



FREE PREVIEW:

**REVIVAL THAT REACHES THE
RELATIONSHIPS**

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A.R.T. Book**



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REVIVAL

THAT REACHES THE RELATIONSHIPS

Luke 1:17, Transformed Lives, Spiritual Generations,
Family, Leadership *and* a Bride Prepared for the Lord

TAVEAU D'ARCY

A.R.T. — ABIDING RELATIONSHIP THEOLOGY SERIES
EORR — EQUAL OPPORTUNITY REAL RESPECT



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**A.R.T. — ABIDING RELATIONSHIP
THEOLOGY is from the
EORR CROSS BODY UNITY NEW MOVE**

REVIVAL THAT REACHES THE RELATIONSHIPS

***Luke 1:17, Transformed Lives, Spiritual
Generations, Family, Leadership and a
Bride Prepared for the Lord***

By Taveau D'Arcy

**“To know the love of Christ which passes knowledge, and be filled with the fullness
of God.” Ephesians 3:19**

**A.R.T. — Abiding Relationship Theology Series
EORR — Equal Opportunity Real Respect**



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Taveau Creative Leadership

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AUTHOR'S AI USE DISCLOSURE

The theology, ministry observations, firsthand experiences, concepts, conclusions, distinctive terminology and teaching perspectives presented in this work originate with Taveau D'Arcy. Artificial intelligence has been used as an editorial and organizational tool to assist with grammar, spelling, structure, formatting, manuscript organization and commissioned visual concepts. AI is not presented as the source of the author's theology, ministry experience or personal observations. Final selection, theological responsibility, editing and approval remain with the author.

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ABOUT A.R.T.

ABIDING RELATIONSHIP THEOLOGY

“Deep inside every human heart is their A.R.T. Sometimes it is kind, compassionate, giving A.R.T. Other times it is cruel, demeaning, devious, dark A.R.T.” — Taveau D’Arcy

A.R.T. stands for Abiding Relationship Theology. It is an ongoing teaching thread within the larger A.R.T. Abiding Relationship Theology series, examining how our relationship with God is lived out in our relationships with other human beings. A.R.T. concerns the relationship within and the relationship without: what is taking place inside the human heart and what eventually comes out through our words, attitudes, authority, conduct, boundaries, mercy, correction, leadership, family life and treatment of other people.

The foundational A.R.T. relationship standard is James 3:17 KJV:

“But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.”

A SHORT WORD TO THE READER

A Word Before You Begin

What if revival is not only about powerful meetings, signs and wonders, prophetic ministry, worship, speaking in tongues, or supernatural encounters with God?

What if revival is also meant to reach **the relationships**?

Luke 1:17 describes a work of God that turns hearts and prepares a people for the Lord. That makes relationships important—not as a replacement for the supernatural work of God, but as part of its fruit.

That is not replacing revival with relationships. That is allowing revival to reach the relationships.

This book explores revival through transformed lives, spiritual generations, families, leadership, the Body of Christ, and the preparation of a people for the Lord.

This complimentary preview contains the **first three chapters** of the complete book.

Taveau D'Arcy

Chapter One

In The Spirit And Power of Elijah: Preparing a People for the Lord

“And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” — Luke 1:17 KJV

Luke 1:17 does not mean that John the Baptist literally possessed Elijah’s personal spirit or that Christians are to seek an “Elijah spirit” as though it were a separate spiritual being or entity. The angel Gabriel was describing the prophetic character, calling and God-given power in which John would minister. John would go before the Lord **“in the spirit and power of Elias”** and fulfill a preparatory assignment.

This agrees with the prophecy behind Luke 1:17. Malachi 4:5–6 had foretold an Elijah-like ministry associated with turning hearts:

“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers.” Luke 1:17 deliberately draws upon that language.

So the important question for this teaching is not, **“What does Elijah’s spirit prepare?”** Rather, it is: **What does Luke 1:17 reveal about the kind of preparation accomplished through this Spirit-empowered prophetic ministry?**

The answer is remarkably relational. John would minister in the spirit and power of Elijah **“to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”** The power was real. The prophetic ministry was real. But the purpose included turned hearts, changed direction, wisdom, repentance and a people being made ready for the Lord.

That distinction is central to everything that follows.

Luke 1:17 is familiar territory for many Christians who believe in revival, prophetic ministry and the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit. When we hear **“the spirit and power of Elias,”** it is natural to think about Elijah, supernatural power, prophetic authority, miracles, signs and wonders and a mighty move of God.

Those things are biblical. There is healing. There are gifts of the Holy Spirit. There is prophecy. There is the baptism of the Holy Spirit. There is speaking in tongues. There can be extraordinary worship, powerful encounters with God’s presence, renewal and times when people experience God in ways that cannot simply be reduced to intellectual theology. I am not writing against those things. I believe they are valid and important when they are genuinely of the Holy Spirit.

I believe and thrive in the Holy Spirit. And I am also not writing against Pentecostal, charismatic, prophetic, revival or other Christian ministry groups that emphasize them. I have known this Christian world for decades. I am in the Body of Christ, and when I address what I believe to be false teaching, unhealthy practices, misuse of authority or misunderstanding within Christian ministry, I am not standing outside throwing stones at “those people.” I am discussing my own larger Christian community.

Some traditions and practices were handed down by sincere people. Some developed because of culture, country law or a particular historical setting. Some leaders were mentored underneath a certain system and faithfully repeated what they had been taught. Some practices have produced wonderful fruit. Some may have begun with good intentions but need to be reconsidered. Others may genuinely be false, harmful or contrary to Scripture. We should be able to evaluate and assess these things biblically without automatically accusing, stereotyping or despising the people involved.

My concern is particularly with prophetic ministry and leadership because I know that world and because prophetic ministry carries tremendous responsibility. It can bless, encourage, warn, strengthen and help prepare God's people, but anything involving spiritual authority can also be misunderstood or misused.

Therefore, when we discuss revival and the **“spirit and power of Elias,”** I want us to examine what Luke 1:17 itself says that this Spirit-empowered ministry was intended to accomplish. The verse does not merely say that John would come in power and leave the subject there. It immediately moves into human hearts and relationships: **“to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just.”**

Then it tells us the purpose: **“to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”**

That should make us stop and think. Perhaps we have sometimes emphasized the **power** in Luke 1:17 more than the **turned hearts**. We know how to talk about a move of God, but do we know how to talk about what happens when that move of God reaches a marriage, a family, a

ministry team, an elder board, a pastor and congregation, a spiritual father and spiritual son or daughter, different generations, different races, men and women, or two Christians who sincerely disagree?

This is not an argument for less Holy Spirit. It is an argument for allowing the work of the Holy Spirit to go farther.

A GENUINE ENCOUNTER IS NOT NECESSARILY THE END OF THE WORK

There is a difference between having an encounter with God and allowing that encounter to produce an increasingly transformed life. A person may attend a revival meeting and genuinely be renewed. They may receive a fresh thought from the Lord. Somebody may lay hands upon them and pray. They may fall under the power of God. They may experience an extraordinary sense of God's presence, receive a fresh infilling of the Holy Spirit, speak in tongues, receive a prophetic word, weep, laugh, tremble, receive healing, or experience tremendous worship. They may get what some people casually describe as a wonderful "buzz" of the supernatural or a taste of the glory and go home knowing that something real happened. Praise God. I am not against that.

But there is another question: **What happens next?** A supernatural encounter can happen in a moment. Transformation ordinarily continues through a lifetime. A person can fall under the power in five seconds and get back up still needing to forgive somebody. A person can speak beautifully in tongues and still need to learn how to speak respectfully to a spouse. Someone can receive an accurate prophetic word and still have racial prejudice that God wants to confront. A minister can possess an extraordinary gift and still need healing from insecurity. Someone can experience the glory of God on Sunday evening and still have to learn

patience with coworkers on Monday morning. None of that automatically means Sunday's encounter was false. It means **God is not finished.**

Sometimes we have treated the manifestation as though the manifestation itself were the destination. But perhaps the encounter is an invitation. God touches me, and then I must walk with Him.

God reveals something, and then I must respond. God convicts me, and then I repent. God heals something, and then I learn how to live differently. God fills me, and then I learn how to walk in the Spirit. God gives me a gift, and then I learn how to steward that gift with character. God shows me something of His glory, and then I begin discovering what His glory requires of my ordinary life.

This is where the fruit of the Spirit becomes extremely important. Galatians 5:22–23 names “**love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.**”

These qualities become visible in relationships. Longsuffering does not mean very much until somebody tests my patience. Gentleness becomes visible when I possess enough power to become harsh but choose another way. Temperance becomes important when I have an impulse that needs governing. Love becomes costly when somebody is difficult to love. Peace becomes meaningful when conflict is possible.

Therefore, transformation eventually has to leave the revival meeting and enter ordinary life. It enters marriage. It enters parenting. It enters ministry leadership. It enters the workplace. It enters the neighborhood. It enters racial and cultural relationships. It enters disagreement. It enters the way we treat somebody who cannot advance our career or ministry. It enters the way we behave when nobody recognizes our title and when we are not in charge.

The touch can happen at the altar. But then the evidence of that eternal touch ought to appear in our real daily life.

GOD FIRST, THEN ME, THEN US

Frankly, this needs to be said plainly. Abiding Relationship Theology is not primarily about going to church, attending meetings, fitting into somebody's ministry structure, figuring out who is over whom, or learning where everybody belongs on a religious organizational chart. Church matters. Biblical leadership matters. Fellowship matters. Pastors and ministry gifts matter. But none of those things is the starting point.

God is the starting point.

The first and greatest relationship is the relationship of a human being with God the Father through Jesus Christ His Son. Jesus said in John 17:3, **“And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”** Christianity is not fundamentally about meeting the holy people, knowing the important people, getting close to recognized leaders or finding our place inside somebody else's ministry hierarchy. It is about knowing God.

Jesus said in John 10:27, **“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.”** Certainly God uses pastors, teachers, prophets, parents, friends and other members of the Body to help us, but none of them becomes a substitute for knowing Jesus Christ for ourselves. John 3:17 gives us another important part of God's posture toward humanity:

“For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.” God is interested in redemption.

Therefore, A.R.T. begins vertically before it moves horizontally. **God first. Then God works on me. Then what He does within me begins affecting us.**

Before I become consumed with everybody else's problems, I allow the Holy Spirit to examine mine. Where do I need to repent? Where am I wounded? Where have I become hardened? Where am I afraid? Where have I falsely accused? Where am I controlling? Where am I bitter? Where have I shown partiality?

Where have I been proud? Where have I confused tradition with Scripture? Where have I demanded something from another person that God never demanded? Where have I refused to forgive? Where have I failed to establish a necessary boundary? Where have I called fear discernment, control authority, suspicion prophecy or avoidance peace?

That kind of examination is not condemnation. God does not merely expose things in order to shame people. He heals, corrects, restores, teaches and matures us. John 3:17 helps protect the process. We can repent without despising ourselves. We can admit that we were wrong without deciding that we are worthless. We can receive correction and still understand that we are loved by God.

Then what God does inside us begins appearing in relationships. The husband walking with God eventually has to consider how he treats his wife. The wife must consider how she treats her husband. Parents must consider how they relate to their children. Adult children must consider their relationships with parents. Ministers must examine how they treat congregations, and congregations must examine how they treat leaders. Christians must examine how they relate to other races, cultures, generations, denominations and kinds of people.

The question eventually reaches very ordinary places. How do I treat the person at the grocery store? How do I treat the person who works for me? How do I treat someone who disagrees with me? How do I respond when

another race, culture or generation does things differently from the way I was taught?

How do I behave when I am not in charge? How do I treat somebody who has nothing to offer my ministry? These are relationship questions, but underneath them are spiritual questions, because our relationship with God should eventually affect our relationship with people.

THE WISDOM THAT COMES FROM ABOVE

This is why James 3:17 is foundational to Abiding Relationship Theology:

“But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.”

Notice where the wisdom originates. It is **“from above.”** We begin with God. We receive from above, and then what comes from above begins showing itself down here in the way we live.

It is **first pure**. A.R.T. is not people-pleasing. Truth matters. Motives matter. Integrity matters. We do not preserve relationships by pretending that sin, abuse, dishonesty or false teaching does not exist. Then the wisdom is **peaceable**. God’s wisdom does not need to manufacture unnecessary warfare or find an enemy in every room. It is **gentle**. Biblical strength does not require unnecessary harshness. It is **easy to be intreated**, which is enormously important for leadership. Heavenly wisdom can be approached. It can listen. Authority does not have to make itself unreachable in order to remain authority.

This wisdom is **full of mercy and good fruits**. There should eventually be fruit observable in actual life. It is **without partiality**, which confronts racial favoritism, economic favoritism, celebrity favoritism, gender disrespect, denominational superiority, ministry cliques and the tendency

to treat supposedly important people better than supposedly unimportant people. Finally, it is **without hypocrisy**. We cannot preach one relationship standard from the pulpit and practice another behind closed doors.

This is why I advise every person, and especially every parent, pastor, teacher, elder, ministry leader and governing authority: **“Abide in enduring James 3:17 by enlisting God’s help, and there’ll be no need to ever be mean.”**

This does not mean we never correct. James begins with pure. A parent can discipline. A pastor can address wrongdoing. A teacher can require standards. A leader can make difficult decisions. A Christian can say no. But we do not have to become mean in order to become firm. We do not have to humiliate in order to correct, accuse in order to discern, dominate in order to lead, or become cruel in order to stand for truth.

Some relationships will test every word in James 3:17. That is why I call it **enduring** James 3:17. When pressure comes, enlist God’s help to remain pure. When disagreement comes, enlist God’s help to remain peaceable. When we have enough authority to become harsh, enlist God’s help to remain gentle. When someone approaches us with a legitimate question or disagreement, enlist God’s help to remain approachable. When somebody fails, enlist God’s help to remain full of mercy and good fruits. When race, gender, age, status, money, celebrity, denomination or preference tempts us toward favoritism, enlist God’s help to remain without partiality. When we are tempted to maintain one public standard and practice another privately, enlist God’s help to remain without hypocrisy.

That is not merely a description of better manners. It is **wisdom from above becoming visible through human lives**.

REVIVAL THAT REACHES THE RELATIONSHIPS

This brings us back to Luke 1:17. The verse begins with “**the spirit and power of Elias,**” but that Spirit-empowered prophetic ministry is associated with turned hearts, wisdom and preparation. Therefore, perhaps the question is not merely whether the power of God was present in a meeting. Perhaps another question is whether we will allow that power to continue working after the meeting ends.

Let the glory fall. Pray for signs and wonders. Believe for healing. Receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Speak in tongues. Worship passionately. Welcome every genuine manifestation of God. But afterward, take that encounter home. Take it into the marriage. Take it into the family. Take it into ministry leadership. Take it across racial and cultural divisions. Take it into the church disagreement. Take it into the workplace. Take it onto the street where we live. Most importantly, allow it to remain inside us long enough for God to change something.

A revival encounter can occur in an evening. **Abiding begins the next morning.**

That is not replacing revival with relationships. **That is allowing revival to reach the relationships.**

Chapter Two

From An Experience To An Abiding Transformed Life

Chapter One ended with a simple thought: **A revival encounter can occur in an evening. Abiding begins the next morning.** That brings us directly to the next part of Luke 1:17. If Spirit-empowered prophetic ministry helps “**turn the hearts**” and “**make ready a people prepared for the Lord**”

So what does that preparation look like after the powerful meeting, the supernatural encounter, the prophetic word, the healing, the worship, the laying on of hands or the fresh touch from God?

This is where revival must move from encounter into transformation, and eventually from transformation of the individual into transformation of the community. Luke 1:17 does not give us a picture merely of isolated individuals having powerful spiritual experiences. It speaks of fathers and children, disobedient people turning toward wisdom, and finally “**a people prepared for the Lord.**” The language itself moves us from the individual heart into relationships and ultimately into a people.

That progression is important to A.R.T.—Abiding Relationship Theology. **God first. Then He works on me. Then His work in me begins affecting us.** If revival reaches my heart but never reaches the way I treat people, there is still more transforming work for God to do. If I encounter the love of Christ but remain habitually cruel, partial, controlling, accusatory or unreachable in relationships, the answer is not necessarily to

deny that I ever experienced God. The answer is to allow what God began to continue.

There is therefore a significant difference between being spiritually refreshed and becoming increasingly transformed. Both can be genuine, and we do not need to belittle one in order to emphasize the other. A person can receive a very real touch from God, a fresh revelation, encouragement, healing, renewal or supernatural experience. But an encounter is an event; transformation becomes a way of life.

This is one reason Romans 12:2 is so important: **“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.”**

Transformation reaches our thinking, reactions, choices and eventually our relationships. It changes not only what we experience in the presence of God but how we behave in the presence of people. We begin recognizing old patterns. We become willing to repent.

We learn to forgive without pretending that wrong was right. We become less controlled by old wounds. We learn to listen. We become more patient. We grow in self-government. We become increasingly able to tell the truth without using truth as a weapon.

This is where revival becomes deeply practical. A person may have been genuinely touched by God and still carry childhood wounds, fear, rejection, anger, prejudice, insecurity, perfectionism, control, mistrust or unhealthy ideas about authority.

The Holy Spirit does not necessarily erase an entire lifetime of learned behavior in one meeting. Sometimes God sovereignly delivers someone in a moment. At other times He begins a process in which the person must walk

out what He has revealed. Neither should automatically be dismissed. The important question is whether we continue responding to God.

A transformed life is therefore not a perfect life. It is a life increasingly yielded to God. The person becomes more willing to recognize what is happening inside himself or herself and bring it before the Lord. Instead of continually saying, “They are the problem,” we become capable of asking, “Lord, is there anything in me that You want to address?”

That does not mean accepting blame for another person’s wrongdoing. It means refusing to make somebody else’s faults an excuse for never examining our own hearts.

And this is precisely where Ephesians becomes so important. Paul takes us from the extraordinary love and fullness of God in Ephesians 3 into the difficult, practical, diverse human community of Ephesians 4. In other words, the fullness we receive from God is intended to accompany us into our relationships.

THE LOVE OF CHRIST THAT PASSES KNOWLEDGE

Paul’s prayer in Ephesians 3 gives us a remarkable picture of what God desires to develop inside believers. He prays that Christ may dwell in their hearts by faith and that they may be **“rooted and grounded in love.”**

Then Ephesians 3:19 speaks of knowing **“the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.”**

Think about that language: **rooted, grounded, love, fullness.** Paul is describing something deeper than acquiring religious information. Knowledge has its place. Doctrine matters. Scripture matters enormously. But Paul is praying for believers to know something that **“passeth knowledge.”** He wants the love of Christ to become so deeply established in them that they are increasingly filled with the fullness of God.

Then comes Ephesians 4. That sequence matters. Paul does not leave the fullness of God floating in some private mystical experience. He takes it directly into community. Ephesians 4:1–3 says

, “I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

There is the transition from spiritual experience to relational practice.

If I am rooted and grounded in love and being filled with the fullness of God, eventually that fullness should influence how I walk among other people. Paul mentions lowliness, meekness, longsuffering and forbearing one another in love. Those are relationship words. Then he says **“endeavouring.”** Unity apparently requires effort.

Paul does not describe a transformed Christian community as a place where everybody naturally likes everybody, thinks alike, possesses the same personality, comes from the same culture or never irritates anyone. If that were the case, we would not need longsuffering or forbearance. We need those qualities precisely because Christian community contains real human beings.

The transformed community of Ephesians 4 is therefore not produced merely by gathering transformed-looking people into the same building. It develops as people who belong to Christ learn to walk with one another under Christ.

ONE BODY DOES NOT MEAN ONE TYPE, STYLE, THAT THEY OUGHT TO BELIEVE 150% LIKE WE DO

Paul continues in Ephesians 4:4–6: **“There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all.”** The emphasis is unity, but biblical unity is not uniformity.

The Body of Christ contains different personalities, generations, races, cultures, backgrounds, histories and styles. It contains people raised in quiet churches and people raised in exuberant churches. Some pray loudly; some pray quietly. Some have Pentecostal or charismatic backgrounds; others do not. Some come from highly structured denominations; others come from independent ministry traditions. Some are highly educated; some learned through experience. Some are wealthy; some are poor. Some are married; some are single. Some have been Christians for decades; others have only recently met the Lord.

Ephesians 4 does not require all of them to become culturally identical. It calls them into **one Body under one Lord**.

That means Christian maturity cannot be measured merely by how successfully somebody learns our particular church culture. A person may not dress like us, worship like us, speak like us, come from our race, possess our education, use our terminology or share every secondary theological conclusion and still belong to Jesus Christ.

This is where relationship maturity becomes essential. Can we recognize Christ in somebody who is not our type? Can we disagree without automatically declaring the other person rebellious, deceived or dangerous? Can we distinguish essential biblical truth from personal preference, ministry culture and inherited tradition? Can we value people without requiring them to become copies of us?

A transformed community should become increasingly capable of doing that.

THE FIVEFOLD MINISTRY EXISTS TO EQUIP PEOPLE

Ephesians 4 then speaks directly to Christian ministry leadership. Verses 11–12 say,

“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”

Notice the direction of ministry. The gifts are given to **equip and edify the Body**. Leadership is not the destination. Christ is the Head, and ministry gifts serve His purposes among His people.

This becomes extremely important when discussing authority. A pastor matters. An elder matters. A prophet matters. A teacher matters. An apostolic leader matters. But Christian leadership should help people become increasingly mature in Christ rather than increasingly dependent upon the leader.

Paul continues in Ephesians 4:13–14 toward maturity: **“Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect”—meaning mature—“man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children.”**

The goal is maturity. Healthy Christian leadership therefore teaches people Scripture, develops discernment, encourages spiritual growth, helps believers discover their gifts and continually points them toward Jesus Christ. It does not need to keep adults spiritually infantilized in order to preserve its own importance. Good leadership should be able to rejoice when people grow.

This also means that ministry authority carries relationship responsibility. First Peter 5:2–3 tells elders to **“Feed the flock of God which is among you”** and warns against **“being lords over God’s heritage,”** instructing leaders instead to be **“examples to the flock.”**

A Christian leader therefore teaches not only through sermons but through conduct. How does the leader respond when questioned? How does the leader treat somebody who has no title? What happens when somebody disagrees?

Can the leader (also a pastor, father, mother, grandparent) apologize, receive correction, say, “I do not know,” or admit, “I was wrong”? Authority does not become less biblical because it is approachable. James 3:17 says wisdom from above is **“easy to be intreated.”** That applies in the pulpit, at the elder table, in the ministry office and at home.

SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE

Ephesians 4:15 gives another essential relationship principle: **“But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.”**

Christianity does not require us to choose between truth and love. Paul puts them together.

Truth without love can become a weapon. Love without truth can become sentimental permission for anything. Christian maturity requires both.

This matters tremendously when correcting false teaching or unhealthy ministry practice. We can identify error without despising the person who was taught it. We can reconsider a tradition without mocking previous generations. We can expose an unhealthy practice without declaring that everybody who participated in it had evil motives. We can challenge misuse of authority without becoming anti-authority. We can disagree with another Christian without attempting to destroy that person’s reputation.

Likewise, love does not require silence when something is genuinely wrong. Jesus corrected. Paul corrected. Scripture reproves and instructs. Second Timothy 3:16 says Scripture is profitable **“for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”**

The question is not whether Christians may correct. The question is whether our manner of correction increasingly resembles the wisdom from above.

Galatians 6:1 says,

“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness.”

Notice the purpose: **restore**. Notice the manner: **meekness**. Spirituality is not demonstrated merely by identifying somebody else’s fault. Spiritual maturity also appears in how we handle the person once the fault has been recognized.

Matthew 18:15 likewise says,

“Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone.”

There are situations involving crimes, abuse, danger or matters requiring appropriate authorities where additional safeguards are necessary. But in ordinary Christian interpersonal conflict, Jesus’ instruction challenges our tendency to talk about people before talking to people.

This is relationship revival.

THE WHOLE BODY FITLY JOINED TOGETHER

Ephesians 4:16 gives us one of the most beautiful pictures of transformed Christian community:

“From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth

Every joint supplies something. The Body is not merely a platform surrounded by an audience. It is a living community under Christ.

That means the seemingly unnoticed believer matters. The elderly believer matters. The young believer matters. The woman matters. The man matters. Different races matter. Different generations matter. The person with a public gift matters, and the person who faithfully serves where almost nobody sees also matters.

This is why partiality is so destructive to Christian community. When we decide that certain people are inherently more important because of wealth, race, gender, title, celebrity, education, ministry connections or social status, we begin contradicting the very picture Paul gives us of a Body in which **every joint supplies**.

The transformed community is not a community without leadership. It is a community in which leadership understands why it exists. It is not a community without correction. It is a community learning how to correct without destroying. It is not a community without differences. It is a community learning how to carry differences without automatically becoming divided. And it is certainly not a community without effort.

Paul said “**endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.**”

That word matters. Relationship takes effort. Community takes effort. Marriage takes effort. Family takes effort. Leadership takes effort. Cross-cultural understanding takes effort.

Listening requires effort. Forgiveness can take effort. Repentance takes humility. Sometimes staying takes courage. Sometimes leaving an unsafe situation takes courage. Sometimes speaking requires courage, and sometimes remaining silent long enough to listen requires even more.

WHEN REVIVAL PUTS ON ORDINARY CLOTHES

This is where A.R.T.—Abiding Relationship Theology—becomes much more than an interesting concept. It becomes the lived work of Christian

discipleship. We are not merely seeking people who have experienced revival. We are asking God to form **a revived people capable of becoming a transformed community.**

The same Holy Spirit who moves powerfully in a meeting wants access to the relationships waiting for us when the meeting is over.

That is why Ephesians 3 and 4 belong together so beautifully. Paul prays that we might know

“the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge” and “be filled with all the fullness of God,”

and then immediately calls us into lowliness, meekness, longsuffering, forbearance, unity, maturity, truth spoken in love, and a Body in which every joint supplies. The fullness of God is not given merely so that I can have a powerful private spiritual experience. His fullness begins changing how I occupy my place among other human beings.

This also helps us understand Luke 1:17 more deeply. The verse does not say merely that somebody powerful would arrive, people would experience something supernatural, and everyone would go home impressed. It speaks of **turned hearts**. It speaks of the **disobedient turning to the wisdom of the just**. It speaks of preparation. And it speaks finally of **“a people prepared for the Lord.”**

That means revival has a relationship test. After the worship, can I listen? After the prophecy, can I be corrected? After speaking in tongues, can I control my natural tongue? After receiving mercy from God, can I show mercy? After experiencing His presence, can I recognize the value of somebody unlike me? After preaching submission, can I myself be approached?

After teaching authority, can I exercise authority without control, applied force or stern critical domination?

After asking God to heal the nations, can I confront partiality in my own heart? After praying for family restoration, can I turn my heart toward my own sons and daughters? After asking have I asked the Lord God to expose any hidden selfish, murderous, deep way in me?

These are not questions intended to condemn us. They are invitations to transformation. None of us has arrived. We are being formed. We are learning to abide. We are learning what it means to carry truth and love together, to forgive without pretending, to establish boundaries without hatred, to exercise authority without ownership, to correct without humiliation, and to disagree without automatically turning another human being into an enemy.

Perhaps that is part of what a transformed community looks like: not a community where nothing ever goes wrong, but a community increasingly capable of handling what goes wrong in a Christlike way.

We may have learned how to recognize the atmosphere of revival in a sanctuary. We may recognize the music, the prayer, the tears, the prophetic flow, the laying on of hands, the healing, the spiritual gifts and the tangible sense of God's presence.

All of those can be precious and real. But we must also learn to recognize the **fruit of revival when it puts on ordinary clothes and walks into ordinary life.**

It may look like repentance or an apology. It may look like a father finally listening to his daughter, a pastor becoming approachable, an elder admitting a mistake, or a wounded person learning to trust wisely again. It may look like two races listening rather than assuming, an older generation blessing a younger generation rather than fearing it, or a younger generation honoring what came before without being required to reproduce everything exactly as it was.

It may look like somebody refusing to spread an accusation, choosing Matthew 18 rather than gossip, or applying Galatians 6:1 and restoring in meekness. It may look like somebody remembering James 3:17 under pressure and asking God for help to remain

pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.

These things may not look spectacular, but they can be supernatural. A changed heart is no small miracle. A healed relationship is no small testimony. A person delivered from bitterness is not spiritually insignificant. A leader delivered from the need to control people has experienced something important.

A gifted, set apart family learning to speak truth without destroying one another is experiencing transformation. A Christian community learning how to remain one Body without requiring everybody to become the same is displaying something of the wisdom of God.

This is why Luke 1:17 refuses to let us separate **power from preparation**. The Spirit-empowered ministry described there moves toward turned hearts, wisdom and a people made ready for the Lord.

So yes, Lord, send revival. Send the power. Send the gifts. Send the healing. Send the prophetic word. Send the conviction. Send the re

newal. **But do not let us stop there. Turn the hearts.**

Let the revival reach our character, our conversations, our leadership, our marriages, our families, our ministries, our generations, our racial and cultural relationships, our treatment of the wounded, our handling of disagreement and our exercise of authority. Let the encounter become transformation. Let transformed people become a transformed community. And let that community increasingly resemble **a people prepared for the Lord.**

That is where Luke 1:17 takes us next: into the relationships between generations, fathers and children, spiritual fathers and spiritual sons and daughters, leaders and those they serve. **If the hearts are going to turn, we must ask what healthy authority, spiritual fathering and generational relationship actually look like when the Holy Spirit reaches them.**

Chapter Three

Turning The Hearts: Father, Children, Spiritual Generations and Authority

Chapter Two ended by bringing us directly into one of the most striking parts of Luke 1:17: **“to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children.”**

If revival is going to reach relationships, then Luke does not permit us to speak only in generalities. The verse specifically brings fathers, children and generations into the picture. This certainly has meaning for natural families, but it also gives us a powerful lens through which to examine spiritual generations, Christian leadership, mentoring, ministry authority and the relationships between those who have gone before and those who are coming after.

Before applying this to ministry leadership, however, we need to respect what the verse actually says. Luke 1:17 is describing John the Baptist’s preparatory ministry before the coming of Christ. It deliberately echoes Malachi 4:5–6:

“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers.”

We should not turn that passage into a rigid modern church-government formula that Luke himself does not give us. But we can certainly recognize its profound relational principle: when God prepares a people, **hearts turn.**

That is very different from merely rearranging who is over whom.

A person can occupy the correct position on an organizational chart and still have a hardened heart. A father can demand obedience from a child

without knowing the child. A pastor can possess legitimate responsibility while remaining emotionally inaccessible.

A spiritual mentor can teach sound doctrine while becoming possessive of the people being mentored. A younger person can rightly identify failures in an older generation while becoming contemptuous of everybody who came before. A congregation can honor its pastor publicly while resentment grows privately. None of these conditions is repaired merely by insisting harder upon rank.

Luke 1:17 points us toward something deeper: **the heart**.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FATHERS

We should not weaken the word “**fathers**.” Fathers matter. Natural fathers matter. The presence, character, protection, affection, instruction and example of a good father can profoundly influence a child. Scripture does not treat fatherhood as disposable or meaningless. Neither should we.

At the same time, honoring fatherhood does not require us to pretend that every father has fulfilled that calling well. Some fathers are wonderful. Some are absent. Some are emotionally distant. Some were never taught how to father because they themselves were poorly fathered. Some sincerely love their children but do not know how to communicate it. Some carry wounds, fear or patterns inherited from previous generations. Some fathers need healing themselves.

And some relationships are genuinely unsafe.

Therefore, “**turning the hearts**” must never be reduced to forcing children—whether minors or adults—back into dangerous, violent, coercive or abusive relationships. Forgiveness and reconciliation are related but not identical. Forgiveness does not automatically restore trust. Repentance does not instantly eliminate consequences. A changed heart does not require the removal of every wise boundary.

Ephesians 6:1–4 gives responsibility to both generations. Children are instructed to obey and honor their parents, but fathers are also told, **“provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”**

Colossians 3:21 similarly says, **“Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.”**

That is significant. Biblical authority is not merely concerned with whether the person underneath authority behaves properly. Scripture also addresses the behavior of the person possessing authority.

A father should be able to ask not only, **“Does my child respect me?”** but also,

“How am I using the influence God has given me? Am I nurturing? Am I provoking? Am I listening? Am I approachable? Am I teaching through my life as well as through my words?”

That is relationship accountability.

FROM NATURAL FATHERS TO SPIRITUAL GENERATIONS

Christian ministry also contains generational relationships. Scripture itself uses parental language in ministry. Paul referred to Timothy as **“my own son in the faith”** in 1 Timothy 1:2. In 1 Corinthians 4:15 Paul wrote,

“For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.”

So there is biblical precedent for speaking about spiritual fathering and spiritual generations. Mature believers can mentor younger believers. Experienced ministers can impart wisdom gained over decades. Teachers can help form future teachers. Pastors can nurture people. Older believers can encourage younger believers, and younger believers can bring fresh strength, insight and energy into the Body.

This can be beautiful.

But spiritual fathering should describe **relationship and responsibility**, not ownership.

A spiritual father does not become God the Father. A mentor does not replace Jesus Christ. A pastor does not own the conscience of another believer. A prophet does not become the private Holy Spirit of the people receiving ministry. An apostolic leader does not become the source from which everybody else receives personal permission to obey God.

Jesus Christ remains the Head.

This is where healthy spiritual fathering differs from unhealthy spiritual possession. Healthy fathers want children to mature. Healthy mentors want those they teach eventually to stand. Healthy leaders are not threatened when another person's gifts begin developing. They do not need permanent dependence in order to feel important.

Paul could call Timothy his son in the faith while still recognizing Timothy as a servant of Jesus Christ with his own responsibility before God. Paul instructed him, encouraged him and warned him, but the objective was maturity and faithful service—not permanent spiritual childhood.

That fits perfectly with Ephesians 4. Ministry gifts are given for the **perfecting**, or maturing, of the saints. The purpose of leadership is not to create lifelong dependency upon leadership. It is to equip the saints.

SPIRITUAL FATHERS AND SPIRITUAL DAUGHTERS

If we are going to discuss spiritual fathering, we should also be honest about the whole Body of Christ. Spiritual generations include **sons and daughters**.

Acts 2:17, quoting Joel, says, “**your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.**” The outpouring of the Spirit does not erase the value of men or women; it includes both.

Galatians 3:28 declares that in Christ “**There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.**”

Whatever distinctions Christians may hold concerning particular church offices, no biblical theology of spiritual relationship should require us to treat a daughter of God as spiritually less valuable as a human being than a son of God.

Fathers should know how to value daughters.

Male leaders should know how to respect women.

Female leaders should know how to respect men.

Men should not automatically be suspected because they are men, and women should not automatically be diminished because they are women.

A.R.T.—Abiding Relationship Theology—calls us back to James 3:17: wisdom from above is “**without partiality.**”

Real Respect does not mean everybody has identical roles, personalities, gifts or assignments. It means we recognize the God-given human value of the person standing before us. We do not turn people into categories, objects, stereotypes or ministry property.

This matters particularly in spiritual fathering because parental language can become unhealthy if it is used to create a permanent superior-inferior relationship. A mature spiritual father should not need an adult spiritual

son or daughter to remain emotionally, spiritually or organizationally dependent upon him in order to prove honor.

Healthy fathering eventually produces grown people.

HONOR IS NOT OWNING OR ENSLAVING ANOTHER GOD MADE PERSON

The Bible teaches honor. Romans 12:10 says,

“Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another.”

First Timothy 5:17 speaks of elders who rule well being counted worthy of double honour. Scripture does not encourage contempt toward leaders, parents or elders.

But honor is not their viewing human people like property or taking ministry ownership.

We can honor somebody without surrendering our God-given conscience.

We can appreciate a mentor without treating every opinion of that mentor as the voice of God.

We can respect a pastor without believing that leaving that pastor's congregation automatically means leaving God. We can receive correction without agreeing that another human being possesses unlimited jurisdiction over our lives.

Philippians 2:12 says, **“work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.”** That does not mean isolated Christianity or refusal of counsel. We need one another. Proverbs repeatedly values wise counsel. But ultimately each believer belongs to Jesus Christ.

Healthy authority therefore does not say, **“You belong to me.”**

Healthy authority says, **“I have been entrusted with responsibility before God concerning how I serve you.”**

That difference is enormous.

The first can become possessive. The second remains accountable.

FROM “POOR ME” LEADER AUTHORITY TO RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY

Sometimes authority is discussed almost entirely from the viewpoint of the person who possesses it: “Nobody respects authority anymore. People will not submit. People are rebellious. People leave churches. People question leaders.” There may indeed be situations where those complaints are legitimate. Rebellion exists. Disrespect exists. Entitlement exists. Leaders can be treated terribly, falsely accused, exploited and dishonored.

But Luke 1:17 begins by saying “**to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children.**”

That is worth noticing.

Before authority demands that everybody underneath it turn, authority should be willing to ask whether **its own heart has turned.**

Do I know the people I lead?

Do I care what has happened to them?

Can they safely tell me when something is wrong?

Do I listen before I diagnose?

Do I assume that disagreement equals rebellion?

Have I confused my preference with God's command?

Do I use prophetic language to win arguments?

Do I believe my position makes me incapable of error?

Do I expect people to give me James 3:17 behavior while excusing myself from James 3:17?

This is not anti-authority. It is a call to **mature authority.**

Jesus gave perhaps the clearest distinction in Mark 10:42–45. He contrasted Gentile rulers who “**exercise lordship**” with leadership among His followers, saying,

“But so shall it not be among you.” He then connected greatness with service and pointed to Himself:

“For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.”

Christian authority should therefore increasingly resemble Christ.

It does not need to become powerless. Jesus possessed enormous authority. Yet His authority was not insecurity wearing a title.

THE LEADER MUST ALSO ABIDE

This is why the A.R.T. phrase applies especially strongly to anyone entrusted with authority:

“Abide in enduring James 3:17 by enlisting God's help, and there'll be no need to ever be mean.”

Leadership will test that.

People misunderstand leaders. People criticize leaders. People disappoint leaders. Some people leave. Some falsely accuse. Some demand too much. Some bring their unresolved wounds into the relationship. Some are genuinely rebellious. Some are manipulative. Some are simply immature.

But leaders are still responsible for their own spirits.

James 3:17 does not say wisdom from above is pure, peaceable, gentle and easy to be intreated only when everybody behaves properly. That is why I use the word **enduring**. There are times when abiding in that wisdom requires prayer, restraint, courage, boundaries and God's help.

The leader may need to correct. The leader may need to say no. The leader may need to remove somebody from a position. A parent may need to discipline a child. A pastor may need to confront harmful behavior. A ministry may need policies and boundaries. None of that automatically violates A.R.T.

The issue is how we carry authority while doing it.

Correction does not require humiliation. Boundaries do not require hatred. Discernment does not require accusation. Leadership does not require domination. Firmness does not require meanness.

And being **“easy to be intreated”** does not mean agreeing with everybody. It means being approachable enough to hear.

THE YOUNGER GENERATION ALSO HAS A RESPONSIBILITY

Turning hearts is not merely a correction directed toward fathers and leaders. Malachi's fuller wording includes **“the heart of the children to their fathers.”** Relationships have more than one direction.

Younger generations can become dismissive of older generations. They can assume that anything old is automatically outdated, ignorant or corrupt. They can benefit from sacrifices made by previous generations while showing little curiosity about what those generations endured. They can mistake innovation for superiority.

That is not healthy either.

Every generation receives something and leaves something.

Older generations should be humble enough to admit what they got wrong. Younger generations should be humble enough to recognize that they did not invent everything they now understand. Spiritual maturity allows us to

honor what was good without being forced to perpetuate what was unhealthy.

A younger believer can say, **“Thank you for what you gave me, but I cannot repeat this particular practice.”**

An older believer can say, **“I do not fully understand your generation, but I want to hear what God is doing in you.”**

That sounds remarkably like turned hearts.

The objective is not generational conquest. It is generational relationship.

EVALUATE AND ASSESS—DO NOT AUTOMATICALLY ACCUSE

This becomes especially important when examining ministry history. Practices that appear obviously unhealthy to one generation may have developed in another generation for complicated reasons. Some were theological errors. Some were cultural assumptions. Some were reactions to genuine problems. Some were inherited from mentors. Some were connected to social conditions or country law. Some leaders may never have thought deeply about them.

We can evaluate those things without rewriting everybody who came before us as a villain.

First Thessalonians 5:21 says,

“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.”

That is an excellent relationship principle as well as a discernment principle. Prove it. Examine it. Assess it. Keep what is good.

Isaiah 1:18 says, **“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD.”** That is one of my favorite relationship-respect verses because it reminds us that reasoning together is not the enemy of faith. Questions

are not automatically rebellion. Conversation is not automatically disrespect. Disagreement is not automatically betrayal.

Likewise, accusation is not the same thing as discernment.

We can say, “I believe this teaching is wrong,” without saying, “Therefore I know the secret motives of everyone who teaches it.” We can say, “This practice harmed people,” without declaring that every person involved deliberately intended harm. We can confront what is demonstrably wrong while leaving hidden motives to God.

That is particularly important in prophetic ministry. Prophetic people must be extremely careful not to transform impressions, suspicions or personal reactions into accusations against another person's character.

A.R.T. requires truth, but it also requires humility.

RACE, CULTURE AND GENERATIONAL FATHERING

Luke 1:17 also gives us room to consider another kind of generational inheritance: what families, churches, denominations and cultures pass from one generation to another.

Not every inherited attitude is biblical merely because it is old.

Racial prejudice can be inherited by exposure from their own environment, kith and kin,community..

Gender assumptions can be inherited. Class prejudice can be inherited. Fear of another denomination can be inherited. Ministry rivalries can be inherited. Distrust can be inherited. Even language about certain groups of people can pass through generations without anybody stopping to ask whether it reflects Christ.

James 3:17 gives us a direct standard: wisdom from above is “**without partiality.**”

That means revival may sometimes require God to confront something we inherited from people we sincerely loved.

We can honor our fathers without repeating every prejudice of our fathers.

We can appreciate our spiritual heritage without canonizing our culture.

We can love the church tradition that raised us while still allowing Scripture and the Holy Spirit to correct it.

This is part of turning hearts too.

The Body of Christ is larger than our race, our gender, our generation, our denomination, our ministry network or our worship style. Ephesians 4 still declares **“one body, and one Spirit.”**

If our revival makes us love only the people who already resemble us, there is still room for transformation.

THE FAMILY IS NOT A BACK BURNER/SIDE ISSUE

All of this eventually brings us back to the natural family. Ministry cannot become an excuse for neglecting the people nearest to us.

It is possible to care deeply about nations while ignoring the emotional condition of one's own household. It is possible to preach reconciliation while refusing to speak to a family member. It is possible to counsel other people's children while remaining inaccessible to one's own. It is possible to build a public ministry image that does not resemble the private relationship reality.

That does not mean every broken family relationship can be repaired. Sometimes another person refuses reconciliation. Sometimes severe dysfunction, addiction, violence, abuse or other circumstances require distance. Romans 12:18 carefully says, **“If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.”** Scripture recognizes that peace does not depend entirely upon one person.

But we can still ask God to work on our hearts.

We can repent where repentance belongs to us. We can forgive without reopening unsafe access. We can stop rehearsing hatred. We can pray. We can establish truthful boundaries. We can refuse to weaponize children in adult conflicts. We can stop using silence as punishment. We can listen when appropriate. We can ask forgiveness when we were wrong.

Sometimes the relationship itself may not be restored, but **our own heart can still be transformed before God.**

That matters.

TURN THE HEARTS

Luke 1:17 does not say, “Organize the fathers “over” all of the children.”

It says “**turn the hearts.**”

That distinction may be one of the most important lessons in this entire discussion of Christian authority.

God certainly establishes order. Scripture recognizes parents, elders, pastors, teachers and other forms of responsibility. But biblical order without relationship can become cold structure. Authority without love can become domination. Honor without truth can become fear. Submission without conscience can become control. Family without safety can become captivity. Ministry without accountability can become personality rule.

But when hearts turn, something different becomes possible.

Fathers begin seeing children rather than merely demanding obedience.

Children begin seeing fathers as human beings rather than merely symbols of everything they dislike about the past.

Spiritual fathers begin blessing sons and daughters rather than possessing them.

Sons and daughters can honor what they received without surrendering their own responsibility before God.

Leaders begin viewing people as souls entrusted to their care rather than resources for building an organization.

Congregations begin viewing pastors as human beings who also need prayer, mercy and healthy boundaries rather than spiritual machines expected never to tire or fail.

Men and women learn to recognize one another's God-given value.

Different races begin listening rather than pre-judging.

Generations begin talking rather than merely blaming.

And all of us return to Jesus Christ, who remains the Head of the Body.

That is not weak authority.

That is **redeemed authority**.

And perhaps one evidence of genuine revival is not merely that people fall under the power of God, but that hardened hearts begin to turn under the influence of God.

The father turns toward the child.

The child turns toward the father.

The leader turns toward the people.

The people learn appropriate honor toward leadership.

The older generation turns toward the younger.

The younger generation turns toward the older.

And wherever reconciliation is safe and possible, people begin finding one another again.

Where reconciliation is not presently safe or possible, the work can still begin inside the heart before God.

This is not merely repairing relationships for the sake of happier families or healthier churches. Luke 1:17 gives us a much larger reason:

“To make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

The turned heart is connected to the prepared people.

And that raises the next question. If God is preparing a people for Himself, how do we relate to the wounded, fragmented, unholy, resistant, suspicious and sometimes very difficult people whom He wants to bring into His Kingdom?

How do we welcome people without approving everything they do? How do we communicate holiness without contempt? How do we carry truth without making wounded people afraid to come near us?

That takes us from **turned hearts within the generations** to the way a transformed Christian community receives the people who are still trying to find their way home.

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