, let me know and I'll figure out some time to meet with you offline.

-----

Now, today we're continuing in our *Sustain* series (learning how to develop a life that's emotionally sustainable so that we avoid becoming toxic to ourselves and everyone else). And I want to introduce our topic by pointing out something else that the Apostle Paul wrote to the Christians at Ephesus.

After he writes about how God, because of his love and Christ's work, has forgiven them and is creating a masterpiece in them ...

**Paul says ...**

*I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Ephesians 4:1 (NIV)*

In other words, do not take for granted this gracious gift that God has given you. Live your life in such a way that you more and more reflect the amazing miracle that God has done in you and for you.

And then Paul goes on in his writing to give some examples of what that looks like in terms of our attitudes and making the most of the gifts that God has given us by linking up with other believers and participating in the joint venture known as “the church.”

But then he arrives at what I think is the defining characteristic of what “a life worthy of the grace we have received” looks like.

**He tells his readers that the pinnacle is to ...**

*... become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Ephesians 4:13 (NIV)*

And this is God’s intention for every follower of Jesus: to *grow up and become an adult instead of a baby.*

**In fact, that’s exactly the analogy Paul uses in the next sentence.**

*Then (when we have become mature) we will no longer be infants tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind ... Ephesians 4:14 (NIV)*

What’s interesting is that this “adult vs. infant” analogy is repeated in many other places in the New Testament.

**The Apostle Peter wrote:**

*Like newborn babies, you must crave pure spiritual milk so that you will grow into a full experience of salvation. 1 Peter 2:2 (NLT)*

“You’re not supposed to remain a baby. God intends for you to grow up and become an adult.”

In fact, the writer of the book of Hebrews actually chided some believers who were not becoming adults. He wrote:

*You have been believers so long now that you ought to be teaching others (about the faith).*

*Instead, you [still] need someone to teach you again the basic things about God’s word. You are like babies who need milk and cannot eat solid food. Hebrews 5:12 (NLT)*

And, that’s not a compliment. The founders of our faith agree: growing up is the norm if you are a follower of Jesus.

Of course, a good question might be “what kind of growing up are they talking about?” Obviously, it’s not physical. Most church people would say they’re talking about “spiritual growth” which, obviously, is true. But there’s another dimension which is often overlooked. And that’s *emotional growth*.

**In fact, if you remember, several weeks ago I mentioned that this was the big “aha” behind Peter Scazzero’s book *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality* (which we have at our bookstore and in our library).**

In this book, Scazzero pointed out that many committed Christians have mentally separated the idea of spiritual growth from emotional growth to the point where it’s possible to think of ourselves as being *spiritually mature*, while we’re still emotionally *immature*.

Of course, that’s just self-deception. Living a life worth of the grace and calling we have received in Christ includes

becoming mature in *every way, especially* emotionally. And I hope that's becoming clear throughout this series.

But more importantly – at least, for purposes of this series – *living a life that's emotionally sustainable actually demands it*. We cannot experience emotional sustainability in our lives without emotional maturity.

Let me state that in the affirmative so maybe it's a bit clearer.

**If you want to live an emotionally sustainable life you must develop emotional maturity.**

And so, today, that's what we're going to focus on: *becoming an emotional adult*.

And I want to especially focus on how that plays out in relationships because you cannot maintain relationships with others long-term where you do not both perceive yourself as an adult and you do not act as an adult in those relationships. It's simply unsustainable.

This became very clear to me last summer when Jetta and I attended that pastor's retreat in Colorado. I realized that, in far too many relationships throughout my adult life, I have not perceived myself as a grown-up and therefore I've not acted like one. And it has caused me – and them – a lot of stress.

For example, not long after I made the switch from a career in software engineering to a career in vocational ministry, I found myself at a pastor's conference. I distinctly remember feeling incredibly intimidated, like everyone else in the room was big and I was little. And, for many years after that, I had that picture in my head whenever I was around a lot of my peers. It was like I was a little boy among grown men and women. And all kinds of weird thoughts and destructive relational behaviors came out of that (which is why it's not emotionally sustainable).

I've also struggled at times with relating to my parents as an adult, particularly my mom. I've talked about it on several occasions. Last summer, I remember asking Bob, our retreat leader, "Why is it that a 53-year old man feels and acts like he's 15 the minute he walks through his parent's doorway?" Have you ever had that experience in your life? He laughed and told me he felt the same way when he visited his parents, and that almost every adult struggles to act like a grown-up around their parents. And as a result, all kinds of weird thoughts and destructive relational behaviors come out of that.

Can you relate to any of this? Can you think of situations in your life where you feel like a little kid – and not in a good way – instead of an adult? And can you see some of the crazy stuff that comes out of that?

### **What Immaturity Looks Like**

In an earlier book called *The Emotionally Healthy Church*, Peter Scazzero does a great job of defining some of the craziness and the patterns that are associated with emotional immaturity.<sup>1</sup> In fact, he does it so well that I'm going to slowly read his descriptions of three types of immaturity (emotional infants, emotional children and emotional adolescents) and, as I read, just listen and see if any of these describe you. And no nudging your husband or wife! This is self-assessment here, not tools of warfare.

By the way, I'll post those up on The City this week so you can go back through them if you wish.

### **Here's how Scazzero defines an emotional infant.**

"Like a physical infant, If I'm an emotional infant, I look for other people to take care of me more than I look to care for them. I often have difficulty in describing and experiencing my feelings in healthy ways and I rarely enter the emotional world of others. I am consistently driven by a need for instant gratification, often using others as objects to meet my needs, and am unaware of how my behavior is effecting/hurting them. People sometimes perceive me as inconsiderate, insensitive, and self-centered."

How does that description strike you? Do you see that in yourself? Would others describe you in that way?

### **Here's what an emotional child looks like.**

"Like a physical child, when life is going my way and I am receiving all the things I want and need, I am content and seem emotionally well-adjusted. However, as soon as disappointment, stress, tragedy, or anger enters the picture, I quickly unravel inside. I interpret disagreements as a personal offense and am easily hurt by others. When I don't get my way, I often complain, throw an emotional tantrum, withdraw, manipulate, drag my feet, become sarcastic, or take revenge. I have difficulty calmly discussing with others what I want and expect from them in a mature loving way."

### **And here's an emotional adolescent.**

"Like a physical adolescent, I know the right ways I should behave in order to "fit in" with mature, adult society and I can play the game. However, I can feel threatened and alarmed inside when I am offered constructive criticism, quickly becoming defensive. I subconsciously keep records on the love I give out, so I can ask for something in return at a later time. When I am in conflict, I might admit some fault in the matter, but I will insist on demonstrating the guilt of the other party, proving why they are more to blame than I. Because of my commitment to self-survival, I have trouble really listening to another person's pain, disappointments, or needs without becoming preoccupied with myself. In other words, I'm going to spin that story around and tell about my stuff instead of listening to your stuff."

I bet a lot of us can relate to that one. Honestly, I think a lot of the people who've known me over the years would say that's the one I fall into the most – emotional adolescence. What would people say about you?

Of course, some of us are probably thinking about what we'd say about *them* because a lot of us have to deal with people *who* act like emotional infants, emotional children or emotional adolescents. So, if that's on your mind, don't worry – we'll be talking about how to deal with those folks in next week's message. But for today, we need to keep the focus on ourselves.

Now, having heard these descriptions, I think you can see two big reasons why these are emotionally unsustainable, especially when it comes to relationships.

**1. When we live like this – when we relate in non-adult ways to other adults – we set up barriers to true intimacy.**

When we act like that, people really don't want to be around us and if they can, they will avoid us. If they have no choice about being around us (i.e. we're married to them, they're family or co-workers), then they'll figure out a way to somehow tolerate us without being close to us. They might figure out how to play whatever game they need to play with us in order to keep getting along with us, but I guarantee you they're afraid of being open, honest and vulnerable with us. And because of that, we miss out on the depth of relationships that we all need.

**2. In addition, when we live like this – when we relate to people as not adults – we feel like failures because, if we have any level of self-awareness at all, we *know* that we should be “bigger.”**

We know that thinking, responding or reacting like a 5-year old when you're in the body of a 35-year-old is just not right. And we know that thinking, responding or reacting like a 17-year old when you're in the body of a 57-year-old just isn't right. There's something “abnormal” about it and we know it.

Now, we might try to justify our individual acts of immaturity, but eventually the feeling of failure, “man, I'm just not measuring up here,” whacks at our self-esteem and sends us into an even worse downward spiral. It creates even more emotional sludge inside of us.

## **Growing Up**

So, obviously, we need to learn how to live and relate as emotional grown-ups. How does that happen?

Obviously, time and experience are big factors. It works that way physically (you don't become a physical adult in one day – it takes time and experience) and it also works that way emotionally. For instance, I don't think it was abnormal for me to feel like I was a kid among adults right after I made that career change because I *was*. I had zero time and zero experience in that world, which is by definition what a baby is.

But after enough time and experience, that needs to stop. Unfortunately, often it does not and it did not for me. That's why, last summer I had to repent of the way I was relating with some of my peers in the community – other pastors. I even had to go to one of them and confess that because of my emotional immaturity I had built a wall between us and ask for his forgiveness. Thankfully he was gracious and said yes.

But, you need to understand, doing that didn't instantly change me into an emotional adult. It just helped me deal with the junk that coming out of the immaturity.

The question is: What does it take to become an emotional adult?

**I think, first of all, we need a vision of maturity. I think you have to have a picture in your head of what emotional adulthood looks like.**

Again, I'm going to lean on Scazzero because he says it better than I ever could. And just as I did before, I'm going to read this slowly and, as I do, let's just let this vision, this imagery wash over us. This is what God wants for us, friends. This is what we need to become if we are going to live emotionally sustainable lives.

Scazzero writes ...

“As an emotional adult, I can respect and love others without having to change them or without having to become critical and judgmental of who they are.

As an emotional adult, I don’t expect anyone to be perfect in meeting my relational needs, whether it be my spouse, or my parents, or my friends, or my boss, or my pastor.

As an emotional adult, I love and appreciate people for who they are as whole individuals, the good and the bad, and not for what they can give me or how they behave.

As an emotional adult, I take responsibility for my own thoughts, my feelings, my goals, and my actions.

When under stress, I don’t fall into a victim mentality or a blame game.

As an emotional adult, I can state my own beliefs and values to those who disagree with me—without becoming adversarial.

As an emotional adult, I am able to accurately self-assess my limits, strengths, and weaknesses and freely discuss them with others without being embarrassed or ashamed.

Deeply in tune with my own emotions and feelings, as an emotional adult, I can move into the emotional worlds of others, meeting them at the place of their feelings, their needs, and their concerns.

As an emotional adult, I am deeply convinced that I am absolutely loved by Christ; that I have nothing left to prove.<sup>ii</sup>

Isn’t that refreshing? Wouldn’t it be awesome to live that way consistently? I say yes. That’s who I want to be. Even better, I think that’s who God wants me to be. I think that’s who God wants all of us to be.

So, the first thing we need if we’re going to go that way is a vision of what emotional maturity looks like.

The second thing comes from something Paul wrote to the first-century Christians who lived in Corinth – and I need to give you just a little bit of background on this so it makes sense.

Paul, in this particular portion of the letter in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians, was writing about a problem in the church where some people were acting superior to others because they had this special spiritual gift of being able to pray and speak in unknown languages. And they kind of got this attitude that they were more spiritual than everybody else. They had arrived and everybody else was way behind them.

But Paul wrote in this letter, he was trying to make a point, he said, in comparison to what Jesus is going to reveal about spiritual reality when he returns, speaking in tongues is kid-stuff. That’s what he is trying to get across here. “On that day, when Jesus come back,” he wrote in essence, “you’re going to see that this stuff that you guys are all so worked up about is trivial. It’s kid-stuff.”



And to exhort them to embrace that truth ...

... **he wrote:**

*When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me.* *1 Corinthians 13:11 (NIV)*

So, basically, in this letter, Paul's telling them to grow up in how they look at this one spiritual experience and to realize that speaking in tongues is kind of childish in the overall big picture ... *but* ... there's so much wisdom in what he says that it applies to all of life. As he says, when you're a kid, you do what kids do: you talk like a kid, you think like a kid and you reason like a kid. That's just normal.

But when you grow up and physically become a man or a woman, you have a choice to make. Are you going to hang on to those childish ways? Or, are you going to put them behind you, as Paul expresses it?

And, by the way, the word in the Greek language for "putting behind" is *katargeo* – a very strong verb. It means to deprive, to terminate, to abolish. A very active, very strong word. And depriving, terminating and abolishing are not things that passively happen. They are decisions we make and actions we take.

### **“Putting Behind” Childish Ways**

So, the question is, how do we terminate and abolish childish patterns of behavior and childish patterns of relating to other people?

Well, there's probably more that could be said than we have time for, but I want to share briefly with you some of the things I learned and have tried to implement since this summer. Maybe they'll help you like they've helped me. (By the way, this list assumes that we've already spent at least some time "emotionally detoxing" like we talked about earlier this fall ... and if you were not here for that series you can listen online at our website or pick up a set of CDS/DVDS at our bookstore).

One key for me to abolish patterns of immaturity is to ...

#### **1. Pay attention to yourself (and to feedback from others).**

When we were at the retreat, one of the things we discussed that I had never heard before was the concept of transactional analysis. Have you ever heard of it?

The basic idea is that whenever we relate to another person, we can choose from one of three positions to operate out of: Adult or Child or even Parent. And when you chart out dialogue between people you can almost always literally analyze the dialogue and unspoken communication to determine which position the person is "in" as they're speaking.

For example, let's say you're picking up your spouse (or girlfriend/boyfriend) from the airport, and you're LATE. It's a bad scene and you're sorry that you're late, and you don't have a good reason for it other than you just missed

it. Even if you were late because you were delivering a baby or there was an earthquake, your spouse is not happy and says, "How *could* you be late? Didn't you check the flight times?" Your spouse might not be angry, but there is definitely tension in the air. Now, in that situation, you can react in one of three ways:

- You could react in child mode: "Please don't hate me, I'm such a dummy, I just can't get timing right. I always do this!" This kind of response is childish because, like a child it's self-centered and turns the focus on you.
- Or, you could react in parent mode: "At least you're getting a ride. I could have told you to just get a taxi." This is parent mode because it assumes an authoritarian role. It totally dismisses as unimportant any emotional meaning behind your partner's comment.
- Or, you could react in adult mode. "I really wish I had been on time, I'm sorry I wasn't. Believe me. I got mixed up on the time - totally my fault. But it's great to see you." This is adult mode because you take responsibility, recognize the disappointment in the other person, and you deal with it, it's not playing a game.<sup>iii</sup>

Now, there are other ways to pay attention to yourself in all this, but I've found this one to be especially helpful. A lot of times, before I have a conversation with someone now days, especially if I know it might be a tense conversation, I try to think it thru like, "so what would a child say in this situation, what would be a childish reaction? Or what would a parental/authoritarian conversation be like? What would be an adult type conversation?"

Let me give you an example of this. This summer after the retreat, we were going on vacation to my side of the family on the east coast. And I've told you stories about this before, that I love going on vacations to see my family on the east coast. It's wonderful, but sometimes there's a little bit of tension there. And one of the tensions that has been constant over the years, which has actually gotten a little bit better (and by the way, this will help some of you for Thanksgiving and Christmas vacation because you've got the same problem), whenever we would go home, we would make the vacation time for 4 or 5 days because I just don't like being away from home, and I don't think it's good for our family to be away that long. But, *my mom* expects that when you go on vacation, you're gone for the whole week. And so, we've had this running battle over the years over how long we're staying. And one time we had a really, really bad blow up over it, and I didn't think we would ever speak again, but we did. Some of you are relating to this, I know, you're thinking about your upcoming vacation. So, here's what I did as I was thinking about what was going to happen if I go to the beach this summer and my mom is upset because we're going home on Friday and everybody else is going home Saturday afternoon. So I thought -

- As a Parent: "Why do you think you should make decisions for my family? I'm a grown man!" And I have done that - don't do it, it's stupid.
- I could go into the Child role: "I'm sorry you're unhappy that we can't stay longer. We're doing the best we can, don't you see that?" Now, here's why that's a child, because I'm saying "I'm sorry" for something that is not my responsibility. I can't make her happy or unhappy - that's her choice. And, I found myself doing this a lot, I'll say I'm sorry about something to someone and it's really not my responsibility, it's theirs. But, that's what little kids do, "Oh Mommy, I'm sorry. Daddy, I'm sorry. I don't know what I'm sorry for, I just don't want you to hurt me. I don't want to get spanked (or whatever)." That's childish. I could do it that

way, but no, I don't think I should do that.

- Instead, I worked on this, and here is what I came up with. If my mom was going to be unhappy with that, here is what I was going to say, "I wish you weren't unhappy that we can't stay longer (and that's totally honest - I wish that, but, I'm not sorry because I'm not responsible for how she feels). I wish that you weren't unhappy that we can't stay longer. But, this is what's best for my family and I hope you can respect my decision." See, that is adult to adult. And maybe some of you could use that for Thanksgiving or Christmas. And, by the way, I didn't have to say that because it didn't come up, and things have gotten a lot better. We're both starting to act like grownups now and it's kind of cool.

In any case, it's very helpful to think about your relationships and your interactions in these terms, with this mental model ... *and* then ... to also ask others what they see in you. Do you think I go into parent mode? Or do you think I go into child mode? Or an adult? When you start seeing what's true of you, whether it's stuff that you pick up on your own or other people are feeding back, that tells you how you're doing at abolishing some of these childish patterns.

Of course, when you start paying attention and start getting feedback you're going to see and hear things that you don't like. It's going to offend you. It's going to hurt you. It happens to me. But here's the deal, you can't run from it. We can't argue. We can't get into justifying mode. We've just got to own up to it.

## **2. Do what we call around here "repenting and rejoicing." You've got to repent and you've got to rejoice. Repent and rejoice, over and over again.**

To "repent" means to change your mind; change how you look at things. Admit where you were off or wrong or maybe even disobedient and rebellious in how you're relating to people.

And we can rejoice because, even though we were off or wrong or even disobedient or rebellious, Jesus gave his life so that off and wrong and disobedient and rebellious people like us could be forgiven. We rejoice because, if we have accepted Christ, we *are* already forgiven.

So, when it hits you, "oh, man, I can't believe it, I just acted like an infant or a child or an adolescent again, (even a parent)" you don't go into the tank over it, you just repent and you rejoice. You repent and you rejoice. You don't beat yourself up over this because God is not beating you up over this. Jesus already paid for that sin and that failure.

One more key for me as I am learning to "put away" immature ways of relating – and this is a big one for me personally – is to just ...

## **3. Trust God ... the ultimate parent.**

Remember that the final characteristic of an emotional adult, Scazzero wrote, is being "deeply convinced that I am absolutely loved by Christ; that I have nothing to prove."<sup>iv</sup>

And here's why that's so important to emotional maturity:

A lot of us just do what we've seen other adults in our lives do. We do what we've seen our parents do or other

authority figures do. For example, many years after I moved out of my parent's home, at night I would leave the light on over the stove. After about 4 or 5 years, Jetta finally said, "What the heck is the deal with this light? Why are you always leaving this light on?" And I said, "I don't really know. It's just what my parents did."

And I've also picked up some other habits from them in terms of relating to others; some of them are good and some are not so good. My dad is pretty level-headed, my mom not so much. I mostly take after my mom in that regard, which is why for many years we've had a lot of conflict (though it is much, much better these days - we're both growing up a bit).

But the deal is that we have trusted what we've seen from our parents and other authority figures and it hasn't led us to emotional maturity. Instead, it's led us to live in ways that are emotionally unsustainable, especially when it comes to relating to other people.

And that's not meant to be a knock on our parents or other authority figures. Most of them did the best they could with what they had. But because they, too, were flawed sinners like us, what they had wasn't enough. Just like if you're a parent right now, what you have for your child is not enough. You need to get that into your head.

That's why we need the ultimate emotional adult to love us and care for us. See, you simply cannot give away what you do not have. Remember, loved people are the ones who love. You can't be a mature loving adult until you have been loved by the most mature loving adult there is, God Himself.

And that brings us full-circle, back to where we began earlier in this service and actually, where we have landed on so many of these topics in this series. We have to trust that we are absolutely loved by Jesus just as we are and not as we should be because we're never in this life going to be as we should be.

So, today as we close, let's just thank God again for his willingness to be our loving Heavenly Father. Let's thank him again for the love that we have received in Christ. Would you pray with me?

---

<sup>i</sup> Pete Scazzero with Warren Bird, *The Emotionally Healthy Church* (Grand Rapids:Zondervan,2003).

<sup>ii</sup> Scazzero and Bird, *The Emotionally Healthy Church*

<sup>iii</sup> Example from <http://www.guesswhatnormalis.com/2010/06/act-like-the-adult-you-want-to-be-treated-as.html>

<sup>iv</sup> Scazzero and Bird, *The Emotionally Healthy Church*