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Rick was here yesterday for the men's breakfast and was fine, but for some reason he's not fine this morning. So lift him up in a prayer.

My normal sequence would still be in the Gospel of John. When I heard last night from Rick, I went to the Gospel of John and I'm looking through it, and the Holy Spirit says no.

Okay. Open my eyes. Wednesday we are doing the book of Ephesians, and he said the congregation needs to hear the book of Ephesians chapter 4. So for those who are regulars on Wednesday, a little bit of a reminder and I want to remind them that this isn't Wednesday where it's interactive. So don't raise your hand and try and interject something that I missed or something like that.

One of Paul's recurring messages is unity in the body of Christ. That we are all in this together. And worldly phrases, Patrick Henry, if we do not hang together, we will surely hang separately. United we stand, divided we fall, the team wins or the team loses. And these are all worldly items because we know that we have already won.

We know the end of the book. We know who is victorious in the end, but all of our battles here on Earth still need to be fought, unified in the body of Christ. A little introduction to the book of Ephesians. It is actually written to the city of Laodicea and to Ephesus and the surrounding churches, but because Ephesus is used a little bit more often, hence the name.

Paul's message throughout this book is encouragement. When you look at Paul's other books, First and Second Corinthians, et cetera, Paul is addressing an issue that the church had. In this one it is, Hey guys, you guys are doing great but you need to continually remember what you were before and what you are now.

Remember where you came from. Remember what your life was like when you were a Gentile. And now know what your life is, that you're a Christian. So the book of Ephesians chapter four: *"I therefore the prisoner of the Lord beseech you to walk worthy of the calling, which you were called."* And yes, one or two verses. Explanation. It took us two weeks to get through this on Wednesday night, and the first thing that Paul says, I'm a prisoner. I'm in Rome, but I am not a Roman prisoner. I am not a Jewish prisoner. I am a prisoner of the Lord. God has me here, so don't pity me. I am in God's will and his encouragement to them was I beseech you to walk worthy of the calling, which you were called. Paul is

going into the fact that you are calling, spiritually is the gifts that God has bestowed upon you, whatever that may be.

I'm not a pastor. I do not have a desire, but God gave me the ability to be able to teach. It took me a long time to figure that out, and I thank John Bjorkman for that. But Paul is telling these Ephesians that you need to be worthy of the gift that God has given you. Now, how can you be worthy of a gift. Sharing it with others.

And so he's encouraging everybody. Look at your life, look at what God has given you and share that with other people. And then well, how do you share a gift? Verse two, *“with all lowliness and gentleness, with long suffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, lowliness, gentleness, long suffering, love.”*

When you distribute your gift. Okay? Be gentle with the people that you're working with, okay? Humble yourself. I'm not here because I'm better than you. I'm here because God has given me something to help you out and love, love for one another, love for every member of the body of Christ. And then it says, endeavor to keep the unity, the togetherness that the Holy Spirit has brought upon every Christian body.

Keep that unity, okay, in the bond of peace, the inner peace that we have knowing that our salvation is secure. Ephesians, this is what you need to do. You've been given gifts. This is how you need to use them, and the Holy Spirit is there to help you use them at all times. He continues with the same theory.

Verse four, *“There is one body. And one spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, and Father of all who is above all and through all and in you all”* one, one, one. Continuing that Christianity is one.

And yes, there are churches that say you're sprinkled in baptism. There are churches that say you are dunked in baptism, there are always minor differences, but salvation is through Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ only. By Tuesday morning, I have one lady who hasn't been there for a while, but she is Catholic and we were talking in the book of Acts about baptism and she wanted to know more about baptized.

Well, I was baptized Catholic because that's it. I'm done. I'm saved. And unfortunately I didn't have time and I really regret not taking the time to explain to her the difference of baptism and salvation. Because salvation is only through

accepting Jesus Christ as your Savior. That one baptism is the baptism that you get by the Holy Spirit.

Water baptism is an outward sign for those around you that you know you need a savior and that Jesus Christ is your savior. One hope. One hope only that Christ is, and that hope is a known fact to us. It isn't ... Well, I hope the Cowboys win this week. You don't know. It's my hope ... is set in stone.

My hope is Jesus Christ is my savior. There is no doubt, there is no question who is going to win in the end, and verse six is really, really good. *One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.* If you go back to John 17 he goes back to the unity of God with Jesus. That God is in Jesus, Jesus is in God, and then it goes down to Jesus says "I am in you. I am in the disciples. Therefore, since, I am in you and you are on me. You are in the Father also."

It implies there that God is in all of us through the Holy Spirit. We all have that continually available to us. So he is emphasizing to the people in Ephesus and Laodicea, God is in you. You cannot lose this battle, but you need once again to use the gifts that have been given you to glorify God.

Verse seven. *"But to each one of us, grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore, he says, when he ascended on high, he led captivity captive and gave gifts to men. Now, this, he ascended. What does it mean? But that he also first descended into the lower parts of the earth. He who descended is also the one who ascended far above all the heavens that he might fill all things."*

And you think about seven. Okay. But to each one of us, every one of us, every Christian who has ever accepted Jesus Christ as his savior, what? Grace was given. Okay, grace, how much grace? According to the measure of Christ's gift. Christ's gift to us, the price that he paid to be separated from God and the Holy Spirit for that one instant on the cross.

Before time began and after time has ended, those three were always unified as one, but they sacrificed that for our free gift of salvation. So when you think of the grace that was bestowed upon us all, the level of that grace, Paul is saying here is equal to what Christ did for us.

And one thing in the men's breakfast that came up yesterday was that God will use you as much as you want to be used by God. How much is he willing to use you? The measure of Christ's gift. If you want to give your life for other

Christians, you can't do it for their salvation, but you could do that for their worldly life.

Use your gift with the same concept of what Christ did for us. The more you want to be with God, the more God will be with you, and it's just the blessing. The more you say, God, I'd like another gift. Okay, God, I'd like another gift. Okay? And God will get to the point eventually where, no, let's work on the gifts that I've already given you.

Let's work on the talents. You need to develop the talents, because a lot of times God's answer is not now. You are not ready for that. You can't teach yet because you don't know the Bible well enough. When you know the Bible well enough, I will put you into a teaching situation. But the concept is, God is there to give us all of the spiritual gifts that we can handle.

Ask for them and once you receive them, make sure that you use them in lowliness, gentleness, long suffering. and in love for the unity of the spirit. What does it take to run a church? You need someone to stand up here. You need someone to be back there in the sound booth. You need someone to be there and sing.

These are the obvious things. You need somebody to stand at the door and hand out bulletins and greet you when you come in. Obvious things. There are so many things that never get seen, that always get done. I can attest to that because I grew up as a garbage man. I worked my way through school as a janitor, and these are people you never see until they don't do their job.

And little things like that never get seen except by God.

Think of the simple things. Teaching the class, doing this, those are skills. Oh, I don't have that skill ... but do you have a skill in another location? Just the skill of helps. Can I pick up the signs? Can I come early and do this? And the greatest gift of all, prayer ... pray ... prayer is the gift that everybody has, no matter how young you are or how old you are. That is a gift that is always given and should be used in lowliness, gentleness, long suffering and in love. Because you think of the prayer of the Pharisees, "thank you God, that I am not a sinner like that man right there. I am better than that man right there".

Obviously not lowliness, surely not being gentle and not long suffering, and surely not in love. Then that poor beggar came up there. Forgive me God, for I am a sinner and I need a savior. Humbling himself, knowing where he was and

what he needed. So, once again, prayer is asking for things for yourself, your family, and other people, and prayer is thanksgiving also.

The Pharisees should have been ... “Lord, I thank you that I am not like other people. Help me help other people. Recognizing God you have given me gifts. Help me to use those gifts to glorify you.”

Verse 11 ...

“and he himself gave to some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and some teachers”.

These are gifts that God gives, just some, that he gives to people. I'm definitely not an apostle and I'm not a prophet, I'm not an evangelist. I'm not a pastor, but I am a teacher and this is just a gift that he gives to different people in the church.

And then he says, these are the people that I am putting in an authoritative position in the church. And this is what those people are supposed to do.

Verse 12. They are supposed to do what? *“For the equipping of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”* And I probably spent 10 minutes on one word, equipping.

What does it mean to equip? You're a carpenter, you go to a jobsite. You didn't bring your tools, you don't have your equipment. You're a catcher at a baseball game. You didn't bring your gear. You're not equipped to do your job. And the concept Paul is getting across here is that in verse 11, he put these people in the church to do a job.

That job is to equip the saint. Who are saints? Every person who is saved. The Catholic church has saints. And to be saint, first of all, you have to be dead. Second of all, you have to have been dead for, I believe, 200 years. So no one alive can prove that you weren't a saint. And then people have to pray for you as a saint.

And those prayers have to come true. And then, and then and then

In the Catholic church, that's the definition of a saint, a very, very, very special person. Christianity - a saint is a saved person who has accepted Jesus Christ as their savior. My favorite guy, one of them, Jay Vernon McGee. Two types of people in the world. There are saints and there are aints. You are saved or you are unsaved.

And Paul is saying that these gentlemen in verse 11, their job is to equip the saints, you people sitting there ... to do what? The work of the ministry, edifying of the body of Christ, to use your gifts.

Sometimes in counseling sessions, sometimes in just preaching the word, sometimes in fellowship at the men's breakfast. But I'd really like to think that every time I get a chance to open God's book and share it with anybody, I am equipping them to do God's work.

The seniors on Tuesday morning, they've all been active in their churches, well past that stage. They've all gotten memories of what they did before, things they cannot do anymore. So I always end up with equipping them with prayer. I ask them, pray for my wife during the morning as she's teaching kindergarteners. Pray for whatever, and be a light onto those who are around you.

Because when someone looks at you who isn't saved, you want them to look at you and think, wow, they're different. And wonder what's so special about you. How can you stand there and listen to your boss yell and scream at you when you know you did nothing wrong and just quietly take it? How can you do things like that?

I did it because he needed to scream at somebody and I was standing there. I'm not going to scream back at him. He'll cool down and we'll talk about this. I can do that because God is inside of me telling me, the Holy Spirit is telling me just calm down and relax. He's going to blow off all his steam and then you guys can talk. Whatever the situation, equipping yourself, knowing when you need help.

Once again, we are the body of Christ. We are in this together. We all have a function in the church. Realizing that you are not functioning well in the church. Being able to ask the question, something's wrong with me, I need help. I'm doing something wrong. Or I think I have this talent, but every time I try and use it, it doesn't work.

Always being willing to ask for help, humbling yourself to the fact that I need help. Now I'm looking at some of the guys out here in the audience, and I know that's tough to do. No, that didn't work. Get a bigger hammer. Hit it again. Hit it again. Keep hitting it. Eventually it'll break. Or you'll break. No, just back off.

Holy Spirit, I have a problem in front of me. I don't know what it is. Call another brother. I'm struggling with this. The Ethiopian eunuch. Phillip comes

alongside of him. “What are you reading?” “I’m reading this?” “Well do you understand it?” “How can I understand it unless someone explains it to me.”

I don't understand this. Someone explain it to me. If you're unclear on something that's in the Bible, that's why we are here - to equip you with the knowledge. Philip equipped that Ethiopian eunuch to go back to Ethiopia and preach the gospel. Equipping him. So yeah, that's my buzzword for a while anyway.

But equipping others in your household, in your family, in the church, or wherever, bestowing biblical knowledge, sharing biblical things, equipping them for the battle that they are going to face every day.

Verse 13, how long are you supposed to do this? “Till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the son of God to the perfect man and to the measure of the stature, of the fullness of Christ.” Back to singular once again, the knowledge, the measure of the stature, the faith.

Paul is saying once again, we will continue to do this until everyone is grounded in Jesus Christ as savior. Everyone is grounded humbly that I'm no better than anybody else. I just have a different talent. I'm looking at people out there that I know can do things that I can't, both spiritually and worldly. I know people, when I've got a problem that I can go to them to say, I need help with this. Sure, let's do it. Let's take care of that.

Twelve years ago, I had the pleasure of teaching the 11, 12, and 13 year olds. It was truly a pleasure and I learned as much from them as I taught them. In how to humble myself, how to be with them and just try and be a part of their life.

Wednesdays. I really love Wednesdays because Wednesdays are interactive. I'm the mediator, not really the teacher, and I get more from Mike, James, Roger, Jonathan, Lisa, Kate, Kacie and Angela. I get as much back as I'm given, so, when does this end? When you die.

As long as you are on earth Paul is saying you guys have this that you are supposed to be doing so that when you go to heaven, what do you get to hear? Well done, good and faithful servant. Never worry about the gifts and never want gifts that are going to be beyond your reach. Never hold someone higher because they have a greater gift than you.

God grades us on how we use the gifts that he has given us, and that you do use the gifts that he has given us. Could you go back to the parable of the talents?

One guy got 10 talents. He used those 10 talents, so he was given a hundred talents after that. One guy was given five talents. He was given 500 talents, something like that, because he used every talent that he was given to glorify God.

One guy was only given one talent. He folded it in a cloth, buried it in the ground, never used it. If you only have one talent, and if that one talent is only prayer, use it to its maximum.

Don't think that you have to be Billy Graham. Chuck Smith. Tozer, take your pick. Write a book like Bunyon wrote, but just use the gifts that God has given you bestowed upon you to glorify him, and you will hear well done, good and faithful servant because you really don't want to stand before God, and ... I gave you 10 talents and you used five of them. Just use them.

Okay, now this is what we should be doing. This is what they are doing now. And then he goes back down to, okay, this is where you were before, verse 14 ... “that we should no longer be children tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting.”

What were they before? Just like children. No spiritual knowledge of God. Nothing like that. Then they were tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine. Every time someone came in and says, okay, I've got something new. I've got these idols that are eight inches tall now, and they're all hand carved. You must have one.

Oh, wow. Great. I'll buy one. Next guy comes in, oh, I have wood carvings, but they're silver plated. Okay, well I must have one of those. Whatever wind is blowing in right now. You can take this another way too. A lot of churches – we're having a special series. Our special series is God in movies, and they're picking worldly movies and showing how God is in those movies. Teach the Bible.

Next month. Okay? This is God in TV commercials, whatever it may be. The doctrine changes in the world from week to week, whatever is the most popular thing at this time. That's all that they are doing.

The trickery of men! Men, oh yeah, especially people standing behind these things. What do they want? Some, to present the word of God. Some, to be worshiped. I am better than you, you know that, because I'm up here. I am better

than you because you guys give me your money. I am better than you because when this is over I just walk away. I have no more problems.

You guys' problem. I don't worry about your problems. Trickery of men.

Cunning, craftiness and deceitful plotting. They're there to rob you. And the thing is, if they rob you of your money and you lose a couple bucks, but what else are they robbing you of? Your relationship with God. Anything, no matter who is telling you this, if it takes you away from Jesus Christ as your savior, Jesus Christ, the only way to be saved, you as a Christian need to use your talents to glorify God.

Anything that takes you away from those type of items is deceitful plotting. Christ kept telling the Pharisees that you are not only not going to make it into heaven, you are keeping people out of heaven. The first time someone says you can get to heaven through Jesus Christ and ... walk away. Christ paid the price. Your salvation is set in stone, guaranteed by God and Christ. There is no "and".

Stay away from anybody who even remotely implies that you need to add anything to Christ's payment for our salvation. Because when you do that, you diminish that gift that you've received of Jesus Christ as your savior. Jesus Christ, "and" ... doesn't exist.

It's Jesus Christ, only.

Verse 15. This is what you should be doing again, *"but speaking the truth in love may grow up in all things in him who is the head, Christ, from whom the whole body joined and knitted together by what every joint supplies and according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love."*

Now we're back to unity, togetherness, and in, verse 16, the whole body. Joined and knitted together because once again, it's a living body of Christ and we're all weird shapes, but God modifies all of our weird shapes together to make the body of Christ, to make the church, the whole body, joined and knitted together.

By what every joint supplies. Every joint, every part supplies something for the body of Christ. And you may have a Billy Graham who's a big chunk, you know, a Chuck Smith who's a big chunk and you may have some 95 year old woman who's a chunk, but she's praying. That is as much a part of the body as any other part of the body.

And when God looks at her and that little chunk, he sees the one poor woman who put the mite in. And Jesus gave more respect to that mite that she put in there than all of the money put in by the Pharisees. It's what you are given and how you use it, not how much you are given at all, and it keeps going "according to the effective working by which every part does its share." No matter what that part may be. Calling someone. How you doing today? Can I pray for you? Let's pray for a little bit. Whatever it may be. Whatever the part is. Every part does its share and causes growth of the body. As every part does its share and more people come in, the body gets bigger.

The body of Christ grows, and for what reason does it grow? The edifying of itself in love, the glorifying of the body of Christ as it grows in the love that every part of the body has. And I'll be honest with you. People are probably about the most difficult thing to actually love. It's tough sometimes, and it's just, you need to see people as God sees people, and a lot of times it's just take a step back, don't get into an argument, don't push his buttons because you can, but just gentleness, lowliness, long suffering, patience, and love. It's tough. It's tough in the workplace. It can be tough in a household and just, but it causes growth of the body of Christ for the edifying of itself in love.

I keep looking at that clock and eh, it's accurate. Okay. I got plenty of time then because this is where I had to stop and we barely made it to this halfway point, and it's just from verse 17 to the end we go back to the before and after situation, and what Paul is doing once again is, Hey guys, this is where you were before. This is where you are now. Think of the difference and those who have truly made the transition to Christianity could look back on their lives and say, whew, I was that bad. Wow. I cannot believe the things that I did and said and how I acted. And you need to remember those things. You need to remember where you came from, but most of all, you need to remember where you are now and how you got there, because repentance is what? It's turning away from something, but turning to something else.

You can repent from a sin that you have. Listening to heavy metal music. I have this sin in my life. I'm going to turn away from heavy metal music. I'm not going to listen to it anymore. I'm going to listen to rap. Okay. So you turn to something that isn't any better than what you were at before.

Okay, well, I'm through with rap. So worldly, so I'm going to turn to country western, and all you're doing is just going from one bad thing to another bad thing to another bad thing, and you're just going around in a circle because you're not really turning to anything better. We turn from a sinful life, living in our sin, to a saved life.

Still sinners, without a doubt, but we turn from the sinful life. The only unforgivable sin that can be committed is not accepting the free gift of salvation, whatever type of sinner you are. A gossip. Now people think big deal a gossip. That's not really a major sin. So if I gossip, it's no big deal. If you live in that sin of gossip, you can do more damage than a thief.

You go into a church. Okay, well, I really saw the pastor, he was going through a supermarket and he was walking through the wine aisle, so I think he's got a drinking problem. Wow. Pastor's got a drinking problem? Wow, I didn't know that. Oh wow. Gee. Gossip ... tears people apart. Breaks up churches. Breaks up marriages. Gossip.

Is it worse than murder? Not in God's eyes. Oh, I forgot. God grades on a curve. So as long as you only break the minor sins, you're okay. Just stay away from the major ones. Don't kill anybody, and don't steal too much money and don't corrupt your kids or your neighbors, or anything else like that.

No, God has two standards, Christ and us, and the only way to make it to heaven is to have Christ as our savior. So when we stand before God, our sins never existed. It isn't like they were just washed and they're clean over here now. No, they never existed.

So here we go. Verse 17. *“This. I say therefore, and testify in the Lord that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk in the futility of their mind.”*

Paul's saying, Hey, listen guys, okay. I'm telling you, I'm testifying to this. I'm testifying this based on all of the information that you have. Don't go back to walking like the rest of the Gentiles did. Why? The futility of their own mind. How corrupt and easygoing can we be in our own minds?

Well, that's okay, he did that so I can do it too. It's all right, God won't look, it's all right to steal small things. So Paul said, don't go back to where you were. It doesn't work. Futility, you're trusting your own smarts? You're not the smartest person walking around in the world, let alone God's level of smartness. Your mind is nothing. Think about it.

Verse 18, *“having their understandings darkened, being alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart. Who, being past feelings have given themselves over to lewdness to work all cleanliness and greediness.”*

This is 2000 years ago. Does anybody in this room think we're any better off now or are we just worse off? Paul's saying this is where you guys came from, your understanding is darkness. You're alienated from the life. These guys are alienated from God because the ignorance in them, the blindness of their heart, having themselves over to lewdness and work uncleanness with greediness.

So they're not only unclean, they're greedy for being unclean. Paul's painting a picture. This is where you were, this is the life that you came out of. You look at your neighbor who's unsaved, you look at his life and what do you see? I see 17 through 19, this is where you were. Okay. Verse 20. Let's see what we have now.

“But you have not so learned Christ if indeed you have heard him and have been taught by him as the truth is in Jesus, but you have not so learned Christ.” You have learned through Christ the difference of what happens. Okay? Have been taught by him the standards of Jesus Christ as the truth is in Jesus Christ.

And what is the truth? I am the way. I am the salvation. I am the inner peace that is available to all of you. Paul is telling these gentlemen, this is what you have learned through Jesus Christ, through what I have taught you about who Jesus Christ is. What Jesus Christ did, why Jesus Christ did it. So think about what's going on, guys. Come on.

Verse 22... *“that you put off concerning your former conduct. The old man, which grows corrupt according to deceitful lusts.”*

Put off the old man, not old, but where you were before. Put it off. You got rid of it. It doesn't exist anymore. And what does the old man do? The old man corrupts according to deceitful lust. You took that old man out of you, which all it did was corrupted you according to deceitful lusts. You shed that old man.

And once again, as I said, when you repent, you turn from something to something better. So what Paul is saying here, you guys have turned away from that old man because you saw that old man was not good for you. And what did they turn to?

Verse 23 ... *“and be rewarded in the spirit of your mind that you may put on the new man, which was created according to God in true righteousness and holiness.”*

Now, that's repentance, right there. Summed up, old man, corrupt, lustful, deceitful. New man. New man is what? According to God, in true righteousness

and holiness, that is repentance. Not turning from something that's bad, to something that's bad, to something that's bad, but turning away that old man, turning your back on the world to the new man. To the new person that has been generated in you by accepting Jesus Christ as your savior, by allowing the Holy Spirit to come upon you and help you with every problem.

Now, I pointed out at some time in my past we all have worldly parents and our worldly parents, truly in their own minds, never in our own minds, want the best for us. Don't touch that. Don't go here, don't do that, and things like that. But they are worldly parents and they make mistakes.

But when you have the Holy Spirit as your spiritual parent, the Holy Spirit is God. Okay? Has God ever made a mistake? Not that anybody has ever found out and or ever will. So worldly, you listen to people, you have the potential to get into trouble or do the right thing. Listening to the Holy Spirit, you do the right thing.

It may not seem like the right thing to you. It may be the more difficult path. But if the Holy Spirit, as God tells you to take that path that is all uphill, it's for a reason because he, the Holy Spirit, he is God. And God will never give us bad advice. So listen to the Holy Spirit, and that is what Paul is saying.

You now have the Holy Spirit inside of you, to guide you and take care of you.

Then he continues with, gee, what were you guys before? Verse 25...

“Therefore put away lying. Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor for we are all members of one another.” Before, lying was easy, it really was. The only problem with lying is you have to remember every lie you've ever told because you will get caught eventually and have to back your way out of it.

Politicians do it all the time and no one pays any attention to them because we know they're all liars. But Paul is saying here, put away lying, there's no need to. You can tell a person the truth. If you do it in the right way. Oh, how would that be? Lowliness, gentleness, long suffering, and in love. Once again, the person has to be willing to accept what you're saying to them.

A lot of people will, and a lot of people won't. A lot of people never want to hear that they've ever done anything wrong in their life or that they're doing something wrong now because they are happy living in the world. Our job is to tell them the truth. If they'll listen, they'll listen. If they won't, they won't.

But you can't go with the club. It won't work. You can't go yelling and screaming at them. It won't work. You have to be willing to tell them the same thing a thousand times and be long suffering to finally get through to them. But Paul is saying, put away lying. Tell them the truth. We are all members in one another.

We are all united in the body of Christ. We are one.

Verse 26: *“Be angry and do not sin. Do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil.”* Now when it says, be angry and do not sin, be angry at sin. Be upset when you see yourself doing sin. Be angry with the sin and do not let the sun go down on your wrath.

If you have a situation in which you are going head to head with another person, try and resolve it. Do the best you can. Don't go to sleep on it. It will just fester overnight, and it will be more difficult. A lot of times just back off to say, we'll talk again in 10 minutes. I need to take a little walk, cool down and then we'll talk again. Because what will it do? Give place to the devil.

If I'm angry with a person, the devil's going to, oh, well, okay. I've got him. He's mad. And when he's mad half of his brain shuts off and I can affect the other half. I can say, well, you got a reason to be mad at that guy. He really wrongs you. He shouldn't have done anything like that.

You need to go in tomorrow and just, put the coals to that guy. That's what the devil will do. If you're mad, do your best to resolve it. A lot of times you can't. I want to talk, click, I want to talk, click and then all you can do is pray about it. You need to go to bed at peace with that situation because the devil will come in the middle of the night and he will work on you.

Verse 28 . . . *“Let him who stole, steal no more, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good that he may have something to give him who has need.”* Repenting, a thief, a thief steals, takes things away from you that don't belong to him. That type of persons needs to repent from thievery, make things that people need, help people.

Simple thing, you got a neighbor who can't take care of their garden or their yard. You mow it, you edge it, you do stuff like that. Give back positively in any situation. Remember, because it's easy to think my sins are forgiven. Okay, well, so today, going forward, I'm okay, but I was 53 I think when I was saved, so I had probably 50 years of consciously sinning to cover for.

I mean that 50 years alone is off the scale bad, let alone the sins I'm still committing and will continue to commit until my last breath. And once again, it goes back down to, we need to look at the grace of Christ's gift to us when we look at the things that we can do for other people because we can never measure up to that gift that Christ gave us.

No matter how rich a person is, most likely that money, there was a lot of sin involved in getting it, and they make repentance for that sin by having a building built with their name on it, by having a wing of a school built for them. They think that they can buy forgiveness for their sins. You can't, except through Jesus Christ as your savior.

So Paul is saying if you had a sin that caused other people grievances, atone for it in any way that you can. We know when we have a disagreement with another brother or sister, the first thing we do is go to God and say I wronged that person, I said those things, I shouldn't have said those things. I apologize to you.

And God says, okay, thank you. Now do what you need to do. Go to that person and apologize to them. Okay, how do you do that? Lowliness, gentleness, long suffering, and in love. I wronged you. I should not have said those things. I was out of line. Forgive me. You sin, you go back and try and make it right.

Here, the guy's a thief, makes something that you can give to people.

Verse 29: *"let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth for what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearer."* Something that I've had a lot of trouble learning, but I'm now in tune to it. It is not what I say. It's what you hear.

Because in many situations I knew exactly what I said and what they heard was different. May have been only one word, but what they heard was different. So it's always an advantage to make sure that, okay, are we on the same page? Because it's a necessary edification that it may impart grace on the hearer.

Make sure that your words are understood. Make sure that you're on the same page because it's no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth. Don't start out on the wrong foot, don't go to someone and start feeding them corruptness in the way of, you did that wrong. Go back to, okay, lowliness, gentleness, long suffering, and in love.

This is the way your conversation should be with worldly people, and especially with other Christians. Not corrupt, not evil, not mean, not backstabbing.

Another problem that I didn't have, but I did suffer it because I lived with someone who did was "I was just joking." It's only a joke if both people agree that it is a joke, otherwise it is painful and corrupt.

That was my granddaughter who lived with us for a while. She always had that. "Well, I was only kidding." You can't take that stuff back. So be careful what you say to other people and you are going to make mistakes, guaranteed. When you know you've made a mistake, I'm sorry, that wasn't my intention. I wasn't going there.

One of the things I learned for 26 years, my job in California, there were only about five people in 26 years I would take a verbal from. Everybody else that I dealt with, "You write it down. You want me to do something? You write it down. Well, I'm telling you, No, you write it down." Those other five people, I could trust them implicitly, and if they made a mistake with it, they told me, they would stand up and admit it, that it was their fault that I did something wrong.

The people I did not trust I made them put it down on a piece of paper and a lot of them would just walk out of the building. Well, if I have to write it down, I may as well do it myself. Good. You do it. And they'd do it wrong. They wanted me to do it wrong. That's why, no. So if you have a problem, write it down here.

This is what I want you to do. One, two, and three. Here's a piece of paper. Can you do that? Yes. Thank you. Goodbye. Well, I didn't understand. I gave you a piece of paper. It had one, two, and three on it. You said you understood it, but make sure you're always on the same page. It will save a lot of problems.

A very important one. "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption." So I stopped there, and then Angela, I think, read that. And then I asked, well, what grieves the Holy Spirit? And Mike said, well, just read verses 31 and 32. Okay, things that grieve the Holy Spirit, bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, evil speaking, put away from you with all malice.

Verse 31 are the things that grieve the Holy Spirit. When you do non-spiritual things. The Holy Spirit is an entity, He is a he. You can grieve him by doing the things that he has asked you not to do. Be honest with other people. Be understanding, be faithful, be kind, do these types of things.

Put away from you evil speaking with all malice. I really like at the end of it, “by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.” Like I said earlier, our salvation is guaranteed. Christ said our salvation has been sealed by the Holy Spirit. Christ said our salvation is guaranteed by God the Father, Christ our Savior, and the Holy Spirit. Sealed by the Holy Spirit's presence within us.

Guaranteed, no problems whatsoever. And then he finishes it off with how should we be walking.

Verse 32: “ and be kind to one another tender hearted, forgiving one another.” How much do we need to forgive one another? Even as God in Christ forgave us. Can you ever forgive anybody for anything that would compare to Christ's forgiveness of our sins for our whole life that would even remotely come to that level?

No, so Paul is just saying, be kind to one another. Tenderhearted, forgiving one another. And when you think about forgiving someone's sin, is that sin any worse than I've had a sin in my life. You're struggling with that sin. I can see that. Okay, well let's do something about you struggling with that sin. Let's pray about it.

Next time you're in a situation where you want to perform that sin, give me a call and we'll talk about it. I'm not saying I'm better than you. There's sins in my life, that I battle with every day. But if you've got a problem with the sin and you need help with that sin, go to a brother.

He does not even need to know what that sin is. I need to pray. I'm struggling right now. Pray for me, that the sin that is before me ... I'm going in to see my boss. He doesn't need to know that I'm going to tell him off because I'm smarter than him. My ego is great. I need to tell him this.

So just pray for me that I'll humbly walk in there. I'll listen to what he has to say, and we can have an intelligent decision. It's a sin. Be with one another, forgiving one another when you're sinned against. Forgive them. Tell them. Yeah, that's fine. You know what you did was wrong, I truly forgive you. I understand what was going on and I forgive you. And it's just that type of thing.

Anyway, the book of Ephesians is tremendous and we'll be in chapter five on Wednesday, but just continue to think about the before and after. If you truly have the Holy Spirit in you, if you truly have accepted Jesus Christ as your savior, if you've truly repented from sin and turned from it, think of what you were before and what you are now.

Think of what the world tried to give you. Every week the world gives you a new beer to drink. Every week the world gives you a new car to buy, a new house to buy, new clothes to wear, whatever, the world is constantly changing. Our salvation never changes.

That is my sermon for today. And now I will put on my Bulletin hat. First of all the afterglow meal is next Sunday. Mrs. Ackerman, who's in the back, has the blessing to be in charge of it. If you would like to participate in supplying or seeing what can be brought or what is needed, please see Karen after today.

The Women's Bible study "Living Hope Through First Peter" is Saturday, February 4th at 9:30 AM. A light breakfast will be served.

Wednesday service, 7 o'clock, continuing our journey through the book of Ephesians.

I will close in prayer. Dearest Lord, Father God, we thank you for your book, we thank you for the inspiration from the Bible, Lord.

We thank you that we can fellowship, come together and understand the message that you have for us, and we do ask that you open our minds and open our hearts this week to being Christ-like, to being humble, to being gentle, to being long suffering, and to being in love with those around us. Help us in our prayer life to continue to thank you for everything that you do for us.

Know that those things come from you, how much you love us, and the value that the Holy Spirit is in our walk, here in our pilgrimage on Earth. And in the name of our Savior, the Christ Jesus, we say Amen. Have a blessed week.