

# Building a Resilient Church Culture: Part 3 - Robust Theology

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[ 0 : 00 ] Well, good morning. I hope you have a copy of God's Word with you today. If you do, please join me in 2 Timothy chapter 3. Two weeks ago now, I began preaching a series of sermons, which is not a thing we do normatively here, expressing our need to build a resilient church culture.

The first week was an overview, at which time I made the case that we live in days of growing, soft totalitarianism, particularly concerning anthropology, how we came to be, why we exist, etc.

This is largely a problem concerning the very definition of mankind, and it is making inroads into our culture at a sweeping pace. I think perhaps you all know already what I've been talking about.

There's going to be a pressure felt against Orthodox Christianity already being felt, but being felt in greater measure than I believe ever before in this country.

If you haven't heard the past two sermons, I think you'll be well helped by listening to their recordings. For the sake of time, I can't rebuild each case as we're doing this. You should be able to find those on the website.

[ 1 : 17 ] But each week, I've begun with three prerequisite statements. Of course, I could say that correctly, prerequisite statements. And I think that they bear repeating once again.

So I'm going to do these three things quickly before we get to the topic for today. Number one, as a general practice, we preach expositional sermons. Most simply put, this means that we take for the sermons point or points the main point or points of that week's text.

We typically preach verse-by-verse exposition. And I'm looking forward in the fall to get started on the book of Romans with you. We want to be especially careful not to read into a text what we want the text to say.

This is called eisegesis, right? We want to exegete the text. Many errors have arisen through the practice of eisegesis. And so, with that in mind, as we think about a text and we think about it topically, I just want to warn you to be especially discerning.

Secondly, I am not trying to be an alarmist. But there are times in which we need to be thinking carefully and looking forward well. And because of this, your elders feel a burden to prepare you for challenges that we believe are coming.

[ 2 : 37 ] We love you very much. We want to teach you well from God's Word for your good and for the glory of our God. And to be frank, if we're entirely wrong, all the things that we're going to be talking about are just good and proper things for the church to be doing anyway.

So, we'll be okay. Third, the six total weeks we're going to be spending thinking about building a resilient church culture will not be enough time to exhaust the topic.

Nor will each week be enough time for the particular thing that we're talking about. I feel that like I want, you know, three times as many pages of notes as I presently have. But I hope that it will prime us and get us talking and thinking.

We're going to need to do so both formally and informally, day to day. And above all, we would ask that you would spend time with the Lord and His Word as you consider the days in which we live.

So, how do we build a resilient church culture, right? A church that is going to stand against the rising tide of this soft totalitarianism, right?

[ 3 : 38 ] A requirement to toe the cultural line. We're going to have to build it, right? It's not going to just happen, right? It will be spirit-empowered if it's valuable at all.

But we're going to have to do some things in order for it to happen. We will have to be strong, right? Because the tide, the cultural tide, it will be destructive.

And it will have to be cultural. It's going to have to be ingrained into every part of who we are as a people set apart for God's praise. So, this morning we're going to consider the second of five things your elders believe we need to be working on.

The first was clear mission. The second, robust theology. The third, accurate history. The fourth, sacrificial hospitality.

And the fifth, healthy family. Today, we're going to consider robust theology. Now, many people, when they hear the word theology, think, oh, that's for the theologians, right?

[ 4 : 42 ] That is for the high-minded in places of academia. But theology is merely the study of God, of our Creator. If we are to rightly answer the questions, how were we created?

For what purpose were we created? How ought our lives to be ordered? If we're looking for any meaning or purpose at all, then we're going to have to do so theologically.

Even the atheist makes a theological statement in declaring there is no God. That is a form of theology. Not only will we need to be theological to stand against the rising tide of soft totalitarianism, but we will have to do theology robustly.

We're going to have to do it well. Our theology will need to be strong, and it will need to be healthy. It will need to be altogether biblical. We will need to know what we believe, why we believe it, and be able to recognize attacks at the very core of our Christian faith.

So, let's begin this morning with our text. 2 Timothy chapter 3. I'm going to read the entirety of chapter 3 and into verse 5 of chapter 4.

[ 6 : 06 ] Let me remind you that the subheadings and the verse numbers and the chapter numbers are not inspired. They're very helpful to us, right? We all arrived at the same point in our English text by saying chapter 3, verse 1, but not inspired.

And I want you to see the flow of Paul's reasoning here to his disciple Timothy. Before I begin reading, let me remind you, beloved, that this is God's word to us. It was written for his glory and our good, and so we would do well to approach it with reverence, to listen to it in order to believe its promises and obey its commands.

2 Timothy 3, verse 1 and following. But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty.

For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness but denying its power.

Avoid such people. For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions, always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth.

[ 7 : 45 ] Just as Janice and John Brace opposed Moses, so these men also opposed the truth, men corrupted in mind and disqualified regarding the faith. But they will not get very far, for their folly will be plain to all, as was that of those two men.

You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra, which persecutions I endured, yet from them all the Lord rescued me. Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil people and imposters will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

All scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

[ 9 : 03 ] I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom, preach the word. Be ready in season and out of season.

Reprove, rebuke, and exhort with complete patience and teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.

As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. So, this is known as Paul's last epistle, the last letter that he wrote.

He's on his deathbed, he's anticipating his soon coming end, and he's issuing these final words to Timothy, who is serving as a pastor, but that doesn't mean that the words here only apply to Timothy and his particular ministry.

Notice that he says that this time is here and it is coming. Timothy himself experienced this and the practical application that he needed in his day, and we also need to consider it.

[10:22] So, to do so, we're going to do it in a two-point simple outline, which is as follows. Number one, two exhortations, and number two, three reasons for the two exhortations.

We've got all those numbers. Number one, two exhortations. Number two, three reasons for the two exhortations. We won't look at this text exhaustively. Remember, I'm driving to a point, right?

Trying carefully to exegete, not eisegete. Be discerning. We can't pick up every little detail that's found in this long bit of text. But I want to draw your attention first to two exhortations.

So, number one, continue. Paul is urging Timothy, right? That's what it means to exhort. He's urging him to continue, right?

In something specific, right? He says, but as for you, right? In contrast to these type of men, you continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed.

[11:23] Paul tells Timothy that there will be difficulty in the last days because of ungodly people. And his response to that is to instruct Timothy not to withdraw from society or abandon his work to start a new one, but to continue, right?

To settle in, to keep moving forward. It's what many of the Puritans called plotting, right? Stay on the path. Just keep going.

Continue. Timothy is told, right, to continue in what he had learned and believed, which we see as Paul continues is the Word of God.

In verse 15, Paul calls this the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. It says that he was familiar with them from a child, right?

We know that his mother and his grandmothers were followers of Christ and taught him the Old Testament text that he might come to faith in Christ. And then in verse 16, we see Paul call this the Scripture, who has God as its very source, right?

[12:37] Breathed out, expired by God himself. If we are to continue, then we are going to have to continue by God's Word, which means we're going to have to study God's Word, right?

We will need to know the sacred writings. And beloved, we live in a tragic day of biblical illiteracy. Too many people who claim to be a people of the book do not know the book they claim to be a people of.

This is our text, and we ought to know it much more than we presently do. We will need to do robust theology.

Not merely to know things, right? Not to be high-minded, not to be academic. This is not the great end of reading the Scripture, but rather to know personally our God.

To know his purposes in the world, and know how we are to walk in his will. This is the end, the practical application of the knowledge of our God.

[13:53] And it will take work on your part. In a survey released by Lifeway Research, showed that evangelical Christians, only 36% say that they read their Bibles daily.

What a shame. What an absolute shame. It's going to take work on your part. But it is also a community project. So if you will, listen.

Ephesians chapter 4, beginning in verse 11. Jesus gives to the church apostles, prophets, which I'll argue is the Scripture. But for another time. The evangelists, the shepherd teachers, to do something specific, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.

Right? So there's gifts given to the church to equip the saints, all of us, for the work of ministry, which is what? It's building up the body of Christ.

And we're to do this work, verse 13 tells us, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

[15:06] Which means that this work will not be done this side of glory. Right? We're going to have to do robust theology until the Lord returns or takes us home. Right? One of the two. And it has a point, verse 14 of Ephesians 11 tells us, so that we may no longer be children tossed to and fro by

the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine.

And doctrine just is a great word for truth. By human cunning, by craftiness and deceitful schemes. So how will we stand against the tide of soft totalitarianism against all the ideas that are out there in the world that are assaulting the church?

We will do so by doing robust theology and doing it together in community. Speaking the truth to one another. This takes all kinds of forms.

Right? As the clear mission of the church is to make disciples, we do this in big and public ways and we do this in small and private ways to press on together in the truth.

To continue. In what we have learned and firmly believe. Right? The scripture itself. That's the first thing Paul is exhorting Timothy to do is to continue.

[16:19] But secondly, he exhorts him to preach. Chapter 4 and verse 2. He says, preach the word. Not only is Timothy exhorted to continue in what he has learned, but he is also exhorted to proclaim the word to others.

To declare it to others. And I want to say to you that this is preaching, but you are also meant to preach. You are meant to proclaim the truth to others.

Right? See Ephesians chapter 4. Timothy is told in this text that there will be difficulty and he is to respond to that difficulty by continuing in the truth and by proclaiming the truth.

He is told to reprove, rebuke, and exhort. Or, if you prefer, correct, warn, and urge others.

And to do this all the time. And to do this with patience and with careful instruction. Speaking the truth to one another has to be and has to continue to be and grow in measure built into who we are as a people.

[17:35] Always helping, always directing. We have to, as a church, have a louder voice than the culture's voice. Right? For what the truth is and what it is not.

The second main point, let's look and see the reasons for these exhortations. Number one, three reasons for two exhortations. Number one, to avoid licentiousness and legalism.

Right? Bear with me. If we are off the mark of how we are meant to respond to the truth as gospel people, it will be one in two ways. We'll either become licentious, right? We'll take for granted the grace of God and we'll throw off the law and we'll think that we can live however we'd like to live in response to God's grace.

Right? God has forgiven me of my sin, therefore I can sin abundantly. Paul says, may it never be. The other temptation is to trend off toward legalism.

Right? To think that we can earn our favor and what we seek is for other people to look like us and not like Christ. Right? To add to the law in particular ways and demand the same from others.

[18:51] So, walking in gospel response, obedient lives is like walking a tightrope and there's always two ways to fall off. Look at chapter 3 and verse 2, 2 Timothy.

I won't read the whole list but you'll see people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parent, jump down without self-control, treacherous, reckless, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.

So, you see all of this licentiousness in the text and then you see hints of legalism as well, them being proud and arrogant, having the appearance of godliness but denying its power.

And these are people who are part of this fellowship of faith, right? they're to be found out, they're to be discovered, they're to be avoided. This is not just the culture at war here but the culture infiltrating within God's very people.

Down through verse 7 and Paul elaborates further but I think you can see the point. There is a promise of wicked people. They will be around us and within us.

[20:09] and because of this there's also a promise of persecution for the faithful. This verse is the hammer blow to the prosperity gospel.

This verse, most who believe the prosperity gospel and see that what God is seeking to accomplish for us here is the avoidance of suffering, they have never heard. And I challenge you with this.

When you meet somebody who's been at prosperity gospel churches ask them, have you ever heard 2 Timothy 3, 12? This doesn't preach in a prosperity church. Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

It will happen. It is inevitable that the world is going to push back. Ungodliness pushes back against godliness. We are disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Why do we think that our path will look any different than His? Hated in this world, suffered and died for our sake. Why would we think that this world will love us and accept us for all that we have to offer?

[ 21 : 19 ] It will not. Those who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. And it's on the heels of this that He then says to Timothy in verse 14, but as for you, this will happen.

It will be going on, but as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed. We must be careful not to believe that we have already arrived.

We still may be tossed to and fro by the wind. We're going to have to press in and continue on because we want to avoid licentiousness and we want to avoid legalism.

Right? We are susceptible to such errors. Listen for a moment to Paul's farewell words to the Ephesian elders recorded for us in Acts chapter 20, verse 28 and following.

He says this and this is just, this strikes me, especially as an elder, as a warning for me and for all of us. He says, pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock.

[ 22 : 37 ] To yourselves and to the flock in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers to care for the church of God which He obtained with His own blood.

I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you not sparing the flock. Okay. So we're going to pay attention to ourselves and to the flock because wolves are coming.

Right? You can see this language being picked up here in 2 Timothy chapter 3. Right? This type of activity is going to be happening. This ungodliness coming in, taking people captive. We must be careful but then in verse 30 He says, and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things to draw away the disciples after them.

So both from without and from within and so we are then to be careful, to pay careful attention to ourselves and to the flock.

To avoid licentiousness and legalism. The second reason, the second reason for these exhortations is to do the opposite of that which is to pursue holiness.

[ 23 : 47 ] Right? We want to avoid sinfulness but we want to also pursue holiness for the glory of our God to be a people set apart for His praise in a dark and a twisted generation.

Verse 16 is our classic sufficiency of Scripture text. I hope you don't grow tired of it. all Scripture breathed out by God and profitable.

It comes from Him. He is its source. Carrying along the pens of men, it is His word and it is profitable.

It is the very thing we need to teach, to reprove, to correct, and to train in righteousness. In order to pursue holiness, this is the text.

It is empowered by the Spirit that we might live in a way that is pleasing to our God. And verse 17 says that the man of God may be complete and you can see there the word proficient would be another way to translate that word.

[ 24 : 53 ] that the man of God may have all that he needs to be equipped for every good work. Every good work. There is not a good work outside of what this book instructs us to do.

The Bible is the sufficient source for all things pertaining to godliness. You want to know how to please our God? Look to His word. He has spoken.

He has condescended to become an author. And I just want you to stop and think about that for a moment. In our culture, to become an author could make you famous.

God is infinitely famous and yet He became an author to write us a book. A book that we ought to pay attention to. We ought to have our lives shaped by this book for our eternal good and for His eternal glory.

So this exhortation to continue in the word and to preach the word or proclaim the word has this as its second reason that order that we might pursue holiness. Third, we ought to continue and to proclaim to help others pursue holiness.

[ 26 : 12 ] Now this is a way in my life that the chapter break did not serve me well in my reading of 2 Timothy. that I separated the end of chapter 3 from the beginning of chapter 4 for a lot of years.

But he flows right from this incredible, incredible words, right? The man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. And then he says, I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus who is to judge the living and the dead.

There will be a judgment that will come. There's something to be warned against. And by his appearing in his kingdom, what? Preach the word.

Be ready in season and out of season all the time. Reprove, rebuke, exhort with complete patience and teaching.

many of you know that I am not in my natural self a patient person. One of my high values in my flesh is efficiency. I love doing things efficiently.

[ 27 : 16 ] And let me tell you, the church is not efficient. It is anything but efficient. So the Lord has had to do a lot of work of grace in me and is still completing that work.

The end of verse 2 knocked me down when I first saw the connection here that we are to proclaim the word to one another with complete patience and teaching which means instruction.

And why? And why? Why are we to do this? Verse 3 and into 4 tells us 4 the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions and they will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.

Beloved, those who claim to follow Christ will not endure Bible teaching and the response to that is that we continue to teach with complete patience.

We press on we keep at it we keep going we keep proclaiming God's word. This blew my mind open I don't know if it does for you but as I have tried to teach things and teach things and teach things over the past 13 years and just things that don't seem to stick like what is happening why is none of this sticking why are people not hearing these good exhortations from the scripture right why is it not I'm not saying you guys are all not enduring and you have itching ears but it happens it happens in this fellowship and the exhortation to me and to you is to keep at it just keep proclaiming the truth just keep doing theology for the good of people and for the glory of God that we would help others to pursue holiness now I know broadly as a church we love theology what a good thing what a wonderful thing you bear with me the fact that you're even here means you're willing to tolerate some theological presentation on the

[ 29 : 40 ] Lord's day get up and some people have said I'm more like a lecturer than a preacher I don't know what to do with that I sometimes feel like good preaching is a lecture but we're going to have to continue or we're going to have to press and we're going to have to see that each and every one of us plays a part in doing this well together so I'm going to cover again and I'm going to do it in brief because it's already new a concept called theological triage I'm going to do it quickly we've done it before if you happen to have a bulletin I just quickly put notes on the back for you if you want to scribble on the back of that I want to tell you that this concept is not explicitly found anywhere in the Bible although you could argue it is implicitly I think the term was invented by Albert Moeller the president of Southern Seminary but it's a practice that has been happening and we can read about it throughout the history of the church triage is the assigning of importance right we have a number of medical professionals in in the church and so you know exactly what triage is but if you note if an entire bus was in an accident and there were a lot of varied injuries in that accident and that entire bus load was taken to the emergency room somebody there the doctor in charge or maybe the charge nurse would quickly do triage they would assign importance to the injuries right somebody bumped their head they can sit to the side and wait right somebody's got a piece of bus frame through their abdomen they're getting rushed to the back right it's an assigning of importance how much time and energy do we give to different areas of theology right so you have in a tier you've got primary secondary tertiary and one of my favorite words in the world quaternary doctrines right now I want to address these just in brief and I'm going to take them in opposite order so we're going to build from least important to most important so firstly quaternary theology or doctrines are just this frankly they're unimportant they don't matter it's the kind of stuff that sometimes people like to sit around and muse about lots of quaternary conversations on seminary campuses right let's just think and muse my classic example is is there life on other planets

I don't care the Bible says nothing about it maybe maybe so if you're a college guy this is college guys question I like to ask this question I won't take a meeting with you to ask this question it doesn't matter it's unimportant there's other things we can talk about but not that tertiary tertiary doctrine these kinds of things are important so they're not unimportant but they're important for you and possibly those you have some measure of authority over this is those gray areas of the scripture that we're all trying to navigate how exactly am I meant to do such and such so an example how will you navigate October 31st in our culture do you celebrate in what measure do you do you do something else do you do an outreach do you hunker in your home and turn off all the lights what are you going to do and your family and with your children navigate the holiday of

October 31st do you have any particular convictions concerning food or drink is it okay to consume alcohol in moderation is it not okay to consume alcohol in moderation let me give you an example of tertiary type of thinking from 1st Corinthians chapter 8 this is Paul here reasoning!

the Corinthian believers they were having some conflict over whether or not it was okay to eat food that had been offered to idols right so this meat was offered to idols and then sold in the marketplace and there were some who thought that was okay and some who thought it was entirely unacceptable listen to what he says therefore as to the eating of food offered to idols we know that an idol has no real existence and that there is no god but one so he basically saying we know that food offered to idols it doesn't matter because there there's no other gods for although there may be so called gods in heaven or on earth as indeed there are many gods and many lords yet for us there is one God the father from whom all things and from whom we exist and one Lord Jesus Christ through some people haven't matured in this way just yet but some through former association with idols eat food as really offered to an idol and their conscience being weak is defiled so people who have been converted to

Christ were once idolaters and they don't think this is okay this feels like an offense against the one true God Paul says then food will not commend us to God we are no worse off if we do not eat and no better off if we do but take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak for if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple will he not be encouraged if his conscience is weak to eat food offered to idols and so by your knowledge this weak person is destroyed the brother for whom Christ died so they be sinning in their own conscience thus sinning against your brothers and wounding their conscience when it is weak you sin against Christ therefore if food makes my brother stumble I will never eat meat lest I make my brother stumble catch that reasoning there right this is the kind of thing this issue is the kind of thing that characterizes many churches!

[ 35 : 53 ] picking a tertiary doctrine and making it your hill to die on you are going to convince others that you're reading the Bible correctly on this particular gray issue it's not unimportant but it's not ultimately important right you may have more maturity or in some cases less and don't we do well trying to navigate the gray areas together right pressing at one another making our case and moving on Paul here is willing to become a vegetarian for the sake of others I don't know I don't know that I'm there it'd be a tough one for me notice his position on this lesser lesser ordered matter right so that's tertiary!

tertiary things there ought to be a lot of different views in that tertiary fashion in the life of the church lots of diversity lots of levels of maturity we're growing in faith we're moving on together all right secondary doctrine very important this category particularly for local church unity right my classic example concerns the ordinance of baptism how are we as a church going to practice the ordinance of baptism it matters what do we believe the bible teaches about this so we are credo baptists which means we believe that christians people who have made believable professions of faith should be baptized we are not pedo baptists who baptize infants we can extend a lot of charity right to our pedo baptist brothers and sisters it's really difficult to be in fellowship when you disagree about how this particular ordinance is meant to be practiced so that's a good classic secondary example lastly primary doctrine right this is important important important right this is high order importance these are the hills to die on right this is where we stand and say no further we will not compromise in any measure on these things things like penal substitutionary atonement right Christ died in our stead and paid the price for our sin non negotiable if you're going to be in the faith right the humanity and deity of Christ is hypostatic union not negotiable right the gospel falls apart at every point if he wasn't both human and God the inerrancy infallibility authority and sufficiency of the Bible justification by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone and the list goes on these are the things right these are the things that ought to unite us hold us together keep us pressing on together right these are the things that those other matters are brought in to distract us from to tear us apart what a great work of the enemy right to bring in tertiary particularly but also secondary doctrines and cause us to divide over the primary doctrine that matters most I think this is what Jude is talking about in verse three where he says beloved although

I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints right the faith once for all delivered to the saints those non negotiable things this process we're going to have to be good at you're going to have to be able to decipher where does this disagreement fall is this a thing that we

can be kind hearted about charitable toward one another yeah I'm going to consider your case here and we're going to press at one another are we going to take things that are tertiary and call others not Christian because they don't see it the way we see it I have been called unfaithful more times in this church than I care to tell you and I saw this I'm done doing it men who think they know the Bible and can call me unfaithful and I don't see it the same way which is them calling me not a Christian catch that I see the Bible this way you're not obeying it this way

I don't read it that way well then am I not a Christian it's what they're declaring in doing that we need to draw a firm line about this kind of behavior I love people who love the word but you need to understand where the doctrines fall what ought to divide us when and how should we declare somebody outside the faith be cautious about how you practice theological triage this is why we've been working for quite some time!

[ 40 : 44 ] a more robust statement of faith which we're going to bring to you as a church you'll be in the process as a congregational church I hope sooner than later we've picked up the 1689 second london baptist confession we've been working hard on it we've been making some small changes we've been adding some things some substantial sections to it Zach Skilling as a pastoral assistant has been doing a through this to bring it to you as a rough draft for your thought and we hope your approval maybe some minor changes need to be made and this document will contain within it those things primary and those things secondary it'll be a document that says as a confessional people this is what we believe the Bible teaches on these matters and it will also say what we are not going to divide and we are not going to be getting in fights over such a thing and perhaps we'll discover new things we have to pick up and think about together perhaps they need to be added to such a confession this type of robust theology thinking together about what the

Bible teaches us is going to be very important in the coming days this week I managed to see! a long range mountain view if you've lived up here very long you have those moments where you're driving along and the sun breaks through the clouds in the perfect way and out somewhere in the distance you see a view of the mountains and it was one of those awe inspiring moments where you go what a view and I think as people generally we're compelled by big grand long views I just started thinking about what it was in me that caused that and then I used how I also really love things up close so how I enjoy finding something little in the woods bright red mushroom don't eat it you know particularly colorful bug I mean it's just an amazing amount of diversity and creativity and the creation in which we live it's just also awe inspiring to me and I started thinking about how everything in the middle all the middle ground

I don't pay that much attention to it's not inspiring and unbeautiful I just don't really pay that much attention to it and I kind of translated this over into my Christian walk all the stuff in the middle all the days in which I'm walking all of the trials that I go through the work that's out ahead of us seems to be a burden seems to weigh me down my once a day scroll through twitter makes me feeling so discouraged the day in day out interactions that don't seem to go the way you want them to go the physical suffering that we experience from time to time in doing robust theology I get these grand views of our God and his promises to us the life that exists beyond this life and I also am shown in great focus the things that are up close the way that God is working in the minutia of my life it's a scripture worked in me by the spirit that helps me to see this and what it does is it brings all of the middle into focus it brings clarity to everything else that

I'm walking through we need to do robust theology right so that we can see the big and the grand where God is glory of his name let's pray together