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The Word Must Become Flesh
Forerunner Church

Alright, go ahead and turn in your Bibles to John chapter one. Let's read together from verse 14. "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth." Holy Spirit, I am asking for help this morning. I'm asking You, Lord, that You would come and meet us, that You would help us, You would strengthen us, Lord, to see You, to behold Your glory, to be the people of God, to be the church, to be Your bride, to be a family. Lord, we ask that Your Spirit would come in this room. Come to living rooms and where people are tuning in via the webstream. Lord, we ask that Your presence would come. We want You. We need You. We love You. In Jesus' name, amen. Well, I'm really encouraged by what the Lord has been stirring in our midst over the last few months. Many of you have been following the story of what's been happening in regard to the family and the homecoming and all of these things that the Lord is initiating in our midst, and today I want to look at this verse and look at some things from the life of Christ, and then actually begin to look at how we take the word that's been given to us that the Lord has put in our midst, and then how we actually begin to make it flesh. That's the main point of the message today. Also, if you would like to follow along, if you go to our website, forerunnerchurch.com, you can find the notes there that I'm going off of right here, the live link. But the main point of the message today is that the word has been given to us and entrusted to us. The Lord has told us that we're to be a family together, and now the word must become flesh. It must take root. It must take hold. It must operate through the people of God through us towards one another and towards the lost.

That's what I want to talk about this morning. The Lord is highlighting the subject of spiritual family to us in a unique way and in an increased way. Now, the subject of spiritual family is not a new subject to God or even to the body of Christ. That is not a new theme at all. It might be touching us in a new way as the Lord is bringing it to the surface and highlighting it, but at the end of the day, the truth is this. Whether we feel it, see it, experience it or not, God has always seen us as a family - His family. Regardless of your experience, regardless of again, how you've felt, how you've interacted with it, how you've perceived it, where you've perceived yourself to be. Simply because of the fact that His name is Father means that we are sons and daughters, His children, and we comprise part of the family of heaven. It's who we are. It's not just this congregation here. It's the churches that gather all throughout this city and throughout the nation and to the ends of the earth. They are the family of God. The Father wanted a family in a very deep and profound way, and that's one of the reasons, I believe, that Christ came to the earth. The Word became flesh because what God desired, what He wanted, what He pictured, He knew the end from the beginning, and He knew that the family of God was headed on this trajectory to be gathered to Him, the Father, forever.

And so, He began to lay out His plan, and He didn't just lay out a plan, and He didn't just tell us, "Be a family," but He actually manifested that plan when His own Son took on flesh to show us what He was like. He came, and He showed us. He didn't just write messages on tablets of stone and send them down the mountain with His messenger, Moses, so that we would have tablets of stone and know what it is that God's - here's the top ten things on God's wish list. Do these things and things will go well with you. But He wrote on the back of His own Son, flesh. He took on

the message. He took on the word. He took on His own desire and left the glory of heaven and left the right hand of the Father to come and become flesh in front of us. So that when we talk about Father, we would see someone who is the exact representation of the Father. And when we talk about family, we would see Someone who is the representation of family. And when we talk about brother and sister, that we would have before us, a template. We would have before us flesh and blood, a model to walk after a Man, not just a God somewhere far away in a heavenly temple.

So, when God begins to tell us, "You're a family. You're a family. You're a family," we need to begin to ask, "What part do I play in the family? Who is my father? Who is my brother? What does it mean to be a spiritual family?" Because when the Lord releases a word, it comes forth through His people. Let me say that again. When the Lord releases a word, it has to come through a person, it comes through people. The love of God is just the love of God if we don't see it demonstrated on the cross. The graciousness of God is just the graciousness of God unless we see it manifest in the life of Christ. The Word is just the Word until it puts on flesh and bones, flesh and blood, and begins to walk and talk and speak and interact and relate and convey a message, the word, that God wants to convey.

It says here that the Word became flesh, and in this context, it's talking about Christ, the Word, His name was the Word, the second person of the trinity, and He put on flesh. But I think that if I can speak prophetically here now for a minute, the word that has been given needs flesh so that we can see it and know what it's like. And guess who that flesh is? It's you. It's you. That's the word of family and the Father and the Son and community and all of these things that are converging in our midst. It's looking to show up and to break out and to manifest, and it wants you to do it through. That means, don't wait for the person next to you to get their act together. Don't wait for your leader. Don't wait for your whoever. Don't wait. Ask Holy Spirit, "Lord, how do You want me to manifest what You're doing in our midst? How do we do it? How do we do family together? How do we manifest that which God has put into our midst?" Don't just spectate. If you're part of the family. You don't just spectate, you participate. You enter in. You engage at the heart level. So, there's a process involved in regards to the word becoming flesh. It's not just instant, and then the story's done.

In John 1:14 here, when he's talking about the Word became flesh, He's talking about that glorious truth, the incarnation of our Lord, where God in His glory and power and majesty and might, I mean, immortal, immutable, omnipotent, decided to come down so low, humble Himself, become poor, become like a slave, take on your flesh and blood and sweat and trial and pain, and in the fragility of what it means to be human, where your life isn't always in your hands. He came as this babe in the hands of this young, this young girl named Mary. And such this fragile and vulnerable state.

See, the incarnation wasn't the end of the story, and the Word becoming flesh, the Word becoming flesh. There is a massive challenge in order for that flesh to rightly and fully express what it is that God wants to express. God wants to communicate something through flesh, and He did it through His own Son. And that statement is powerful, and we consider it, and we tremble, or at least we should. And we think on the power and the glory of God taking on the form of a slave for our sakes. But now begin to ask yourself, "What is it that God wants me to embody and to manifest towards others? What part of His heart is He highlighting to us individually and corporately right now that I need to show to the people around me so that they can be enriched by the knowledge of God, so that they can be enriched by God?"

God doesn't just want us to enjoy the benefits of the family, sitting back with our arms crossed. But He wants us to get in the fight and get in the fray. "What's going on? What's happening? What part am I supposed to play in this so that those that are around me would see God working in me, my gift would be brought to the table?" Because we can't be the family of God, we can't be the church of God if all the gifts aren't coming to the table. We're incomplete. We're incomplete. If you're waiting on the liver and the heart and the lung, but you're the spleen, you've got to play an important part in the body. And the hand can't be the eye, and the eye can't be the foot. And so, to manifest Christ, to show internally, and to the lost and to the world what Christ is like and what the Father's like, you have to participate in the family of God.

One of the things I love about our family is we get together for family dinner with my parents and sisters and their spouses and my wife and our children, and all the grandkids are there.

There's something special about everyone being in the room together. You can't replicate it. It's not the same. Like, if my sister and brother in law aren't there, if they're out of town or sick or something, it's just not the same. Because when we're together as a family, they bring things out of me and I bring things out of them, and the kids bring things out in each other, and there's this sense of life and joy and purpose together when we're together as a family. Each person playing their part, each gift, each distinct personality coming, and when one of them is gone or one of them is having a difficult time or struggling or something, it's not the same. There's this picture of wholeness and beauty and this corporate sense that we can't enjoy and experience if everyone in the family isn't at the table.

And the same thing is true here. You're part of the family, and you play a part in the family. And so, don't just come to the family meeting and you know, just kind of sit back and, "Well, I hope it feels like family for me." Make it feel like family for someone else. Give way. Turn to the person next to you and say, think to yourself, "How can I make this person feel like family? How can I really love them?" Guys, we're a big community. We're a big family. We've got a lot of leaders. We've got a really great team of people and pastoral team and friendship group leaders, zone pastors, and pastoral support. We have so many incredible people, but here's the thing. Even with all of those incredible people, we can't be family, even if they're full on and give all their time to it. Why? Because if only mom and dad in the household family, if only mom and dad do family, but the kids don't do family together, something is missing. Something is lacking.

You know, sometimes with my kids, I just want family to mean just tolerate each other, just get along, stop fighting, stop screaming, stop arguing, just stop, everybody please stop! Please!

Those of you with lots of little kids know what that's like. But I don't just want my kids to just tolerate one another. Even if they just stopped fighting, that would be nice, right? I mean, that would be really nice. Let it happen. But even if they just tolerated one another and stopped fighting, it still wouldn't be the same because I want them to enjoy each other. You know, silence, if they were just like, stopped fighting and just stopped, that would be nice. That would be a miracle, yes, thank you, Klondo. Yeah. That would be a miracle. It would be nice for a couple hours or a couple days, but then it would be like, Uh, there's this void. Because families weren't meant to live in silence. Their mouths aren't supposed to be closed towards one another. There's something that's meant to fill the void, and to fill the silence. Hey, guess what it is? That individual bringing to the family who God has made them to be. It's their gifts, it's their calling, it's their personality, it's me seeing my kids individually and enjoying their personality, and then one across the table, they're seeing them, and they're playing off one another. Did you ever spend time with families that are like really close knit together? But you're kind of on the outside, and it's like, "Where are we going here?" In some ways, make it a joke, and then someone's talking

about their childhood, and it's like, "Where do I jump into the story here?" There's just an understanding. There's a unity that's forged and built together when the family operates in their distinct gifts, callings, personality, and all those things.

The word became flesh. A family is something that you are not something that you do. A church is something that we are. It's not something that we do. Church isn't about something that we do and just checking it off a list. There was this old song. When we were moving out here, my parents got us all these Christian hip hop cassettes. In the shining year of 1991. And one of the songs, I still remember it. "You can't go to church cause the church is you." Powerful truth. Horribly written song, but it stuck with me. But I remember even as a kid, thinking about those words, "I can't go to church cause the church is me." And me being like, "What?" Because as a kid, I'm like, "No, church is on Sunday, like, that's where we go," but no, the Scripture describes the church as who we are.

You know, the number one metaphor that it uses in the New Testament to describe the church is family. You just do a little Bible search, it's over 250 times. It's like way more than that, but I'll just say it's 250 times. You look up "Father," "Son," "Daughter," "Family," "Inheritance," all these different terms that are familiar terms, those are the terms that the Bible uses to describe who we are because God is a Father. He's not just a, you know, a pastor or a teacher, or a preacher, or a leader, or a president, or a king. He's not just that. He wanted to know Him. He wanted us to know Him as Father. Therefore, because He is Father, we are family. We are. Legally, it is true about you in heaven. That is the legal truth about you as a Christian is that you are a part of a family and you have a part to play in the family. And you know, we have to learn how to do that together. We're not great at it. When you adopt a child, you go to a court date and you, you know, sign on the piece of paper and the guardianship of that child passes to you, and you know that it's true. I am now this child's parent. I am their mother or I am their father. And legally, it's true. Legally, you know and the judge knows, and the courtroom knows, and maybe some of your family knows, and whoever gets your newsletter, it's all legal, but it's all legal until it become flesh. It's just legally true but that child isn't always connecting with the fact that you're now their mother or you're now their father. Simply because you show a child a piece of paper that says, "I have legally adopted you" does not convince them, shape their understanding or whatever until you go home and what? You begin to walk out life together day after day, meal after meal, homeschool after homeschool, or child pickup at the, you know, at school, day after day, meals together, holidays together, church gatherings together, family life together, game nights together, game nights gone awry together.

And then what happens is in that process, the legal truth becomes real. It begins to manifest. And then the child begins to understand, "Oh, this is how I relate to you. Oh, this is how I relate to my siblings. I'll know how Dad is gonna react to this situation because I've walked with Dad now. I know how my sibling is gonna react to this situation because I've walked with them now, and we've been through some stuff, and I know exactly what buttons to push in their heart to psychologically destroy them." I mean, kids, they're expert psychological warfare artists. They know exactly what buttons to push. They know exactly what tone to hit with their voice when they come in and you're there, just doing the dishes or something, they want something. They know the frequency to hit with their voice to make you stop and look at them. And they hit that exact frequency and you're like, "Ah!" Why are they doing that? They're doing that because they want your attention. They know exactly the frequencies to hit to get your attention. Why? Because they've walked with you. They've walked as a family. They've experienced life. They've done the family vacations. They've seen you happy. They've seen you angry. They've seen you

whatever, and they begin to relate. See, this is what we're in right now. The word to be a spiritual family now has to become flesh. You're that flesh. I'm that flesh. The person next to you, they're that flesh, and now we begin the journey of walking together to know how to relate to one another, to bring in the lonely, to turn to the person next to us, to introduce ourselves and then invite them over for dinner, to spend time with one another.

A family is different than a business. Because in a family, you can't fire people. Can you imagine the way that we so many times, I'll just use myself, I've thought of the church as a business and organization? The way that we leverage one another for our own personal gain, our own happiness, to fill our own sense of unfulfillment, to make our life better, to make our life more rich. We turn to the person next to us, and we leverage those relationships, what can you give me? And we do it all in the name of, "Well, this is in the Bible, and I'm supposed to feel apart, and I don't." So, we like, slap this religious jargon onto it, and we begin using the people around us like it's a business transaction. We have people over for dinner, "Well, did you like that?" "Well... I mean, I don't really know... How's this person going to enrich my life and make it better?" You know what that's called? It's called being a sociopath. We're all a bunch of sociopaths. We're all leveraging one another, and the Father is looking at us, and He's going, "This is antithetical to the Gospel. This is not what we're to be about as a family."

One of the most challenging things as a father is seeing my children leveraging one another for their own gain. It's really hard to... It makes me mad sometimes, most of the time. When they leverage one another, when they, you know, the older ones get the younger ones together, you know, after the harvest festival, Halloween candy shebang, and they get it out. They set up a little money changer table, and they start buying. There's this whole black market of candy happening under the facade of my home, and I'm like, "What's going on? What's happening? There's a weird spirit in here." Next thing I know, I'm eating a tootsie roll, and the 5-year-old's driving away in my car. Like, they know how to wheel and deal. And you know, the older ones, they've been wheeling and dealing longer than the younger ones have, so the younger ones come, and they come skipping in, and you know, they're so happy. They're like, "Look what I got! I got this piece of candy. It's so good. Oh, my gosh, it's so good." I'm like, "What did you give them?" "Four Reese's cups and five lollipops, and half a pound of skittles." Time for a family meeting. In a family, we serve one another. We celebrate each other's victories and we mourn each other's losses. Being a family is sometimes just as simple as when somebody does something awesome. You come along side with them and just, "Good job! We did it!" Come along side of the person that's hurting and mourning and just cry with them. Sometimes we're so afraid of people in pain because we feel like we have to fix their pain. We don't have to fix their pain. Jesus will fix their pain. We just need to feel their pain with them. You don't have to have the words. Don't shy away from your friends that are in pain. I remember when my wife and I went through a really painful season of our lives several years ago. We had friends that called us up and said, "Hey, can we just come sit with you?" It meant the world. That's family. They didn't come and give us perspective and preach the Bible at us and tell us how God's gonna wipe away all our tears and give us all the theological reasons why there's delay and pain and anguish and loss of life. They didn't do that. They just sat in our living room, and we cried, and then they cried. That's it. That's family. When we're hurting. When you're hurting, I'm hurting, and when I'm hurting, you're hurting. When the person next to you is hurting, first, find out that they're hurting, and then go and hurt with them. Feel what they feel. Just feel it. Don't give an answer, just feel it. People that go through trauma and crisis, more times than not, they come out with this testimony. We so appreciate people around that didn't feel like they had to talk the entire time, and they just came

to our hospital room, or they came to our home, and they just sat with us, and they just told us that it's just okay to grieve, and to go through the pain of what was happening. They just wanted to experience that with us. That's powerful. You don't need a whole sermon prepared to go visit your friend in the hospital or visit the friend whose marriage is going through a challenging time. You don't have to have all the answers. God has great answers. The Holy Spirit has great answers. He's really good at saying the right thing in the right time, and He'll want to use you, but sometimes He just wants to use you just to be there and put your arms around that individual, and just love them and suffer with them, long for them. Because families rejoice together, and they also suffer together. The point of the family is just that you're not alone in your suffering. It's not that you don't suffer. It's not that you won't have pain. It's not that you won't go through crisis or loss or disappointment. It's that you won't have to do it alone. But be that for someone else first. Go find someone, and be that to them.

The Word became and He came and dwelt among us. The Word becoming flesh, who's more than just this last-ditch mercy mission of the Father to try and, you know, redeem Adam. There was more at stake. There was more that was in His heart. It wasn't just, "I'm here to fix all your problem, so whoosh. Jesus, the Carpenter, come forth," you know? It wasn't just a last-ditch effort. There was something burning in the heart of God that humanity did not know about Him, and He longed to show them. He longed to show them. He called to them from the mountain in Exodus 19. He said, "Come up here," but only Moses went up. and so, what did God do? It's the glory of Christianity. It's the glory of the gospel. it's what sets apart Christianity from every other religion. God doesn't stay in His temple up on a mountain expecting you to get with the program so that you hopefully end up there too. But He comes down the mountain. He walks into your life. He walks into your job. He walks into the pain of loss and suffering that you've been through. He shows up. He doesn't blink. He doesn't turn away. He's not ashamed of you and your plight. He's not ashamed of us. He longs to reveal the Father because He wants a family.

The difficulty of the word becoming flesh doesn't end there. It only begins. When the Word is given and the Word now has to become flesh, it's given. You know the fragility in which Christ came to the earth. Here's this young maiden girl, Mary. She's not even married yet. And all the sudden she's with child. There was legal grounds to stone her. The Lord knew that. He knew that the Word becoming flesh, there would be this precarious position that His beautiful Son, His only begotten Son would be the crux of. You know, He's not born in the time of modern medicine and ibuprofen. He's not born in that time. He came at a time when it was not uncommon to die before you were forty. Death was normal. There was war. There were famines. There were plagues. There was disease. There was no cure for it in the natural sense. And He comes in this precarious time of history, and then Herod, after He's born, rises up and murders all of the young boys two years old and younger all around Bethlehem. It's precarious, and then they have to escape to a foreign land, and as they're escaping, there are robbers and there's danger to go all the way from Israel to Egypt. People didn't do that. They didn't have a commuter train. They didn't just travel to Egypt. You don't go to Egypt. They stayed in their hometowns. The majority of them, all of their life, they never left. There's not a reason. it was too hard. It's too dangerous. It's too precarious. It's too expensive. And Jesus comes at such a precarious time, and even during His ministry, He's hidden, and then He can't show His power, because when He shows His power, He knows that His hour will come, the hour of the cross where He would die for the sins of the world, and yet even during His ministry in John 8 and other places, there are people that are trying to kill Him. They're trying to stone Him. They're trying to throw Him off of a cliff. See, when the Word becomes flesh, there are very precarious scenarios that begin to

occur. Because it's trying to steal away the intent of God. It's trying to cut short the revelation of the Father. It's trying to cut short the Word that God longs to reveal about Himself. See, this thing about spiritual family that's happening in our midst, this isn't mostly about us. It's mostly about Him. He will be more glorified as Father when we begin to relate to one another as a healthy family. He will be more glorified. People will interact with you, and there will be something different about you. They will say, "I think I just met Jesus." You will manifest to them the glory of God in the same way that Christ manifest the glory of God to us. See, it's all about Him. It's all about His worth. So, when you get discouraged, when family isn't working, just remember this. It's all about Him. It's His plan. It's His way. And I'm just obeying what He's asked me to do. I'm responding and then obeying. I'm beholding, and then walking it out. I hear the word and I make it flesh. I hear the word, and I make it flesh. Make flesh the word. Make it flesh. Don't hide it. Don't put it under a lamp. Don't hide it underneath of a basket. Make it flesh in your homes. Make it flesh in our workplaces. Make it flesh in school. Make it flesh in our community. Make it flesh. Let the world see the light of Christ. Let them see you and then see Him. Do you know why? Because He's standing at the right hand of the Father. He's hidden from human and natural eye right now, but He's coming again in power, and He's looking at you to make Him flesh.

2 Corinthians 4:6, "It is God who commanded light to shine out of the darkness, and He has shown in our hearts the light of the knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Jesus shines and radiates exactly who the Father is. He says, "My will is do to the will of the One who sent Me. They're not My words. They're His words. It's not My miracles. They're His miracles." The Father wanted that water turned to wine so the Son manifest the Word. When we see Christ, when we behold the light of His face, who do we see? We see the exact representation of the Father. One of the challenges is that we think the Father and the Son are different. The Father is angry, the Son came and rescued us. The Father is distant, but the Son came near, so we like the Son. We like Jesus. We read the Gospels. We revel in who Jesus is. We're like, "Oh, You healed the sick, and You raised the dead, and You spoke with such gracious words. I just want to be around You. I just want to touch the hem of Your garment. Oh, if You would just brush past me, that's all that I need." And Jesus said, "I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me. When You see Me, you see Him. When you behold Me, you behold Him. When you hear My words, you hear His words. I don't speak on My own authority."

Colossians 1:15, Paul says that He, meaning Christ, is the image. He's the image of the invisible God. The word "image" here implies more than a shadow or a type, but a representation because that image is directly derived from the source. It's not just like a picture that someone drew. What's the Father like? Okay, let's sketch a carpenter from Galilee. He's derived. He's begotten, that's what that means. He's begotten of the Father. Everything that Christ is is who the Father is. And when He shows up on the earth, we don't have to ask the question, what is the Father like? All we must do is look at the Son. You look at Him, and you know what the Father is like. The writer of Hebrews continues in Hebrews 1:3. He's speaking of Christ. He says, "Who being the brightness of His glory," meaning the Father's glory, Hebrews 1:3. "And the express image of His person." The express image. That word is that word we derive "character" from. Character. And it was actually a tool that was used to engrave in that day. It was a specific tool that would engrave the exact intent of the author. When Christ came, He showed us the exact intent of what He wanted us to know about Him. Contained in 89 chapters, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, He showed us what the Father is like. And we have to believe that He believed that it was sufficient

that giving us just that little resource and the New Testament and the whole word of God would point us in the direction to see the light of the Father as we behold the stories in the word of God. The Christian doesn't have to see Jesus in order to experience the Father because He's not here with us right now. And some people are so longing for an encounter. They just say, "Oh, if I could only see Jesus. Oh, if I could only see Jesus." Do you know you rob yourself of the blessing of John 20:29 when Jesus said, "Blessed are they who have not seen and yet still have believed"? Blessed are they who have not seen. You might come here and say, "Well, I've never had a dream. I've never had a vision. I've never had an encounter. I've never been taken to heaven," and you live in conflict in your soul and you're thinking, "I'm not a part of this family." You are. You're blessed. Blessed are those that have not seen that radiance face to face and yet still believe. You know what blessing? That means there's a reward that is for you in the age to come from Him. You get a greater blessing. You still believe. You still endure. You still moved your family. You still sign up again. You still sign up to volunteer. You still show up in your quiet time and say, "God, here I am!" You've endured less money and less influence and all these things, and you're wondering, "Where's the angel? Where is Christ? Why isn't He showing up?" Blessed are you who have not seen and yet still believe.

The glory of Jesus and the knowledge of the Father are experienced when you hear the stories recorded in the Word of God. That's how we behold Him. That's how we behold His glory. John, in John 1, got to see the Word manifest, and He got to handle Him and be with Him, and yet, even they abandoned Him and doubted Him and had to put their finger into the scar in His side to believe. See, that's why there's a blessing for you. Because you still believe and you don't need to put your hand inside of the scar. Like, what would be cool, but I bet the blessing He's gonna give is gonna be really cool.

These stories are filled with power. The word of God is unlike any other book. I love what Smith Wigglesworth. He said, "I don't read this Word. I don't read this story. It reads me." This is dangerous stuff! There's so many testimonies of unbelievers opening up this Word. Even John 1, I was reading one of a 17th century author who opened up to John chapter 1, had never read it in his life. Read it and suddenly was converted by the power of God. It's sharper than a two-edged sword. You don't mess with the Word of God. It messes with you. You open that thing, it's not just words on a page. It's the logos. It is the declaration, the revelation of who Christ is and who the Father is, and you behold that Word and you read it, and you pray it, and you act on it, and you obey it, and that Word begins to manifest. It begins to show up in your speech and in your dreams, and in your thoughts. The word begins to transform you, and then it begins to impact those around you. The Word is living and active.

We'll end with this. This last phrase. Christ came full of grace and truth. He was full. He was filled with grace and truth. That word full is actually the word that sometimes it can mean maturity. Maturity. Christ in maturity showed us the grace and the truth of the Father. Do you know what's implied? If He was revealed to us and sent among us, it means we don't understand the grace and the truth of the Father. We have wrong ideas about God. Do you know that you could be a Christian and have wildly wrong ideas about God and act consistently upon that? He came to show us the grace of God. Why? Because the Father was filled with grace and truth. So, as the Father manifest the Son that we would know the grace and truth of the Father, so we are to manifest Christ so that the world knows the grace and the truth of the Father. Do people know the grace and truth of God when they interact with you? When they hear you speak? When they read what you type? When they hear the tone of your voice, do they experience the grace and the truth of the Father? Are you manifesting the Word to them? Are you showing it as a family?

Grace is unmerited favor. Unmerited favor. It is acceptance in the face of accusation. Grace clothes the dirty and disqualified with new garments. It lifts the head and says to the accuser, he that is without sin may cast the first stone. Even though we have not earned it, even though we do not deserve it, reckless love, we are recipients of the acceptance and delight of God. He came to show us that acceptance and delight. He came to model it. All through the stories in the Scripture and culminating on the cross. Why did He die if He was innocent? The grace of God. He longed to bestow favor, the free gift of righteousness upon sons and daughters and pull a family to Himself, and it was appointed that He must suffer many things at the hands of sinners. Truth is more than a moral compass or rules written on a page. Truth is a Man. Truth is a Man, and when you, as a believer, as I, when we manifest truth, when we speak truth, it means that we are to communicate who Christ is. So that person comes away going, "I think I just had an encounter with Jesus." Remember that on the internet. Remember that on Facebook. We must have grace and truth. If we have only truth, then we set boundaries with no love and acceptance. If we only have grace, we set boundaries with no love and acceptance. If we only have truth, that means that there are no boundaries, and everyone is loved and accepted. Christ was mature in both, and we are called to be mature in both, to be gracious towards one another and to manifest Christ.

Jesus said in John 14:6, He said, "I am the way and the truth..." I am the truth. That means that truth, if it were to be evaluated toward me, I'm so weighty, I'm so glorious, I'm so powerful that truth cannot bear the weight of who I am. I would crush it. But if truth or if a law or a moral or a standard is applied to me, I can bear the weight of it. He says, "I am the truth. I am the standard by which you're to measure that which is right and wrong, that which is noble, that which is pure, that which is holy. You measure it by Me, a Man." When you speak the truth, do you manifest the Man? When we talk to our kids, do we manifest the Man? I'm gonna tell you the truth. You know we walk about speak the truth in love and what that means is give people a compliment sandwich. "Thank you so much for meeting me, taking the time. I so appreciate you. Here's all your problems. Here's all your deficiencies. Here's everything wrong with you. But, to wrap up the sandwich, the lower piece of the bread. I think you're gonna make it. I really appreciate you." What if we approach speaking the truth in love as not being critical and identifying with the accusation of the enemy? You know, it takes no discernment to be a critic. Discernment and criticism are not the same thing. Because you don't have to be filled with the Holy Spirit to be a critic. But you have to be filled with the Holy Spirit to be discerning. Why? Because discernment means that you see what God sees. The prophet in Zechariah 3, he saw Joshua in dirty garments. He saw what man saw. He's disqualified as a priest. He's disqualified. He's really messed up. Here's all of Josh's deficiencies. Zechariah could have sat him down and laid it open. That's not what the voice of the Lord said. That wasn't discernment. The Holy Spirit wants to write another story as we relate to one another. What if speaking the truth in love meant we manifest the truth in love to them. We tell them what Christ sees about them from the Word of God, and we relate to one another in the way that we want to be related to? What if we turn to the person next to us, we got to know them, and understand what they were like and who God made them to be, and then we begin to champion that and we begin to say, "Man, I didn't know that about you. I want to help you be what God has called you be. I want to help you do what God has called you to do. Your battles are gonna be my battles. Your victories are gonna be my victories. I get to claim those too. I get to say we. I get to say we did it."

The family of God. This is our last point. We'll just invite people to stand. Brenton, if you're around. Brenton and team, go ahead and come out. Let's stand. The family of God, we've been

given the Word. We've been entrusted with a word, and now we begin the fragile and tenuous journey of making it flesh, of walking it out. It doesn't happen in a week or a day or a service. It's nice to hear from a platform. I can say that cause I've said it from the platform. It's nice to hear from the platform, but once you start making it flesh, you realize there's all sorts of challenges. But if it didn't stop Christ, then it shouldn't stop us, and we can ask the Lord to help us and give us fresh eyes and a heart filled with love and abounding love toward one another.

Holy Spirit, I ask You that we would be a family, that we would know the Father, and that Your Son would release His power in our midst, Lord, to help us, to really help us. To really help us get our eyes off of ourselves and onto the person that's next to us right now, to really fight for each other, to really get each other's back, to not quit on one another, to not revile one another, to not accuse one another, to not let envy drive us and jealousy drive us and motivate our conversations, to not leverage one another, Lord, to enjoy one another, to celebrate together, to mourn together. Holy Spirit, we ask that You would come all across this room. We ask for a fresh revelation of the grace and the truth of God that would transform us, that we'd be able to manifest Your grace and Your truth towards one another. Help us, Lord. Help us, Lord.