

Teachings From Ephesians 4

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[0 : 00] Well, good morning and greetings to each one. It's a blessing to be here. We're gathered in Jesus' name, amen, because we love Him.

I appreciate what you shared there, Timothy. It was a blessing to hear you share that, especially on your birthday.

But what a blessing to have young men that are concerned about our time and how we spend our time. Such a blessing.

And, yeah, might come back to that a little bit more later. So, most of you know I've been looking at the book of Ephesians lately and I'd like to just continue with that.

I do want to say welcome to the visitors and welcome to those of you that were gone to Alaska for a while. Hope you had a blessed time.

[0 : 59] Glad you're back. Safely, we pray that you'd be safe. God answered that prayer. So, amen. So, Ephesians chapter 4, we're mostly going to be there, I believe, this morning.

Looking at that and I know we started and came through the other three chapters already. And I might have skipped and preached something else in between, I don't remember.

But it seems like quite a while since we were in Ephesians. But I'd like to go through the whole book. There's just several more chapters. And it's such a blessing to see what the Apostle Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus.

And what we can today, what we can glean from that, those writings. And how we can apply that to our lives today. It's as if it was written for us.

Right? I know it says Ephesians, but it could be Plains, Montana. It could be Crossbridge Church. And it would, I think all of it applies to us today.

[2 : 11] So we'll just start by reading in chapter 4, verse 1. Therefore the prisoner, I therefore, Paul says, I therefore the prisoner of the Lord beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.

With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love. Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism.

And I think what we've been doing is just, you know, we'll read some verses like this and then stop and talk about them a little bit. Preach from them, whatever.

So on these first six verses, one more here. It says, So we'll stop with these six verses for a bit.

[3 : 25] And I especially want to start there in verse 2 where it says, You know, we as a church can use these kind of verses, can't we?

Not only that, as individuals, like in my life, in your life, Jeffrey, right? We can use these verses and say, oh, that's the Lord speaking to us.

Because He is. If we believe the Word of God is true and is for us today. So what does it mean with all lowliness? We know what lowliness would mean.

Another word would probably be humility, being humble. And meekness, they kind of go together. What's meekness mean?

You know, Moses was one of the meekest men that ever lived. And yet he was a leader of millions. How's that work? Meekness, I believe, if I understand correctly, it simply means...

[4 : 43] Now the word left me. Somebody want to explain the word meekness? Gentleness. How about strength is what I was thinking.

But gentle strength, right? It's controlled strength. It's under control. It's with lowliness that we have strength.

Somebody that just has strength without any humility. They're not so fun to be around. Right? It's just all this boisterous strength.

But if there's strength with humility. I believe that's what Moses had. And look at how God could use that. He can use that today. How about long-suffering?

Long-suffering would be like patient and willing to endure for a while. You know. Not quickly writing somebody off or being upset.

[5 : 48] The next word is forbearing one another in love. What's forbearing? Is that kind of like putting up with each other?

I need that. I need you to put up with me. You know. Not to say that. Not as an excuse to not change. But forbearing one another in love.

Being willing to maybe overlook the small things. The mistakes that we make. And maybe our personality that we just don't like as much. And you know.

There's some personalities that we really connect with. And then there's another one that's a little harder to. But having love. As Christians we have love that overrides that.

And it forbears. And then verse 3. Enduring to keep the unity of the spirit. Now that is one that I think we need to fight for. And that is that we keep the unity of the spirit.

[6 : 50] In the bond of peace. Not just unity of man. Or you know. We could. Men have come up with all kinds of plans.

And organizations. And ideas if you will. And then they want to unify about that. Let's come up with. You know. You think about the political world.

They want to be unified as a party. So they have more power. Right? They know that if they're divided. They can't stand. A house divided against itself can't stand.

Jesus said. And so there's. People will unify around anything. Even evil. They can unify around evil.

But here it says. Endeavoring. That's an amazing word. Endeavoring. Endeavoring. Striving. And fighting for. To keep the unity of the spirit.

[7 : 48] And that's about the spiritual things. The spirit of Christ. In the bond of peace. Fighting for peace. I don't know if that goes together. Fighting in peace.

But you know what I'm saying is. Is doing battle for peace. Spiritual battle. And being committed. To having peace. As much as possible.

Especially. We're talking about the church. About the body of Christ. Christ. The next verse. And by the way.

All you have to do. To not have unity. To not have peace. Is just not fight. Is just not do anything.

Just not caring. That's all you really have to do. It's not like you have to do a whole lot otherwise. It's just not caring about these things. Not worrying about whether we're.

[8 : 47] Have lowliness. Or meekness. Or long suffering. Or forbearance. Just not having it. Will destroy the unity of the spirit. Sometimes we think we have to do great.

Horrible things. But no. It's just. Just not walking in where God calls us to walk. That's all it takes. Then it says in verse 4.

There is one body and one spirit. Even as ye are called in one hope. Of your calling. I just love how Paul brings out. This one thing.

This oneness. Just one. One body. One spirit. Verse 5. One Lord. One faith. And one baptism. And then verse 6.

One God. And Father of all. Who is above all and through all and in you all. You know. One Lord. One faith.

[9 : 49] And one baptism. Last Sunday. Brother James preached a message about. The one true God. And how making. God.

God. A different God. God. In our imagination. How that we can imagine God to be something that he's not. And how that that is idolatry.

It will lead to idolatry. Having a God in our mind that is not real. It's not the true God. And here we're reading in Ephesians about the one true God. A question.

A question. I have some questions written down. Is the church of Jesus Christ today still just one body? Or did something change?

Paul says one body. So how is this? One body. I say yes.

[10 : 47] Word of God hasn't changed. Unless the Bible changes. Still just one body. When Jesus comes back. He's coming for his body. And we better be part of it.

Amen. And we can be. We can be. It is not many bodies. But one. Yes. There are small local parts of that body.

I believe in a local body. Where we come together regularly. We worship together. We know each other. We work with each other. We are friends. We're close.

We're a local body. But we're not the whole body. Right? There's more than this going to heaven. I believe there are millions of redeemed.

Yes. Ultimately the Bible teaches that there's one body. And one spirit. We know there's many spirits. But one spirit.

[11 : 55] It doesn't contradict. But there's many false spirits. Many evil spirits if you will. But we're talking about the spirit that is from God.

God's spirit. The Holy Spirit. How do we see this? You know not everyone that goes to church. Or is a part of a church body. A local body.

Is part. Unfortunately. Of the kingdom of God. Or the body that we're talking about. If you think that. Well if I just get near to other Christians.

And I hang out with them. And I can maybe even kind of slide in with them. And sit on their pews. That somehow. When Jesus comes back. I'm going to go with them.

Because I'm with them here. That's not how it works. We know that. But do we? Do we know that? Just yesterday. I think it was. My wife was talking to a lady for quite a while.

[12 : 57] And I was listening. And she said something about. What she loves about this area. Is there's so many Christians. And that if. You know.

Judgment's coming to America. There will be less judgment here. Because of all the Christians that are around me. And I thought. Wow. That's interesting. I never thought of that.

You know. Maybe there's. There's an element of truth. I get what she was saying. But then I thought. But if you're not born of the spirit. If you're not born again.

The real judgment. Is. Just being with Christians. Isn't going to help. There's going to be a great separation on that day. Of those that are redeemed by the blood of the lamb.

And those that are not. And it doesn't matter who you're hanging out with. As far as. Trying to make yourself better. I mean. I would still recommend that you hang around with Christians.

[13 : 58] You know. I would still say. Yes. Go to church. You know. Maybe God will save you there. I'm not saying don't. But. You know where I'm going with this. The blood of the lamb is what redeems us.

Not even our tears like that one song. Not even my remorse. For my old life will save me. It's a stepping stone. It's. It's part of.

Getting to that place of salvation. But it's faith alone. It's faith alone. In the shed blood of Jesus. That will save us. Those that are redeemed by the blood of the lamb.

Those that have put their trust. And all their faith and belief in that blood. That is the only thing that will save you this morning. That judgment wouldn't be so severe in this area.

Because there's Christians around me. Only faith. But it talks about here in verse 5. About one faith.

[15 : 03] One baptism. Well aren't there many faiths? Aren't there many different faiths? I grew up thinking there were. I was of a particular faith.

And those people over there. They're of a different faith. And you know so on. Here it says one faith. I remember. Really. Looking at this verse years ago. And.

One Lord. One faith. One baptism. What does that mean? And what is Paul saying? I believe he is just making it real simple.

There's only one true Lord. Right? There's many. So called lords. Gods. Always have been. But Paul is saying there's only one real.

There's only one true one. There's only one true faith. And when that faith. Has nothing to do with the blood of Jesus. It's not the true one.

[16 : 00] When that. What people call faith. Does not believe that Jesus came in the flesh. God becoming man. That's not the true faith. Any spirit that says otherwise is not of God.

The Bible says. So there's only one true faith. What about baptism? There's only one true baptism. That baptism that's based on that faith. Believing.

In the Lord Jesus Christ. The. The. Philip said to the eunuch. That. When the eunuch wanted to be baptized. And that's after Philip explained the gospel.

And the lamb. And. There in Isaiah. When Philip explained that. He wanted to be baptized. Right away. What hinders me? There's water.

And what did Philip say? He said. If you believe with all your heart. Thou mayest. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. And he said he believes. So we know what that is.

[17 : 03] Right. Brings a smile to your face. You believe. You believe with all your heart. That's the true baptism. Let's go on to verse 7.

But unto every one of us. Is given grace. According to the measure of the gift of Christ. Now he's talking about. Okay. Let's say we have this faith.

We have this belief. We. Have this trust in Jesus. What does God want to do with it? He wants to give us grace. He wants to grace us with gifts.

Spiritual gifts. Verse 8. Wherefore he saith. When he ascended up on high. He led captivity captive. And gave gifts unto men. Now that he ascended.

What is it? But that he also descended. First into the lower parts of the earth. Jesus came down to the earth. He that descended.

[18 : 07] Is the same also that ascended. Up far above all heavens. That he might fill all things. We know that Jesus. Today is up far above the heavens.

He's on the right hand of the Father. In heaven. And he gave some. These are the gifts. Apostles. And some prophets.

And some evangelists. Evangelists. And some pastors and teachers. Why did he do this? He didn't just do it to. Give gifts to make something out of you.

But here's why. For the perfecting of the saints. For the work of the ministry. For the edifying of the body of Christ. For his bride. He did these gifts.

Gave gifts to men. To edify the body. His body. That he owns. That he purchased. He wants to edify. And build it up. And I believe this morning.

[19 : 08] That we are to exercise. Or use those gifts. That he gives us. Are we willing.

To allow God to use us. You know. Not in our own. Fleshly. Talents.

If you will. You know. Some of you are. Actually. Probably most of you. Are a better carpenter. Than I am. I know how things are supposed to look.

But I don't know how to do everything. And how to. But you're. Some of you have. Natural gifts. You've learned things. And you just have a natural gift. And there's some of you that. Can cook better than others.

And so on. And. Some of you like to clean. Others don't like to clean. Some like to. You know. Whatever. But those are natural gifts. And I believe those are also of God.

[20 : 03] But. We're talking about spiritual gifts here. To edify. And sometimes we get them confused. I know.

Years ago. There was a young pastor. In a church I went to. And. He cried to me one day. As a young man.

And I was younger than him. But. We were good friends. And he cried. And he said. You know. I think I've been put in this position. Because of my natural gift. Not because of my spiritual gift.

And it caused a real burden. For him to lead in the church. You know. He had some great natural gifts. But. He felt as though.

Spiritually. He wasn't at that place. And. And that. Sometimes we get them confused. But. Paul here is talking about.

[21 : 00] Spiritual gifts in the church. And are we willing to be vessels? Are we willing to. Edify the body? Can God use us?

Are we vessels of honor. That will strengthen the body of Christ. For his glory. And why is this? Again. Look at the next verse. Till we all come.

In the unity of the faith. And of the knowledge. Of the Son of God. Unto a perfect man. Unto the measure. Of the stature. Of the fullness. Of Christ.

Christ. You know. It's so that we learn Christ. More and more. As we grow spiritually. You know. And I appreciate you young men. Coming up.

And just speaking the word of God to us. And. And. Allowing God to use you in those ways. And allow. Him to develop gifts in us. Verse 14.

[22 : 00] Keep going. This is kind of a long. It just kind of keeps going from one thing to the next. But it's all. Connected. Speaking of the church.

That we would. Know Christ. The fullness of Christ. Then in verse 14. That we henceforth be no more children. Tossed to and fro. And carried about with every wind of doctrine.

By the slate of men. And cunning craftiness. Whereby they lie and wait to deceive. They just want to deceive. Those spirits want to deceive us.

But speaking the truth in love. May grow up in him. In all things. Which is the head. Even Christ. I believe here is.

Just. A continuation of the reason. To allow the spiritual gifts. To work in the church. To edify. And to strengthen our faith.

[22 : 59] We're not talking about just. Anything. And just. You know. I realize that sometimes. Any of us can be immature.

And. And. Or maybe we're just not ready. Maybe we have burdens. But. God doesn't have us at a place yet. To. Maybe fulfill that purpose. And some of those things take time.

But. But seeking after. Being open. And saying. God. If you can use me. I just want to be a vessel for you. Maybe. I can just encourage somebody.

And it's not just men. It's ladies as well. Maybe I can encourage somebody. Or strength. Be a strength to somebody. That's. Struggling. And. And.

Or. What about praying? What about just praying? How much do we pray? God use us. In the spirit realm. To fight.

[23 : 54] To do battle. The things that we were talking about. And to pray. Maybe. Nobody knows. But. You're praying a lot. God knows.

God wants to use that. In the church. I believe that. With all my heart. That may be the place of the most. Significance to God. God. Allow God.

To use us. We all have something. That we can bring to the body. That will strengthen the body. I believe that. Every believer.

Even just the fact that Jesus is in you. Is a strength. And a. Powerful. Influence in the church. Knowing Jesus.

Knowing the word. What are you bringing. To the body.

[24 : 56] Here's a question. What if. What if. Everybody. Would bring as much. To the church. As you do. What if everybody brought.

Just. The same amount. To the church. As you do. Or as I do. Would the body be edified. That. It's a provoking thought. Isn't it.

Is it safe. To be just like you. Would that. Be a church. Is it safe. One time. I preached a message. Years ago.

About. Following. Or. Being an example. And. The question. I asked was. Is it safe. To follow you. Is it safe.

For younger ones. Than you. To follow your steps. This is not. To bring. Condemnation. Just a.

[25 : 54] Nice challenge. That. God. Wants. To use us. I really believe that. To bring life. To bring. Edification.

To the body. In whatever form. That he can. Let's allow him. To use us. Especially those. That are. You know.

Older. And born again. And know Jesus. As their savior. Verse 16. From whom. The whole body. Fitly joined together. And compacted.

By that. Which every joint. Supplier. According to the effectual. Working. In the measure. Of every part. Maketh increase.

Of the body. Unto the edifying. Of itself. In love. There is so much. In that verse. Every measure.

[26 : 47] Of every part. Maketh. Increase. Of the body. You know. Increasing. In love. Are we increasing? Are we decreasing?

Or are we just. Holding steady? Where are we? As a church. Are we increasing. In love. Increasing. In strength. And edification. Verse 17.

This I say therefore. And testify. In the Lord. That ye henceforth. Walk not as. Other Gentiles. Walk. In the vanity. Of their mind.

He's talking about. Unbelievers. Back then. It was the Jews. And the Gentiles. It was those that. Understood. God. And who God is.

The chosen ones. Versus those that. Didn't care. Didn't believe in God. They were considered Gentiles. So. He's saying here. In verse 17.

[27 : 47] That we don't walk. As other unbelievers. Doesn't really matter. What background they are. But if they're unbelievers. They're. Considered Gentiles.

In the vanity. Of their mind. Having. The understanding. Darkened. Being. Alienated. From the life of God. Through the ignorance.

That is in them. Because of the blindness. Of their heart. Wow. Ignorance. That is in them. Why? Because their heart.

Isn't right. And it's blind. If our heart is not right. Then we're blind. And ignorant. Of the life of God.

Verse 19. Who. Being past feeling. This caught my attention. This morning. Who being past feeling. Have given themselves over.

[28 : 43] Unto lasciviousness. To work. All uncleanness. With greediness. You know. People. A person that is past. Feeling. Did you get that?

I take that as having no conscience. Just. Hardened. And just. You know. How many of us have been there. And know what that is.

Where we just don't really care. I know I'm not right. But. You know what. Forget it. I'm. Past feeling. It says here. And then you're given over.

To lasciviousness. Which I believe is lawlessness. To work all uncleanness. With greediness. Wow.

Just bad fruits. Really bad fruits. Once we're past feeling. That's a bad place to be. But then he says.

[29 : 42] But you have not so learned Christ. That's not how you've learned Christ. That's not. When you started this journey. With Jesus.

That's not how you came to him. That's not what you know about him. If so be that you have heard him. And have been taught by him. As the truth is in Jesus.

That you put off concerning. The former conversation. The old man. Which is corrupt. According to the deceitful lusts. You put off.

The old man. Paul is saying that. We are no longer what we used to be. We're not like we were. Maybe a year ago.

Or five years ago. Or ten. We're not like that anymore. I'm sure. A lot of us know what we're talking about. You know.

[30 : 40] Some of you are maybe new Christians. And you're like. Oh I know I'm not like I was. Before I was saved. But what about us that have been saved for a long time? Does God still change us?

And conform us. More and more into the image of his son. I believe he wants to keep changing us. Keep teaching us. Keep strengthening. Edifying. Making us more meek.

And all these things. In verse 23. And be renewed in the spirit of your mind. And that ye. Put on the new man.

Which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Put on the new man. You know. He didn't just tell us to put off the old. That would be one thing.

If we could put off the old man. And not be like we were. But he's saying. Put on the new man. The Bible says to put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

[31 : 49] Like. We are willing to accept him and receive him. And to have him live through us. His life. His fruits.

We hear a lot. And we talk a lot about crucifying the old man. And that's good. And it's right. We're called to do that. But we're called also to put on the new.

The new man. We're not just emptying ourselves of our old ways. But we're being filled with the new way. Filled with the new.

The new Adam. Which is Jesus. Can we point to a time. Where we have done this. Or where God.

Where we have allowed God. Maybe we don't remember the first time. But where we have allowed God. To just make us new. And being renewed. Or has nothing changed.

[32 : 51] The Christian life is a changed life. And those closest to us. These are just some thoughts. Closest to us are the ones that know best.

Whether we have been changed. Amen. I know it's that way in my family. They know best if dad needs to change more.

And I do. I need that. We are not Sunday morning Christians.

But changed Christians. I say this for myself. And I really mean that. My children.

They need to keep seeing me changed. I need that. I need that. And I'm not proud of that. That I need to change more.

[33 : 55] Than what I have. In verse 25 it says. Wherefore putting away lying. Speak every man truth.

With his neighbor. And I'll just share with you. Where I need to change more. And that is to be more long suffering. To be more gracious. More gentle. More kind. And we'll get to a few more of those verses later.

But in verse 25 he says. Putting away lying. Speak every man truth with his neighbor. For we are members one of another. Be angry. And sin not.

Let not the sun go down upon your wrath. That's a verse that has confused me over the years. Because I always thought it was wrong to be angry. I still think so.

But what is Paul saying here? And maybe there's other translations.

[34 : 55] That would speak different on this. I'm not sure. I didn't look it up. But be angry and sin not. Let not the sun go down upon your wrath. And then he says.

And neither give place to the devil. There is a verse that says. That the wrath of man does not work the righteousness of God. And so. I don't know if this is 100% accurate.

But here's a thought. This isn't thus saith the Lord. But. We all have the emotion of anger. Right? There's things that upset us. And is Paul saying maybe.

Have that feeling. Because it comes. But don't let it make you sin. We can't help that we have. You know.

If there's. Injustice. Or. Evil. Something very evil happens to another person. There's an emotion that rises up. And says. That makes me angry.

[35 : 53] Right? God put that there. But don't let it make you sin. I don't know. That's. That's one of my thoughts on that one.

Let's go to verse 28. This is a pretty simple one. Let him that stole. Steal no more. But rather let him labor. Working with his hands.

The things which are good. That he may have to give. To them that need it. To him that needeth. Him that stole. Steal no more.

We could go in a lot of different ways with this. But. I have a few thoughts. That I want to share. What is stealing? Is it sneaking into.

Enos' house at night. And stealing all his money when he's asleep. Is that stealing? We would know.

[36 : 49] Well now that's a thief. That's a robber. Right? We know. That's sometimes what we think maybe. When we think of stealing. I don't know if there's a lot of money there or not.

But that would be stealing. What are some ways that we can steal? What about just taking advantage of someone else?

Is that stealing? I think we'd all agree. Yeah. That's stealing. I'd take advantage. Whether it's financially. Or whatever it is.

Just taking advantage. That's stealing. And the Bible says. If you've been changed. You won't do this anymore. Making sure. Making sure that we always are the one that comes out on top.

Making sure that nobody takes advantage of me. You know. This stealing thing is a commandment.

[37 : 57] These are all commandments. It says that we work with our hands. So we can not only pay our bills and our debts.

The things that we owe. It says so that we would have extra to give to those that need. It's a wonderful reason to work. Not just for me to make it.

Not all about me, me, me. And mine. But to also help others. And we live in a culture today. It's important to speak about these things.

Because in our culture today. Right here in America. We have this deserving mindset. This I deserve it. I deserve the things I didn't work for.

And I need them right now. That's the culture we're in. Way too much. It used to not be like that in America. It used to be that if I didn't work for it.

[38 : 55] No, I don't want it. You can read story books. And no, that's how our country used to be. But that has changed. People have no problem taking advantage of someone else.

But I say this morning that is ungodly. And it will be judged someday. God will judge that mindset. The Bible says to own, or to owe rather, to owe no man anything.

Do you owe anyone? You know, I had to think of, well, what does that mean? Like, okay, so some of you got peaches. Some of you owe me some money.

But you really don't. In my mind, you don't. Because you're just getting them or did the other day or whatever. But let's just say that a month rolls by and you still haven't paid.

And you just, whatever. I got my peaches and they were good, whatever. At some point, I'd say, you know, they owe me that. They never pay their bill.

[40 : 08] And that's just a small thing. And by the way, I'm not worried at all. If you need peaches and don't want to pay, we would be okay. But I'm just using that as an example.

These are small things maybe. But now, if you forgot to pay, which I do, I tend to forget things like that. Or maybe think my wife paid it. Now, we're not talking about that.

We're talking about owing somebody something and not caring. And not even calling up and saying, hey, I'm sorry I'm having a hard time. I want to get you paid. I'll pay half now, half later.

What works for you? You know, communication. But when you don't care, you are not living in God's will. When I don't care that I owe Joe something financially.

And, you know, forgive me if I do, if I forgot something or overlooked something. But I believe that it's God's heart that as Christians, we don't owe each other.

[41 : 10] We don't owe other people money or things. Yeah, forgetting to pay is a different story.

We're all human. Sometimes we overlook things. And that's where we need that grace and that long-suffering, right? But, you know, what about owing each other something else?

What about I owe you an apology? Or you owe him or her? Something that needs to be made right. Does the Bible include that?

It doesn't say if you owe money. It just says anything. Are we sensitive to those things?

Spiritual matters. Maybe we talked down on somebody or we did something that hurt somebody else. Verse 29.

[42 : 13] We're wrapping this up soon. Verse 29 says, Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

What is corrupt? What are the things that we speak? I need to hear this.

I don't know about you, but this thing of, you know, does it edify? Does it minister grace to the person that's hearing it? Sometimes we think our words are just words, but they do something to the one hearing, right?

It either ministers grace or it doesn't. Does it build up? And then he says right after that, And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

You know, we discussed that Wednesday night, didn't we? We had that in the Bible study about grieving the Holy Spirit, and Joe was leading that. And I appreciated the thoughts that were shared, how we can grieve the Holy Spirit.

[43 : 32] I believe we can grieve Him in all the things we just talked about. We can grieve the Holy Spirit if He's living in us, but we don't take heed to these things. We don't let it, we don't apply it to our lives.

We are potentially grieving the Holy Spirit. Then it says, Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice.

All those things, bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking, be put away from you with all malice.

Then be kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you.

Does it sound like a Christian? Does it sound like somebody we want to fellowship with, worship with? Somebody that's tenderhearted towards you?

- [44 : 38] Somebody that easily forgives you? Just as God, for Jesus' sake, on the cross, through the cross has forgiven you?
- Sounds like a Christian. Do we want to be with people that are kind to us? Tenderhearted, softhearted, not cold, not unforgiving.
- If we want to be around people like that, we should become like that. We should be more concerned that I am like that, right?
- That I'm like that. Don't worry about you so much, but that I am like that, because you're around me. So I want to be like that. If we all do that, a tenderhearted person will not run others down or slander others, but will be forgiving and kind.
- We can be all these things, and still walk in truth. Why don't you stand with me if you can?
- [45 : 54] We can be all these things, and still walk in truth. That is often a question.
- You know, well, if I'm tenderhearted and kind to everybody, will I speak the truth to people? What if the truth hurts somebody, and I have to speak the truth?
- You know, we can have the truth. The truth will always stand. And we can stand on it. But we must have the right heart of love, or it means absolutely nothing.
- In 1 Corinthians 13, it says, Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.
- In other words, I'm just a bunch of noise. I have the truth, but it's just noise. It doesn't mean anything. And though I have the gifts of prophecy, I can prophesy and understand all mysteries and knowledge.
- [47 : 01] And though I have all faith, so that I could even remove the mountains and have not love, I'm still nothing. And though I bestow all my goods and feed the poor, though I give my body to be burned.
- Radical. I could be very radical about what I believe. People actually do these things. Give my body to be burned.
- And it says that I'm still nothing. It profiteth me nothing. Because charity, love, it suffers long.
- It is kind. It's not envious. Charity vaunteth not itself. It's not puffed up. It does not behave itself unseemly. Seeketh not her own.
- It is not easily provoked. Love doesn't thinketh no evil. Love doesn't think anything evil about her brother or sister or other believers.
- [48 : 03] Rejoice. Rejoice is not in iniquity, but rejoice in the truth. That's the verse. When I mention about truth, can we still stand on truth and be kind and tenderhearted and have love?
- Absolutely. We must stand on truth. In fact, here it says, it rejoiceth in truth. Do we rejoice in the truth?
- And are those things that Paul wrote, I feel like he wrote those things to us. As much as the Ephesians. God meant it for us.
- Let's just put it that way. So Lord, we just come to you and thank you for your word today, Lord, that the Apostle Paul wrote so many years ago.
- To the Ephesian church. Lord, we thank you for those words. And Lord, we want to take them to heart. Lord, that we take them seriously. And Lord, that we would have a heart that is surrendered, a vessel of honor for you, Lord, that you can use the things about gifts and being meek and having love in our hearts, tenderhearted, and to work so that we have to give to others.
- [49 : 28] It's just a heart that's surrendered to you, Lord Jesus. God, may we have that heart. As a body here, as individuals, but also as a body here, Lord.

Esteeming our brother higher than ourselves. Father, just be with us. And Father, we lift up those that are sick this morning. And just pray, God, for healing.

Pray that you'd heal them. And it would feel better soon. We pray for Brother James as he's out and about, Lord. And just pray for safety for him and his family, Lord.

Pray they would have a blessed time together. And we just commit this day to you in Jesus' name. Amen. You may be seated.