

the
PROVERBS 31
MINISTRIES
podcast

Biblical truth for any girl in any season.

Copyright 2018 Proverbs 31 Ministries. All rights reserved.

Lysa TerKeurst: Hi, I'm Lysa TerKeurst. Welcome to the Proverbs 31 Ministries podcast. We're doing a series called *Therapy & Theology*, and I want to welcome my partners in crime my co-hosts, my fellow brilliant humans, Joel Muddamalle. And Joel is, of course, the resident theologian at Proverbs 31 Ministries, and Jim Cress, who is not only an amazing therapist, but he's also my counselor, my personal counselor, my family counselor, so I appreciate what you do. But you also have a degree from Dallas Theological Seminary. So welcome to both of you. So excited for this episode. Today, we are talking about emotional maturity, emotional immaturity, what are the signs of both of those? So, I wanted to start out today by reading something, this started off as a text message to a friend, she may or may not also be my hairdresser.

Jim Cress: Only your hairdresser knows for sure.

LT: That's right.

LT: But she's an amazing gal that had a question about something she was struggling with. And I answered through a text, but the text message prompted me to go over to the notes section in my phone and just keep writing. So, what started off as a text wound that were coming and eventual, probably future chapter in a future book. But I want to read a little bit of it to you today. I said "A friend recently said to me, your healing will bring out the emotional immaturity of those around you not willing to pursue help for themselves what a true statement. And by acknowledging this, it helps to make sense of the tension that exists in relationships where I'm wrestling over decisions this other person is making that feels so unexpected, and sometimes even shocking. Either way, I never thought that they would do what they're now doing or make the decisions they're now making. If this is you, do not be surprised by the tension. And when this other person tries to label you as difficult or uncooperative, see it as a compliment. If they're making choices that are hurtful to you, and refusing to acknowledge your concerns, then the relationship can't function normally. There is tension, because you are now doing the difficult work to no longer cooperate with dysfunction. And you are probably saying to yourself quite often, is it me? Am I crazy? No, you are not. Chances are, it's just because you are no longer cooperating with their dysfunction. And when this starts to happen, emotional immaturity is in play."

So, I want to make sure that we fully acknowledge all of us are a combination of mature and immature moments. So, this isn't to point a finger at someone else. It's really to help create some self-awareness. And to help better understand more in relationships that we cannot possibly discern in the moment,

what's really going on here, we may want to consider this reality, the signs of emotional maturity, and make sure that we're leaning in the direction of being emotionally mature. So, Jim, I've got a list of some things that I've noted in my more emotionally mature moments, we've already stated, I have some emotionally immature moments too. But I've made a list of some things. And there you have a list. So, let me start with my list. And I'd love to hear yours as well. Okay, committed to healthy habits. In other words, we all at times go through very hard days, very hard seasons, or even coping with past trauma or even present trauma. And we can have a tendency to have coping mechanisms that are not healthy. And so emotional maturity, though, recognizes I need to have healthy habits in place, so that when I have a moment of stress, trauma, a trigger that I, instead of going to unhealthy habits, that I've already pre-loaded my life within that unhealthy habits that I've learned to turn to healthier ways to respond to the trauma or the trigger or the really hard day. So, committed to healthy habits. Two, self-awareness, which means I'm aware of how people are perceiving me and I'm aware of what I'm adding good or bad into a situation and that goes hand in hand with others awareness. I can be aware of facial expressions or tone of voice; ways that I can discern some things about other people and make sure that whatever I'm contributing to the conversation, that I'm not adding to the hardship of this other person, right? Okay, so self-awareness and others awareness, another sign of emotional maturity, I'm able to own my stuff without saying, "but you."

JC: Big one.

LT: That's a big one. And Jim, I know you have a, you have something you've taught me that when you start to say, "but" that's when the real truth comes out. Right?

JC: So, you can put, "and" which is a difference to say this is true and this is true, the human brain is wired when it hears, "but" is to think, okay, so disqualify what you just said.

LT: Like, you're a really nice person, but...

JC: Now you're going to tell the truth.

LT: Now I'm going to tell the truth, right? And so, I'm learning to be able to own my stuff without saying, "but you" and Jim has also taught me that blame, "but you", blame is an attempt to discharge pain onto another person, right?

JC: Yeah, that's right.

LT: Okay. And another sign of emotional maturity is empathy and being able to understand or even think about before I act, right? What is the impact that this is going to have on the other people that I do life with? And almost pre deciding, I need to be empathetic to these people. I need to care about them. So, it's not just empathy in the moment, like you're having a hard day, and I'm going to sit with you and, and be empathetic. Like I see you, I hear you. I want to know more. Help me understand, you know? Just being that gentle, kind voice. But it's also saying I need to have empathy for people before I act, before I say something. And so really thinking through what's the impact of this on another person. So, all of these things I've noted as signs of emotional maturity that I want more of in my life.

Jim: Yeah, thank you. And this list might cross over a little bit too. So, I'm going to also, I just thought, as I looked at this and studied this, to kind of read some of the highlights so that I cover what I need to cover. I'm mindful of First Peter 5:8, "*Be sober...*", because a lot of emotional maturity is what we call emotional sobriety. It's just a word in the Bible. AA didn't come up with the word sobriety, in the Bible, to be sober, be vigilant for your adversary, the devil. And I think your adversary trauma and unfinished business from your past, I'll put that in, but is a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. So, we ought to be sober and like be vigilant. We have to be even vigilant in our emotional sobriety, emotional maturity. I've shared on the podcast before that Scott Peck said that mental health that we all want is what? It's a commitment to reality. But it's at all cost. A lot of people think, or tune out, when you say commitment to reality, they missed the last part, at all cost to face reality, in relationships with yourself and your story.

It often will cost you and that's why a lot of people don't live healthy because they consider the cost and go like the rich young ruler, that cost too much, and they don't do it. I want you to also — it was weird talking here— we were talking before we went on camera here to watch out for spiritual bypass. I see people do that, where they will like bypass their emotions and what's going on in their internal world. And just quote scripture on top of it, there's nothing wrong with the Word of God. But I'm bypassing what's really going on here. And remember that emotions, it has been said, are really emotions are energy in motion.

So, where's this energy going to go? One of the things with the brain that's important real quick is the limbic system where emotions are stored, God set it up that way, to the prefrontal cortex, where you're kind of in control and making decisions. That's like a six-lane highway. But from the prefrontal cortex to kind of talk yourself down, you can do it. It's like a one-lane country road, and a lot of this, you're not just going to just talk yourself down, when the emotions get what I call fully involved. And we're going to try to learn how to hopefully act rather than react or respond versus reacting. Reacting if you think of it as like redoing an action from the past, which we've said before if it's hysterical, its historical.

Here's just a few more components of emotional sobriety. You've already said this, but this is a key one, to take responsibility for your life. People who are in a place we call a victim or martyr stance, they blame. They're not going to take responsibility for their life. Or worse yet, they'll take responsibility then say, "but" I'll own this but you, and that's that quid pro quo that is unhealthy. Admit your mistakes and confess them. I like the Greek word for confess it means, say the exact same thing. No, this isn't kind of sort of what I did to you. This is what I did and don't put but. Our confessions should never be explained. Well, here's why I did... Our sins should never be explained. Stay out of judgment and Rene Browns, research, you're either in empathy or judgment when you're another person, you can say hard things. But I'm not in judgment.

As we've talked about the trauma egg, take a look. If you want to get emotional sobriety, emotional maturity, somewhere, even if it's just with a friend, a pastor, certainly a therapist, take a look at the facts and the impact of your story. Because if you don't want to, then you don't work out, you'll act out. Pay attention, as we've talked about fight, flight, or freeze, because if you get in that freeze response, you'll to see meant all this emotional maturity in and no and you were saying this eloquently earlier about kind of stepping back here before you enter the arena like, where am I be grounded in my own body? How am I getting? I'm getting ready to go into this conversation. We'll watch, we prepare in times of

strength, because he works out all the time. I think you do too. Yeah, really. But we prepare in times of strength for coming times of weakness.

So why do we do this is to go out in that arena, here comes that weak moment I've prepared for this moment. Practicing, enforcing, which is much more difficult, healthy boundaries. We've talked a whole podcast on this, boundaries are to keep me safe. And they're never to be explained, pause before reacting or responding. There's a literal taking of the breath. I mean, some people think that looks weird, but to say, I'm not going to say that you got to have a proper editor and filter saying, boy, I want to say this. And I got to honestly, pause the Fruit of the Spirit. That's an emotional sobriety to practice these things, especially self-control. And one that we've talked about before and you've alluded to it is really having before me, I don't want to be left to be a narcissist, I really don't, to seek first to understand before you're understood, and literally to feel that emotional sobriety maturity, say, help me understand what's going on for you versus me coming in and telling you all that, people with emotional immaturity, it's all about them. They're unfettered, uncontrolled and they're just like a garden hose, or a fire hose just all over the place. So that grounded emotional sobriety, seeking the other person and their understanding before you tell your peace. There are more, but that's a few.

LT: That's so helpful. I want to have these like on a list, and I want to attach them to my bathroom mirror with some scripture, and just look at it every single day. Because you know what, we have to have a license for so many things that require schooling. So, if you if you want a medical license, you know, medical school, you'd go to school for a long time. If you want a driver's license, you got to go to Driver's Ed, right? But we can get a marriage license. And we have friendship contracts. They're not like a license, but we have an understanding of what it means to be a friend. But nobody's sending us to any kind of school to say, Hey, why don't we study emotional maturity, and what you're really shooting for here. And I've even seen sometimes where people are very spiritually mature. But like you said, Jim, what they haven't worked out, they're going to act out. And if there's a level of unhealed trauma, which we all have in our life, but there's this sense that you can quote Bible verses so much, but you can have this general sense of weirdness when you're around them. And you can't quite understand it, because you see them as a spiritual pillar. And then the emotional side of things just feel real weird or real, covered up, or there's just something there, you can't quite put your finger on it. And so, but because they're such a spiritual giant, you kind of walk away going, it must be me.

JC: Well, and that spiritual bypass could be in play. And we've talked about this, but there is truly a developmental stuck-ness that often I'll say to people, I think they're stuck seriously developmentally, between four to 14. So, they could feel like this wonderful spiritual adult, but relationally if I didn't know better, it's the line I use. I have a sign in my office that says, how old would you be if you didn't know how old you are? Developmentally, they really are stuck in adolescent or even younger behavior.

LT: And isn't it true that sometimes when we're having a chaotic reaction, or we're putting emotional immaturity on display, that sometimes it is us reverting back to the age that we were when there was some kind of trauma that happened that's gone unhealed.

JC: Totally. That's why proactively if we go back to do this work in therapy, to go back and deal with that we're trying to get people literally unstuck to help them. First Corinthians 13, the love chapter, verse 11, grow up to help them put away childish things gracious, like what do you think and why are you an idiot? Why are you doing that? If they're in previous podcast in shame, or running shame scripts, they're

not thinking, and they are developmentally stuck. If we go back, we go there to find them and often taking people out of a family, I'll say we got to take you out of the family. And then appropriately, we got to take the family out of you, as God took these people out of Egypt, that he had to take Egypt out of them. So, part of that is just helping people literally grow up.

LT: So, Joel, I know you've got small children.

Joel Muddamalle: I do.

LT: And so, you know, what happens sometimes just because they are young, give very small kids. And so, once somebody hits somebody else, and then all of a sudden, they've gone from being seven years old to almost reverting back to two years old. Right?

JM: Were you listening in on our conversation last night at the house? Putting the kids to bed?

LT: Yeah, with the walkie talkie? I'm just on speed dial with bread. But have you ever seen somebody like in the grocery store? Or even Target or Walmart or some store where they don't get something that they want? They're trying to return something, and the store won't cooperate? Yes, or the drive thru or whatever. And have you ever seen someone who's like 40 years old? And they're throwing a temper tantrum like they're four? So, it's not that all of a sudden, they have reverted back in age. But emotionally, their maturity has diminished down to immaturity. In that moment, they're having a moment of extreme immaturity. But it's because like you said, they're stuck.

JC: In that six-lane highway from the limbic and trauma that's unhealed. It's like, they snapped. Yeah, they did. Literally neurochemically as far as the brain goes, they did. It's on them so fast.

JM: I think what's really interesting too, is that all of our conversation also has such a massive echo to a biblical storyline. If you think about a new talk about Moses and we're talking about the people of Israel trying to get out of Egypt, but then get Egypt out of them. I think it's really interesting did army six the Shema, I mean, when God Institute's to Israel, how to do this, it's through a, what I call a theology of remembrance. It is remembering what the Lord your God has done. Remember the Red Sea, remember the plagues, remember the Manna remember all of these things? Because otherwise, if you are not remembering God's goodness in your life, where he has redirected and reoriented you, you will remember a false narrative. That is kind of natural. That's why the Israelites often, throughout the Old Testament, are called stiff necked stubborn, because they go back to their enslaved condition.

LT: Hmm. It reminds me of the verse and Jim you use it often, I think it's Romans 13:14 "... make no provision for the flesh..." So, I want to get into some more Bible teaching. But first, Jim, can I ask you? Like, what is the deal here? If we are, if we are talking about emotional maturity, emotional immaturity? Do you get to a place and stay there? Or is it possible to become emotionally mature, but still have lots of immature moments, or the reverse to be emotionally immature, but have just brief moments of emotional maturity? Like what is the deal? Is there? Is there a level that you reach that you're kind of at that point, stable? Or is it always going to be in flux?

JC: One of the things that I say is for me, for all of us, is don't let your sin surprise you. It comes up, I can't believe I did that. There's always data, Proverbs 20 verse 5, the purposes in a person's heart, why

you do what you do, are deep water. So, a person of understanding goes down deep alongside you to draw those purposes up, progress, not perfection we'll say. So, the idea if I'm dealing with things in my life, and the emotional sobriety which mimics human growth and development, I'm literally 4, 5, 15, 20. Growing up, the issue is he will not be a ruling thing in my life. I will be largely emotionally and spiritually mature, reminding myself that Oswald Chambers, the great Christian writer said he said it was impossible to be spiritually mature and emotionally immature, that they're so tied together. So, I think that that point, I keep growing and developing, but there will then be moments where I will be triggered back. And the issue is I say healed wounds don't leak infection, but that trigger can go, and I grab it quickly back to taking every thought captive and make it to be to Christ. I catch myself. And then I can, it won't be like, I get triggered. And I go back and literally the biblical metaphor, I'm literally back in Egypt fulfilled in slavery. I'll catch it, I go, that's something I talk out loud to myself and say, Jim, you know better than that. What do you need or call a friend say, Man, something just happened to me with a client, sometimes in counseling, and I felt all this stuff come up, talk and process and I feel like it's like, shorter and shorter and the emotional sobriety is far more what I'm known for?

LT: And I think when that happens, when that limbic system gets fired, and all of a sudden either fresh trauma is happening or triggers from past trauma or just something terribly upsetting is happening in our life. You've taught me this, and I think it is it has served me so well. You've taught me that it takes 20 minutes for the amygdala part of our brain, which is where our trauma and deep emotions are stored, it takes 20 minutes for that to calm down. So just give yourself a minute. And during those 20 minutes, get proactive about self-care. And that's not being selfish, that's truly caring for yourself so that you can have a better response and not an immediate reaction, to give yourself 20 minutes, drink four ounces of water. I like to walk outside and look up and remind myself the sky is not falling, because one of the tendencies of my personality is worst case scenario. And that's part of what makes me all of a sudden get into such a panicked place that emotional immaturity starts really like presenting itself, even though, I've worked really hard to be an emotionally mature person.

JC: And look what you just said, I use this all the time with people. It's powerful. Let us use our bodies in good ways what we look down into our emotions, and that trauma will be like CRO Magnon man, it will pull you over, down and then we look up and how many times do the Jewish people in the Bible say, I look up, I look up and even we, nothing wrong with praying Our Father, we go down and we pray fine, if that's what the Jewish people so often lifted hands and they looked up, we look down into our emotions, whatever they may be. But we've got to then look up into the truth and the reality and it literally neurochemically works, it changes our brain to look up and to walk is the other piece.

LT: Yeah. And some people even take my shoes off, you know, and just like walk in the grass. And —

JC: that's grounding, you understand that part? Right? You're grounding in Gods... This is our Father's

LT: I did not know that I was doing good work here, but yes.

JC: No, really that's important. This is when you get your shoes off and guess God's Earth and get in the whatever is emitted from in the grass and all that, you're literally how most of us spend our days. On concrete, we have a rug over this concrete, we're on slab but what we're very seldom grounded into God's Earth, just having our feet down in the ground. So that's very important what you said.

LT: That's great. And I like what you said to just, I've just, I know myself. And I know worst-case scenarios are not going to bring out a best-case scenario in my response right now. And so, looking up to me is really important. But you were talking about the children of Israel, getting out of Egypt, but then having to get Egypt out of them, think about what they did when they weren't in Egypt for their provision. They look down at the ground, they needed the ground to give them their provision. But when God took them out to the desert, they had to look up for God's provision, and God's provision was manna, little flakes that fall from the sky. And so that was part of getting that Egypt out of them. Like you're not going to be self-reliant anymore when teach you to be God dependent. And I think that's really important. So, a little...

JM: Sidetrack, though it's really interesting with Exodus, it was necessary when God even tells Pharaoh through Moses, to let my people go into where the wilderness, why to worship. Why in the world would the people of Israel need to go into the wilderness to be the environment for their act of worship? The wilderness was a necessary part of their journey to the promised land, it was in the wilderness, they could do exactly what you just said.

JC: Love that good.

LT: And I really liked your phraseology to Jim about saying emotional maturity is emotional sobriety. I don't know that I've ever put those words together. But it is being sober-minded. It's not being swept up in traumas and triggers. And it's not being swept up in coping mechanisms and addictions, and all of that. And, and I think you have told me before that addictions really are a dysfunction of worship.

JC: A disorder of worship, because it's back to where we were earlier in the podcast before Jeremiah 2:13. Addictions are broken sistering I say, God, you're not enough fountain of living water. And I go here, and it is it is a worship, even sometimes you see this worth-ship, I can go there and find my worth here. That's why it's, I think, is absolutely it's much more than a disorder of worship. There's dynamics physically, and all that goes on, but it really is that for sure.

LT: So, all of us can be pursuing emotional and spiritual maturity, but still have moments of immaturity, and what do we do in those moments? And so, I really think it's important, give yourself 20 minutes, drink some, at least four ounces of water, go outside, look up, remind yourself that the sky is not falling, you know, put your feet into the ground and just, you know, stabilize yourself for a while. But Joel, there's also some really good passages that we've talked about. So, I want to turn over to you Colossians chapter three, is that a good place to start? Okay, so let's turn it over to Colossians chapter three. And Joel shared with me earlier, some research that he's done that I think is going to be mind blowing.

So do not miss this part. If we look at Colossians chapter three, and always go to the table of contents, if you can't find Colossians, or look right here, it's just this many left-handed turns from the back of your Bible. So that's always super helpful. But in Colossians, chapter three, starting in verse one, *“Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life, appears, then you also appear with Him in glory. Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature.”* And so many of these things are signs of displaced worship or even immaturity. You know, going back to an age that you know you should mature past this. It's sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires, and greed, which is idolatry.

Because of these the wrath of God is coming, you use to. So, I love how it's past tense there. *"You used to walk in these ways in the life. But now you must also rid yourself of all such things as these anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips."* It's not becoming of you; you're reaching for something better you're walking toward spiritual and emotional maturity." *"Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and put on the new self which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its creator."* Here, "there is no Jew... Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised. barbarian," ... Hard word, how do I say that? *"Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all and is in all there for therefore"*.

So, this is really important. It's like, okay, these are all the signs of spiritual and emotional immaturity. You use to do that. But now you've been made new because of Christ in you. And because Christ is in you, *"therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with..."* So now, this is what we need to do every single day. Put on your new clothes that represent who you are, this new creation, spiritually and emotionally mature. *"Therefore, as God's chosen people holding dear love, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another. If any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."* So, we were talking a little bit Joel, and then the very next verse and *"let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts..."*

So, if you want to know what the payoff of emotional and spiritual maturity is, it's peace. Immaturity is going to lead you to the opposite, yes, peace, lying, slandering. Practicing all kinds of idolatry or, you know, making other things more important than God and even sexual immorality, that is not going to lead you to the peace that will comfort your heart, but it will lead to a destroy disruption and destruction really, of all that's good within you.

So, we want peace and the way we can let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts is by putting on these new clothes. If you think about it, think about when you go and buy clothes, OK? So, if you're telling put like clothe yourself with all of this, when you go buy clothes. What's important? Let's just throw out a couple of things. What's important, you want to buy clothes that fit? Yeah, you want to buy clothes that fit, that you like. Yeah. And so, it's okay. For some of the different ways the different personality types, the different wirings of people. It's okay, if your compassion may look a little different than my compassion.

Jim, you're uniquely wired with incredible compassion, and you're a therapist. So, your garment of compassion is probably going to look a little bit different than somebody else who has a different kind of career, right? So, it's okay for your clothing that you need to put it on as it fits you, but don't disqualify yourself like, Oh, well, I, you know, I'm just a real practical person, or I'm just a real you know, I'm like a bull in the china shop, I have no compassion. You can't say that. Because you're instructed here, you need to get some compassion you need to put it on. And if you're putting on this garment of compassion, you can make it fit you. But you don't want to walk out naked, absent of compassion, right? What's another interesting thing about clothing?

JC: Where are you going next? Because I have thoughts before one is, I think the idea also, for me reverses this back to how many times are we going to keep going back to Genesis three, that when I found out I was now naked and ashamed, I didn't go to the right tailor, right? I just grabbed whatever was near, fig leaves, to cover my inadequacy. Of course, we know God in the narrative says, For the

first-time mimicking Christ's sacrifice, eventually, that there'll be the shedding of the blood and cover yourself with animal skins. So, the idea then Ephesians 6, the spiritual warfare wardrobe that we can put on that's the clothing. By the way, we referenced really quick, the passage in Romans 13:14, I always do the second half of the verse. Well, the first half of the verse says, "*Clothe yourselves in the Lord Jesus Christ first,*" then provision for the lust of the flesh.

LT: So good. Another thing about clothing is its different seasons, you know. So, in the wintertime, we don't put on shorts and T-shirts in the wintertime, we put on coats, right? And so, there are different seasons where you need your clothing needs to properly reflect that season. And that's true with us, and it's also true in people that we're interacting with, you know? If I'm interacting with someone who's in a devastating season, then I need a warmer sense of compassion for them. Or if they're going through just typical everyday stuff, maybe my compassion can be a little more, you know, just like shorts and a T-shirt, you know, a little more casual, whatever. Another thing about clothing is you want to make sure that you've gauged where you're going to. So, if you're going to an official board meeting, right, you don't put on a you know, gym shorts and, and tank top. You don't walk into a board meeting like that.

So, you want it to be appropriate for this setting that you're stepping into. So, I find this notion of clothing, like we're very familiar with what it means to put on clothing. We know we have different styles for different times, we have different seasons, and all of this, but I think we can think of this in terms of compassion. But Joel, one of my favorite things that you've shared, is a deeper spiritual meaning of why are we putting on these clothes? And why is it referred to as clothe yourselves with all of these things?

JM: Yeah. So, I think what's really intriguing about this is, anytime you see repetition in Scripture, there's a reason for it. You know, repetition always has reason. So, when we look back to Colossians, 2, in verse 15, actually, verse 15, sets up how to rightly understand the put to death and put on and, and all of this clothing language, this is what Colossians 2:15 says, "*He (which is Christ) disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame by triumphing over them in Him.*" Now that word disarmed in Greek is actually related to the putting on or putting off of clothes. And so, in the ancient Greek world, if a king or if a ruler had conquered an enemy, it would have been common practice, to then parade that enemy in a royal procession. In a party in front of the entire people so that everybody knows that the king has come, and he is victorious. And there would be the ceremony where the enemy would disrobe their royal kind of clothes and put on a different type of clothing to identify their defeat.

So, I think this is intriguing. Because what then Paul does and Colossians 3 is, he's saying, by the way, all of that emotional immaturity stuff, the morality, the lying, the debauchery, all of that kind of stuff, that has been conquered, it has been defeated by Christ on the cross and all the spiritual powers, the authorities and the rulers and the principalities have been disarmed and their final defeat, it's coming when Jesus will return. But as that has been disarmed, we can then take off of our old self and put on these new clothes. What are the new clothes? It's what you just said, Jim. It is the clothes of Christ Himself and the clothes are marked by these things that Lysa had said in verse 12, Colossians 3:12, "*Put on then compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.*"

I wish we had another two hours. I would want to do a deep dive of each one of these words and how they're used all of Scripture. But let me just say this, that in the Septuagint, the Old Testament in Hebrew was translated into Greek. And in fact, that's probably the Bible that Jesus had. Jesus had the

Old Testament in Greek. That's what Paul would have had. And these words here in the Septuagint, in the Greek Old Testament, are the words that are used to describe God's actions. This is not arbitrary maturity or arbitrary characteristics. These are the very characteristics of God Himself.

And so, when we participate in this, we're participating in rightly imitating the likeness and image, we talked about this last episode, of God Himself. And then just a final thought of emotional maturity and spiritual maturity. What we're ultimately talking about theologically is this idea of sanctification, progressive sanctification, our emotional immaturity will lead us to spiritual depravity, like it will, those things don't work together. But when we participate in emotional maturity, as evidenced by spiritual maturity, it's actually leading to this idea of progressive sanctification. It's leading us to something, to a certain place, to a direction, to a destination. And that destination for the Christian, for the person who has put their faith and hope in Jesus Himself is to emulate and to and to resemble Christ Himself. And so that's really what I think we're after.

LT: I love that, and I love the clothes, clothing, that is a sign of victory and clothing that is a sign of defeat. And Christ is saying here, you do not belong to defeat. That's right. So, if you are putting on things of your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires, greed, idolatry, you're lying, you're deceiving other people, you are participating in slander, when you're when you're putting on those things, that is a sign of defeat. And God is saying, "No," you do not belong to defeat you belong to the victorious Christ. And when you belong to the victorious Christ, you put on, you clothe yourselves in signs of victory, compassion, kindness, gentleness, patience, love. And I think that to me, reminds me bring it all the way back to another important thing about clothing. You do it daily. Yes. And so back to my question, Jim, you know, can you be like what am I emotionally mature, am I emotionally immature? I am the maturity spiritually and emotionally that I choose to close myself in each day. And so many times when we talk about some of the principles of therapy, it seems like you've got to do your work. And it's like this long-term payoff, but the payoff can be yours today. The peace of Christ can rule in your heart today, when you choose daily to clothe yourself with these principles, kindness, compassion, you can do it today, today. Be compassionate. Today, be kind, today, be loving, today, choose to be gentle. And when you do this, you are wearing the victorious signs that you belong to Christ and the peace of Christ will rule in your heart.

Now, does that mean that you need to allow people to take advantage of you that this is a sign of weakness? No, this is a sign of incredible strength. Because what you are choosing to do is you are saying, Jesus' power is full and alive in me. And I can still be compassionate. I mean, these other people can act like fools if they want to, right? But I'm not freely handing over my power to them. I am saying, you do not have enough power over me to make me act foolish. I have clothed myself with compassion and kindness today. And it's not a determination of what you may deserve or not deserve. It's because I deserve to let the peace of Christ rule in me. So, I am letting the peace and the power of Christ rule in me so that I can be an agent of compassion and kindness and love, even in this world that's full of brokenness and abuse and abandonment and rejection, and all the other things. You deserve to have the peace of Christ rolling in you today. Closing thoughts?

JC: I'll go. Remember that if you are working on it, it is progress not perfection if you're working on emotional maturity and emotional sobriety, the person who is walking with you in or around you, who's in emotional immaturity, it's going to be very hard to truly connect with that person. So, do not be surprised and don't go into judgment of them. But it will separate people in relationships. That's one and

two, is just remember that you can have this thing this clothing things really hit me in this podcast, you're going to have the clothing a closet full of all the greatest clothing in Christ. And if you don't daily move from what I call the inspirational, heard a podcast, I'm inspired I need to do this, like these podcasts. You don't move from the inspirational to the intentional, the intentional is daily, I got to get in that closet and open up and intentionally dress myself. You'll be able to stay in emotional immaturity for a long time if you'd like.

LT: Yeah. All right. So, let me close with this. This is the last little thing that I wrote that started off as text message that moved into the notes section of my phone. "Water seeks its own level." Thank you, Jim. Another quote that you get you have given me water seeks its own level. Never have you seen a glass of water sitting on a flat surface where the water is low on one side and high on the other. Just like the gravitational forces help water achieve equilibrium. So will the pressures of life make it very evident.

That equilibrium in a relationship is only possible when both people are equally committed to healthy habits, self-awareness and empathy for the feelings of the other. When one person dabbles in unhealthy habits refuses to look at themselves through the lens of reality, and or stops considering the feelings of the other, there will be an ever-increasing tension until you sink, or they rise. Then only you can decide how to either manage that ever-increasing tension between emotional maturity and emotional immaturity, or when to say enough is enough and in compassion, move on. Thank you so much for joining us today.