

Ephesians 4

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Tape # 8173
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Let's turn now in our Bibles to the fourth chapter of the Book of Ephesians.

In the third chapter Paul began the chapter with the words, "For this cause, I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ."

In the fourth chapter, he begins, *I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord*, Though he was in a prison in Rome, he did not consider himself a prisoner of Rome or of the Roman Government. He considered himself a prisoner of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was there in prison because of his preaching and of his teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. So a prisoner of the Lord.

And I beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, So as Paul now, enters into this portion of the Book, he is going to be dealing with the walk of the believer. And the first thing he exhorts, is that we walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we were called.

What have we been called? We have been called to be saints. We've been called to be the children of God through faith. We've been called to be the heirs of salvation. So walk worthy as a child of God, as an heir of God, as a saint of God. Walk worthy of the calling wherewith you have been called.

And then he describes how we are to walk, in verse two, ²*With all lowliness and meekness*, There really is no place for pride in the Christian walk. In fact, a person who is proud is a person who has not yet met the Lord. They may know about the Lord. They may profess knowing the Lord. But you cannot have a true encounter with God and remain a proud person.

When Isaiah had an encounter with God, chapter six, "I saw the Lord, high and lifted up, His train filled the temple. Then said I, woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips. I dwell among people of unclean lips."

Daniel, when he spoke of his experience with God, declared that his beauty turned into ugliness.

Peter, when he had a real encounter with the Lord, he said depart from me, Lord, I'm a sinful man!

And a person who has had a true encounter with God, how could you be proud? There is no way. So we are to walk in all lowliness and meekness. We are not to be lifted up or try to be lifted up or elevate ourselves or walk around in a, you know, sort of strut kind of a thing, you know. But we are to walk in lowliness and meekness.

with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Even as God has been long-suffering. And of course one of the characteristics of the agape love is that it suffers long and is kind. Forbearing one another in love. You've got to put up with me, in love. Forbearing one another in love. And I've got to put up with you. I don't know which has the biggest problem, but we are to forbear one another in love.

³*Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*. Now Satan wants to cause division within the body of Christ. He has done a pretty good job! We look at how the body of Christ has been divided and fractured. But we should endeavor to keep the unity of Spirit in the bond of peace. So when Paul tells us to walk worthy, this is how we are to walk....endeavoring to keep this unity that we have in Christ.

⁴*There is one body, and one Spirit*, For there is only one body and one Spirit.

Now I dedicated a church in Arlington, Texas, this past week, a new Calvary Chapel there. And the pastor of the Calvary Chapel there, was formerly a member of the Church of Christ. In fact he was an elder in one of the Church of Christ churches. But he said that he was in one of the strictest of the Church of Christ. In fact the thirty-five people that were meeting together, had determined that the rest of the Church of Christ were more liberal. They doubted whether or not they were really saved. He said, we had come to the conclusion that we were the only ones that really walked in truth. The whole rest of the body of Christ was in error. And we thirty-five were probably the only ones that were going to make it to heaven. He said, you don't know how narrow we were!

He started listening to our studies on the radio as we were in the Book of Romans that talks about the grace of God. God began to open his eyes to realize that there are other people who love the Lord who

weren't a member of their thirty five. And as God began to open up his eyes to the truth of the grace of God, it was like a revelation to him. And so he finally started a Calvary Chapel there in Arlington, Texas. God has been blessing him and his ministry.

But it is sad that there are so many segments and divisions within the Body of Christ, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. But here are so many who are ready to divide over almost any issue.

Yet there is only one body. We are all a part of that one body of Christ. And God help us that we might really recognize this and realize this.

I had a wonderful time this past week fellowshiping with a couple of pastors from Costa Mesa, a Lutheran pastor and a Baptist pastor. They are looking in to the merging of their two churches. Now that's exciting to me! A Baptilutheran or a LutherBaptist or whatever you would call it, but the merging of the two churches that they might have a stronger witness, that they might have a larger Christian school, and that that they just might work together. And to me it was an exciting thing to talk to them about this possible merger that they are praying about and the congregations are considering. I encouraged them!

There is only one body. You know, as far as the Lord, He doesn't look at the name on the door, if we are Presbyterians or if we are Lutherans, or if we are Baptists or Methodists or whatever. In fact that is immaterial to Him. There is one body and that is the body of Christ. There is only one person who can really say, My church, and that is Jesus. He said upon this rock, I will build My church. He is the only one who can say, "My Church". And the glorious thing about His church is that you can't join it. You've got to born into it.

Everyone who is born of God is in the one body. And sooner we can recognize that, the better. The walls come down. And as we talk about the one body of Christ, if one member suffers, they all suffer. If one is exalted, they all are exalted. And that is why it is so absolutely wrong for us to sort of gloat or feel, you know, satisfied in a sense, when someone stumbles and someone falls, a church or a pastor. When one suffers they all suffer. When one is exalted and it's so wrong to be jealous when God is moving in a church in the area or community and God is really blessing them. It is wrong to feel a sense of jealousy because one is exalted, they all are exalted.

We need to really see the oneness of the body of Christ, one body, one Spirit *even as ye are called in one hope of your calling*; Now, there are not seven heavens—one for the Baptists and one for the Lutherans, you know, not separate segments in heaven. There is just one hope of our calling and that is just to be with our Lord forever! And there we will have to mix. Well, we might as well get started now. And we might as well recognize now, that when we get there, it's going to be just one big happy family of God. And no one is going to be asking you about what denominational affiliation did you have? That won't be important. There is just one hope of our calling.

There is only ⁵*One Lord, one faith, one baptism*, It's so sad, there are churches that will to accept the baptism of another church. If you have been baptized in a church and you want to gain membership in another church, there are many churches that will not accept your baptism if you weren't baptized into the church of Jesus Christ. And so they require another baptism. You have to be baptized into the church of Christ. That is sort of sad.

It is interesting that the one issue that has come up with the merger of the Lutherans and the Baptists, is the Baptists believe in baptism by full immersion. Of course the Lutherans, sprinkle for the most part. So they are wondering and this Baptist church has a rule that you have to be baptized by full immersion. So what do we do with all of the Lutherans that will be joining us who were sprinkled. And that is one of the issues that they are working through. They are talking about sort of a grandfather clause, that they can accept the Lutherans if you were sprinkled, fine, you know. And they are ready to accept that and to recognize that there is only one baptism, and whether or not it was by dunking or by sprinkling or forwards or backwards or whatever, that one baptism, baptized by the Spirit into the body of Jesus Christ!

There is only ⁶*One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all*. He is everything! He is above all. He's in all of us and He is through all things. So the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace because we are one. There is only one baptism, one church, one Lord and one calling, one God, one faith.

⁷*But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.* Oh, how I love this passage of Scripture! God had given to each one of us, grace. His unmerited favor, according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

To the church in Rome, Paul wrote in chapter eight, what do we say to these things? If God can be for us who can be against us? He who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all. That is grace! God spared not His own Son. He delivered Him up for us all. How much more then shall He not freely give us all things? God has given us grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. What Paul is saying is that God has already given the most! Anything that you may desire, anything that you may need, pales in comparison to what God has already given! The grace of God according to the measure of the gift of Christ. He gave the best for us in giving His Son. Anything that we might need just is nothing in comparison to that grace that God has bestowed through the gift of His Son.

⁸*Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.* Gifts according to His grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ. And now He has given to the church, gifted men. Now there are gifts of the Holy Spirit, manifestations and gifts of the Spirit, that Paul speaks about in Romans, chapter twelve and in 1 Corinthians, chapter twelve. But now he is talking about ministry gifts, the ministry gifts of an apostle, the ministry gifts of a prophet, and of an evangelist and of pastor-teachers.

So to everyone of us He has given grace, wherefore He says, when He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. And ⁹*(Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?)* Now he is talking about the ascension of Jesus. And of course he is quoting from Psalm 68:18. That is an interesting, prophetic Psalm, concerning the Lord. And Paul is quoting it here, where the Psalmist says Thou hast ascended on high. Thou hast led captivity captive and Thou hast received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them. So Jesus has ascended, but Paul said He first of all, descended into the lower parts of the earth.

The Pharisees, one day asked Jesus for a sign. He said a wicked and an adulterous generation seeks after signs, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

When Jesus died on the cross, His soul descended into hell, into Hades. And He was there for three days and for three nights. Now prior to the death of Jesus, Hades was divided into two compartments.

In Luke's gospel, chapter sixteen, Jesus talks about Hades, the two compartments. He said there was certain rich man who fared sumptuously. Moreover there was a poor man that was brought daily and laid at his gate, begging bread. Moreover the dogs came and licked the poor man's sores. The poor man died and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and in Hades, in hell, lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and seeing Lazarus, being afar off, covered in Abraham's bosom, called. He said, Father Abraham, I pray, send Lazarus unto me, that he may dip his finger in water and touch my tongue for I am tormented in this heat. Abraham said, son, remember that you in your lifetime had the good things and Lazarus the evil. Now he is comforted while you are tormented, but besides this there is a gulf that is fixed between us. And it impossible for those that on this side to come over there or those that are on that side to come over here. He can't be sent over. There is this gulf that is fixed. Now, the rich man was in torment. He was suffering. Lazarus was with Abraham. He was being comforted in Abraham's bosom.

Now it was impossible in the Old Testament with the sacrifices of the goats and the bulls to put away sin. It covered sin, but it didn't put away sin. Thus, those in the Old Testament period when they died, could not enter into heaven because their sins were only covered. They were not put away. It took the blood of Jesus Christ to put away our sin. Thus those in the Old Testament all died in faith, we are told in Hebrews, chapter eleven. Not receiving the promise, but seeing it afar off, they held on to it. And they claimed they were just strangers and pilgrims here on this earth. They were looking for a city, a city of God, which has foundation, whose maker and builder is God.

We are told in the last part of Hebrews eleven, concerning these men of faith, they all died in faith, not having received the promise, God having reserved some better thing for us, that is the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

That they without us could not come into the perfected state. So that when Jesus died, His soul went into hell.

There we are told in Peter that He preached to the souls that were in prison. Now when He ascended, He led the captives from their captivity.

In the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah, the prophecy concerning the Messiah, it says the Spirit of the Lord is upon me because the Lord anointed me to preach good tiding to the meek. He has sent me to bind up the broken hearted and to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to those that were bound.

So Jesus descended into hell, into that compartment where Abraham was comforting those who died in faith, assuring them that God would keep His promise. When Jesus descended into hell, you can be sure that there was a glorious celebration as He announced that the redemption has been finished. As He cried on the cross, "It is finished"! The price of man's redemption and thus when Jesus ascended, He led the captives from their captivity.

We are told in Matthew 27 that the graves of many of the saints were opened and they were seen walking in the streets of Jerusalem, after His resurrection from the dead. They were set free from the prison. He led the captives from their captivity.

And so He who has ascended is the One, who first of all descended into the lower parts of the earth. Now on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came upon the church and people gathered become of the phenomena that was taking place, when Peter stood up to preach to them the message of Jesus Christ, he announced the subject, Jesus of Nazareth a man who was proved to be of God by the signs and the wonders which He did in the midst of you. Whom you according to the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God, with your wicked hands have crucified and slain, but God has raised Him from the dead because it was not possible that He would be held of Him.

For David prophesied of Him saying, Thou will not leave My soul in hell, neither will You allow the Holy One to see corruption.

So Peter said, we testify to you that God did not leave His soul in hell, neither did He allow the Holy One to see corruption, but this same Jesus hath God raised from the dead.

So Paul tells us he who ascended is the same one, first of all descended into the lower parts of the earth. When He ascended, He led the captivities captives and He gave gifts unto men, that is unto the church.

¹⁰*He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)* ¹¹*And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;*

For what purpose? ¹²*For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry,* The purpose of the church is for the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry. You see God has called all of you to serve Him, to serve Him in some capacity or another. We have been called of God to serve. The purpose of the church is to perfect you for that place of service that you might fulfill the ministry that God has called you to fulfil.

The word, minister, means a servant. We have all been called to serve. And thus, the purpose of our gathering together, the purpose of God giving to me the gifts of pastor-teacher, is that we might perfect you for the work of the ministry, that you might be able to fulfill that calling of God and that service to which God has called you, that which God would have you to do for Him.

for the edifying of the body of Christ: For the building up of the body of Christ. We gather in order that we might be built up in Christ, that our faith might be built up, that our relationship with the Lord might be built, that you might become strong in the things of the Lord---the building up of the body of Christ.

For years, the early years of my ministry, most of my sermons were evangelistic sermons, because I believed that the primary purpose of the church was the evangelization of the world. And thus I was preaching evangelistic sermons. It was not until I made a careful study of Ephesians, that I came to the conclusion that the purpose of the church, is to perfect the saints for the work of the ministry and to build up the body of Christ.

Now the problem with evangelistic sermons, is that the people didn't grown or mature spiritually. I kept them in a state of spiritual infancy, in that we were always preaching sermons on repentance from sin, the necessity of being baptized and the first principles of the doctrine of Christ. In Ephesian, chapter six, it says,

therefore, laying aside the first principles, the primaries. Let's go on into the full maturity. But I wasn't taking the people beyond the message of salvation. And as the result, I was preaching salvation to those who were saved, going over and over again, the necessity of being born again, the necessity of being forgiven of your sins, the necessity of being baptized in water, but I wasn't taking them on into maturity in Christ. And thus they were being kept in a state of spiritual infancy. And this I was preaching the church to death. And unfortunately, many churches have been preached to death. Unfortunately, many churches have been preached to death, but they haven't been taught! They've never gone beyond the first principle. They have never been taught. And the real need in the church is the solid, systematic exposition or teaching of the Scriptures, that there might be growth beyond the first principles of the doctrines of Christ. Let's go on into perfection.

So the perfecting of the saints, the building up of the body of Christ, ¹³*Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God*, That we might come to an understanding of what we have through Jesus Christ, more than just the forgiveness of sin, more than just salvation, but we have the power of God's Spirit to live as God would have us to live.

We begin to understand what it is to have Christ in you as the hope of glory. And the transforming power of God's Spirit transforming us into the image of Jesus Christ and going on into these things, that we might be perfected or come into a full maturity.

So till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, *unto a perfect man*, A fully mature man. The word, perfect, there in the Greek, speaks of full age or fully matured.

Now Paul writing to the Corinthians, said that they were babes in Christ. They weren't able to take meat. He had to give them milk. And even at the present time they were still not able to take the meat of the word. And so here he speaks to them of the coming into the knowledge of the Son of God into a full maturity in Jesus Christ. And oh, how we long for that full maturity! That we not be babes, but we grow up and become mature.

unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That's the kind of maturity that God wants to bring us to, the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, to be like Jesus. That is the purpose of the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives, to conform us into the image of Jesus Christ.

As Paul wrote to the Corinthians, and we all with unveiled faces as we behold the glory of the Lord are being changed from glory to glory into the same image, by His Spirit that's dwelling in us.

So Paul is talking here of coming into full maturity. And Jesus is the measure. He is the model that God is using as He is forming and shaping your life.

Sometimes we wonder, God what are you doing? As He begins to chip away at some of the old nature. Lord, what are You doing? Well, He is making you into the image of Jesus. And He's knocking off the rough edges. And He is looking at the model. Jesus is the model. He is seeking to form you into that model.

Beloved, now are we the sons of God. It doesn't yet appear what we are going to be, but we know that when He appears, we are going to be like Him, for we will see Him as He is. So God is working in us by His Spirit, bringing us into that full maturity into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

¹⁴*That we henceforth be no more children*, (not be a baby any longer) *tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine*, Throughout the church there are many winds of doctrine that blow over the church. They are spiritual fads. People follow after them. They chase after them. They are the latest spiritual fads or they are the latest spiritual craze. And people begin to chase after these spiritual fads, as they are looking for some kind of exotic, spiritual experience. And they are carried about with every wind of doctrine, vacillating, unstable, whatever direction the wind is blowing, by what every new concept or idea comes along.

But Paul points out that so many of these winds of doctrine are being promoted and promulgated *by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive*;

There was a Bible teacher from England who came to the United States. He began teaching that Christians could be demon possessed. He started having meetings in which the Christians were supposedly being delivered from demon possession. They would actually sort of vomit up these demons. They would go through sort of a contraction or whatever and begin to sort of vomit up. So they would pass out Kleenexes, so that the people could vomit the demons. So they would go through this thing. Then they would say, they

would vomit up this green thing in the Kleenex. When they opened up the Kleenex, would believe there was nothing there? Yes, I would. Now this Bible teacher was questioned about this. His rationale for doing it was that you have to have a gimmick. Because if you are just a Bible teacher, you aren't going to gain any notoriety. So you need some kind of a gimmick to draw the crowd so that they can listen to the teaching of the Word.

Well that is exactly what Paul is talking about here. The cunning craftiness, the slight of men, that is the slight of hand kind of stuff, the cunning craftiness where they develop some gimmick to draw the crowd. So you find that these men all have their little gimmicks. Whether it be slain in the spirit or whether it be severe physical shaking or whether it be uncontrollable laughter or making animal noises or whatever, they need some kind of a gimmick to draw that crowd that is looking for the spectacular kind of experience.

So children, tossed to and fro. Why? Because they haven't been taught in the Word. They don't have a solid foundation.

You know to me it's great that when these men with their gimmicks come into the area, it has absolutely no effect upon our church. Why? Because you are no more children. You have been taught in the Word. You have a basic foundation in God's truth. Thus, you are not deceived by every wind of doctrine. You are not chasing after all of these things, because we have the foundation of God's Word. We are established in that.

But children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, the slight of men and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive.

¹⁵*But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things,* But in contrast to this we should speak the truth in love, that we might grow up into Him in all things. And so often I feel like just saying to people, "Grow up, man"! You know they come and tell of some exotic meeting that they've been in. Usually they are sort of new believers. Someone has invited them to some meeting where things are all happening. And they come and say, oh my, you know! And I just feel, "Grow up". You know, that's stuff has been going around, recycled over the years. There is nothing new about that. That's you know, just gimmicks to attract people's attention. We need just to speak the truth of God. To speak it in love. Now some people are speaking the truth, but not in love. They are speaking it in a critical way. They are always seeking to find fault.

But we are to seek the truth in love. That we might grow into Jesus, into Him, in all things, *which is the head, even Christ:* Jesus Christ is the head of the body, the church.

¹⁶*From whom the whole body fitly joined together* It is Jesus who places us in the body. And as I said, we've all been called to serve. Thus, we all have a place in the body. Jesus places us in the body. He fitly joins us together.

Now not all parts of the body have the same function. Each part of the body has it's own distinct function. One of the problems is trying to be something that Jesus didn't make us.

As for years I tried to be an evangelist, which God didn't make me. He put me in the body as a pastor-teacher. It took me years in the ministry to come to this.

If you are an eye in the body of Christ, so to speak, then it would be very difficult for you to grip something. To try to be a hand, I don't like being an eye. I want to move things. Or if God called you to be a hand, it's awfully hard then to be an eye. I want to see things, you know.

Jesus fitly joins us together. We each have our place. It's important that we each fulfill the place that God has put us in the body, else wise the body isn't functioning fully. The body is crippled because you are not taking and fulfilling that place in the body where the Lord has placed you.

We are fitly joined together *and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part,* Every part working effectually. Every part doing it's part and being strengthened and being directed by the Head, even as our bodies are being directed by the brain. And the brain marvelously directs the functions of the body so that we move and we can walk and we can reach things and we can do so many things because the brain is directing the whole function of the body.

Now if my hand doesn't want to obey the instructions from the brain and I want to pick up an object and my hand is rebelling. It says I don't want to pick that up. So my brain gives instructions to pick up my keys

and my arm and my muscles react to the message from the brain, but my hand says, no way! I don't want to do it, then you see, the function is breaking down because one part of the body isn't functioning in obedience to the head. It's sort of sad. It's wonderful the way the brain does co-ordinate the actions of the muscles and the tendons and so forth, that you can reach out in a smooth, co-ordinated way.

But yet you look at the body of Christ, and it's spastic. It's tragic that there is so much, "I want to do it my way". No, I don't like that. No, I won't do that. And thus Paul is taking about the body being fitly, compacted together. Every joint being supplied according to the effectual working in the measure of every part.

Every part effectually working together that it might *maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love*. So the body is built up in love, but it takes us all working together as Jesus, the head of the body, gives the direction, as He places us in the body, as He gives us the ability and the strength and all to fulfill that part in the body of Christ where He would have me to be.

¹⁷*This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord*, (So Paul is going to go on to another subject now as he, this is all walking worthy. Now he is going to tell us that we are to walk.) *that ye henceforth walk not* (This is a negative, now.) *as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind*, He is talking about the Gentile world. He is saying that they walk in the emptiness of their minds—empty headed. Their lives do not make sense. They are not rational in their decision making. They are walking the emptiness of their minds.

¹⁸*Having the understanding darkened*, Their understanding is darkened, the understanding of God, the understanding of Spiritual things.

And they *being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them*, It's interesting to me how that so many people speak in such a knowing way of God, but yet are totally ignorant of God.

The Gentiles, you are not to walk as they walk, in the emptiness of their minds. Their understanding is darkened. They are alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them *because of the blindness of their heart*: One day Jesus said, if the blind lead the blind, they will both fall in the ditch. But it's amazing how many blind people are leading other blind people.

The New Age movement, how ignorant they are of the truth of God, yet how many people are following the blind leaders of the New Age movement.

Paul goes on to describe them, ¹⁹*Who being past feeling* They don't have natural inhibitions anymore. They have seared their conscience. They do things that the Scriptures prohibit, but they are not embarrassed about it. They talk openly about it, almost boasting about it as they appear on the TV talk shows and so forth and talk about the corrupt, filthy lifestyles. They are sort of being promoted on these TV programs. You know, people are applauding them because of their willingness to break the bonds of decency.

Who being past feelings *have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness*. And of course at the bottom of so much of it, is greed. So all of your pornography, what's the bottom line? Greed. Prostitution, what's the bottom line? Greed. The drug trade, what's the bottom line? Greed. So they are working all uncleanness with greediness.

But Paul said, ²⁰*But ye have not so learned Christ*; It's not what you've been taught. You've not so learned Christ.

²¹*If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus*: Jesus said, I am the way, the truth and the light. Pilate said in a cynical way, what is truth? And today men are asking what is truth? In the college philosophy departments, the big question is what is truth? And they have concluded that truth does not exist. That truth is only relative, but Jesus is truth. You have been taught by Him as the truth is in Jesus.

And what is the truth? ²²*That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man*, We need to put off our former manner of life, the old man, the old nature, the Adamic nature.

We need to put that off, *which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts*; Our old Adamic nature is governed and ruled by our body needs and desires, the body drives. Alexander Maslov has identified some eleven, I think it is, body drives. And the old nature, the old man is controlled by these body drives. That is why Jesus said, the Gentiles are seeking after, what shall we eat? What shall we drink? What shall we wear?

He said after these things the Gentiles are worried. But you, if you will seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, all of these other things will be added to you. In other words, they will fall into place. It isn't that I don't eat, I become an esthetic, but it doesn't master me anymore. It isn't the most important thing in my life any longer. It doesn't mean that I don't have sex. It means that sex doesn't rule over me. It isn't mastering over my life any longer. And I have it within the prescribed Scriptural confines, one woman for one man.

So we put off the old manner of living, the way the Gentiles live, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts. The things that make lust deceitful is that lustful desires promise so much. But they deliver nothing. They promise fulfillment, but they don't produce. It only creates an emptiness. A person who gives himself over to his lusts only finds that the lust grows and he desires more and more and more in order to get the same degree of excitement. But there is never a place of fulfillment. Lust only grows, the deceitful lusts.

So that is the part of the old man, ²³*And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;* That's the new man. Renewed in the spirit of my mind. My mind is not governed or ruled by my desires any longer, but ruled by the Spirit of God.

Paul, talking to the church in Rome, said, I beg you brethren by the mercies of God. Present your bodies unto God as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto Him, which is your reasonable service. It makes sense. And don't be conformed to the world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. So renewed in the spirit of your mind.

²⁴*And that ye put on the new man,* So you put off the old nature, the old man and you put on the new man, *which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.* As we sang tonight, we choose the fear of the Lord, for the fear of the Lord is to hate all evil. We choose the fear of the Lord. The new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

²⁵*Wherefore putting away* (Now we put away the old man. Now he is going to contrast here the old man with the new man.)

Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. Lying is a part of the old nature. Speaking the truth is a part of the new nature. Why are we to speak the truth? Because we are member of one another. You don't want to lie to yourself. And we are members of each other. So we are to speak the truth because we are part of each other.

²⁶*Be ye angry, and sin not:* Or don't let your anger lead you to sin. Now we can become angry, quite easily because we are still in these bodies. We still have our old nature. Our old nature is warring against our new nature. The flesh is lusting against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh. These two are contrary and we don't always do what we would. And so it's easy to get angry, but then immediately bring it under the Spirit. Put that off. Don't let your anger lead you to sin.

And then *let not the sun go down upon your wrath:* Before you go to bed at night, get things settled, especially husband and wife kind of things. Don't go to sleep before you get the issues resolved, there is forgiveness and there is a settling. Don't spend those restless nights saying, oh, I hate him! How could he do that and all? But you know, get the issue settled. Don't let the sun go down on your wrath.

²⁷*Neither give place to the devil.* The moment you give a place for the devil, the moment you give him a beachhead in your life, you can be sure he is going to try to expand that beachhead. Jesus said the prince of this world cometh and he hath nothing in Me, no beachhead. Don't let him have a beachhead in your life. Don't have that little area that you sort of coddle and say, well, you know, I have a right to feel angry. And I have a right to get even. You know, you've got that dirty closet where Satan still lives. And you've allowed him that place. No, no.

Paul goes on to say, ²⁸*Let him that stole steal no more:* That's good, but that's negative, though. If you have been a thief, don't be a thief anymore. If you have stolen, don't steal anymore. That's fine, but Paul goes on to the positive. You know it's the old man who steals, gets by with what he can.

but rather (rather than stealing) *let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.* Rather than taking, work so you will be able to give to those that are in need. I like that! It isn't just a negative. Don't steal anymore. It's positive! Go out and get a job and help

someone who is in need, so that you'll have the gift to those that are in need.

²⁹*Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth*, Be careful of what you say. Let no corrupt or filthy communication come out of your mouth. Be careful of those four letter words. They are totally unbecoming to a child of God. They are totally inappropriate for a child of God.

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but again the positive, rather than the filthy communication coming out of your mouth, the positive side, *but that which is good to the use of edifying*(building up), *that it may minister grace unto the hearers*. You see, the Christian life isn't just a bunch of negatives. It's a bunch of positives. We don't do the negative, but it's not enough just to be a negative. You know, I don't smoke. I don't chew and I don't go with girls that do. Well, you've got to have a positive side. It's not that I just don't steal, but I'm giving. I'm working so that I can give to those that are in need. It's not that I just don't use filthy language, but that my language builds people up. That my language ministers grace to people. It help people. It builds them up. It ministers grace to the hearers.

³⁰*And grieve not the holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption*. Now what grieves the Holy Spirit of God? In verse thirty-one he says ³¹*Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice*: These are the things that grieve the Spirit of God. Bitterness in your heart, if you allow bitterness in your heart, that grieves the Spirit of God. If you allow wrath or anger to control you, that grieves the Spirit of God. If you are clamoring, that grieves the Spirit of God. Evil speaking, grieves the Spirit of God. Malice, grieves the Spirit of God. So grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby you have been sealed unto the day of redemption.

In the first chapter, Paul talks about how that God has sealed us with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest or down-payment of the purchased possession until the redemption of the purchase possession. So God has purchased you. Jesus redeemed you with His blood from the old life, from the sinful life. He bought you. He redeemed you.

Know you not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, which is in you? You are not your own. You have been bought with a price. So having purchased you, He gave or He put on you His seal of ownership, which is the Holy Spirit, which is the earnest or down-payment of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession. You are His purchased possession. One day He is going to claim you. He is going to take you out of this world. He said they are Mine. I purchased them. They belong to me. He is going to claim that which is His and He will redeem His purchased possession, this is He'll take possession of us. So the Holy Spirit is the seal that I belong to God.

And then verse thirty-two. And this sort of just sums up the whole issue. ³²*And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another*, This is the bottom line.

Be kind. Be tenderhearted, not hard-hearted, forgiving one another. To what extent? *even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you*. That's the measure! Even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you.

It's interesting that when Jesus taught on forgiveness, He usually used as an example of contrast of how much God has forgiven us, such a great debt and what little debts we hold against our brother.

The little things that I get upset about, and say I'll never forgive them. Look what they did to me. And they are minor little things. They are such minor little things.

As James said, behold what a great fire such a little matter kindles. And isn't it interesting when you've been in this big, big fight, and you go back. Where did it all start? Well, he said something I didn't like. He said I didn't look good. And that can flare up into a huge fire. A big fight, little things. Be kind, tenderhearted, forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us. That's the new man. Put off the old man, all of the corruption. Put on the new man, which is created in Christ Jesus and allow God's Spirit to work in us as He conforms us into the image of Christ.

As we move into chapter five next week, look over carefully how we are to walk in love and what Paul actually defines as walking in love, both from a negative and a positive standpoint. What it is to walk in love. And then the encouragement to walk circumspectly. Then we get into the family relationships next week, also as we walk in relationships to our husbands and to our wives and to our children. So a lot of valuable teaching in chapter five. Study it over carefully. Read over it. Pray over it. Ask God to just work these things out in

your heart and in your life as we go through the Book of Ephesians.

Father, we thank You for what You have done for us and what You are doing for us. And now, Lord, help us, that we might walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we have been called. Help us Lord, that we would not walk as the world, but Lord, may we be renewed by Your Spirit. And may we walk after the Spirit and the things that build up the body of Christ. Oh Lord, help us that we will be tenderhearted, forgiving one another. We thank You, Lord, that You have forgiven us. Bless us Lord, and help us, Lord, that we might be everything that You would have us to be. Help us to find our place of service in the body. Help us, Lord, to fit into that place where You've called us. Help us to function, Lord, with the power of Your Spirit. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.