

One Lord, One Horizon, and the Integration of the Heart



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Grace and Peace and One True Center

This morning in church, as my amazing Pastor Whitney, who never ceases to deliver a sermon that lands squarely on my heart, opened the first lines of Ephesians and spoke the words, “*Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,*” I felt both grounded and gently confronted. He lingered over that phrase, the Lord Jesus Christ, reminding us that there is one true center of allegiance, one source of identity, one place from which grace and peace actually flow. Whenever we allow something nearer to occupy that place, whether it is political, cultural, ideological, or even personal, we begin to live from a different organizing principle. Our tone shifts. Our posture shifts. Our capacity for unity diminishes. We begin to argue not simply for what we believe is good, but against those we have learned to see as the problem.

The Place Where I Am Most Alive

As I sat there, my mind moved to something that for me is never far from the surface. I began thinking about motorcycles. Anyone who knows me knows that riding is not a casual

hobby. It is my favorite pastime. It is one of the places where I experience the deepest sense of coherence in my whole being. When I am on the bike, everything has to come into alignment. My attention sharpens. My body settles. My breathing slows. The noise in my mind quiets. There is a kind of integrated presence that happens when the road unfolds ahead and I lean into a turn with full awareness. Riding will not tolerate fragmentation. It requires that mind, body, vision, and direction all agree. And nowhere is that more evident than in the reality every experienced rider eventually encounters: the phenomenon known as target fixation.

Target Fixation

And every rider knows the law of target fixation. Anyone who has ridden for any length of time understands how serious it is. And for those who have never really learned it, well, let's just say some of them are no longer around to talk about it.

You see the hazard and your eyes lock onto it. It might be gravel in the turn, a guardrail at the edge of the curve, or a car that feels too close to the center line. Your instinct is to stare at it because you want to avoid it, but the moment you do, the motorcycle begins to move toward it. Your body follows your gaze. Your line tightens in the wrong direction. You drift toward the very thing you were trying not to hit. The only way through is to acknowledge the danger but refuse to give it your focus. You turn your head. You look through the turn. You fix your eyes on the long line, the open road, the place you intend to go. When you do that, the bike settles beneath you. Your movements become smooth. The path opens. You move forward with stability and even with joy.

What My Body Has Known for Years

Sitting in that pew, I realized with unusual clarity that my body has known this truth for years. Every time I ride, I live it. My nervous system understands what happens when attention is fixed on the wrong target. It knows the difference between contraction and openness, between fear and flow, between fixation and horizon.

But in my thinking, in my writing, and in my engagement with the cultural and political world, I have not always lived what my body knows.

NeuroFaith® — Lived or Betrayed

Through the lens of NeuroFaith®, that realization becomes even more personal. We speak often about the heart as a center of relational intelligence, about appreciation and love as measurable physiological states, about heart rate variability and the way a regulated heart can help regulate another. We speak about the electromagnetic field of the heart and the reality that our internal state is never private. It is transmitted. It is experienced by the people around us. It either creates safety and connection, or it communicates tension and threat.

I have taught this. I believe it. I have watched it transform lives.

And yet when my attention becomes dominated by opposition, when my focus shifts from Christ to the hazards of the cultural road, I step out of the very coherence I am inviting others to live. My heart moves from appreciation to agitation. My nervous system moves from regulation to subtle threat. My relational presence begins to communicate distance rather than grace. Even if my words are logically correct, my state is no longer aligned with the model. That is not simply inconsistency. It is disintegration.

Back Into Order

Pastor Whitney's sermon brought that contradiction into the light for me. My riding life has been disciplining my body to look toward the horizon. My faith calls me to fix my eyes on Christ. NeuroFaith® calls me to live from a regulated, love-centered heart that co-regulates others and creates the conditions for connection. When my attention is captured by the need to defeat an opposing position, I betray all three at once. I do not simply weaken my argument. I diminish my capacity to transmit grace and peace as a lived reality.

On the motorcycle, if I fixate on the hazard, I crash.

In my faith, if I fixate on the opposition, I eventually crash into the very people I am called to love.

But when I lift my eyes toward Christ, everything begins to come back into order. My body knows this feeling. It is the feeling of a clean line through a curve, of the motorcycle settling into its lean, of the road opening instead of closing. It is the feeling of coherence. This is NeuroFaith® embodied. Grace and peace are no longer abstract theological ideas. They become a regulated nervous system, a heart filled with appreciation and love, and a relational field that invites connection rather than broadcasting tension.

There is an order to this that is both theological and physiological. Christ is Lord. From Him flow grace and peace. When grace and peace become the lived state of the heart, the nervous system moves into regulation. When the nervous system is regulated, the presence we carry becomes safe and invitational to others. When that happens, we can speak truth without contempt, hold conviction without hostility, and engage disagreement without losing connection.

So this morning became more than a sermon. It became a call to integration. What my body has been practicing on every ride, what my theology has been proclaiming for years, and what NeuroFaith® has been articulating in clinical and relational terms are all the same movement toward one living center.

Lift your eyes. Look through the turn. Fix your gaze on Christ.

Because the motorcycle goes where the rider looks. The nervous system organizes around what the mind attends to. The heart transmits the state it lives in. And the soul becomes

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aligned with whatever it calls Lord.

And I know now, with a quiet certainty that feels less like striving and more like surrender, that the long road ahead is not about winning arguments or defeating opposing lanes of traffic. It is about riding in such a way that grace and peace become the atmosphere I carry, the coherence others can feel, the steady line that invites rather than divides. It is about living from one center, loving from one heart, and moving toward one horizon.

And so I lift my eyes again.

Not to the hazard.

Not to the noise.

Not to the identities that demand my allegiance.

But to Christ, who stands at the far end of the road, not as a threat to be reached but as a presence already guiding the line.

And I ride toward Him in grace.

“Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.”

— Hebrews 12:1-2