

Ephesians 14-03-30b

We pick up our study in Ephesians chapter 4 verse 2, we are looking at the second of three terms, the second of three concepts or ideas that Paul ties to our worthy walk. This is the key. There are so many things you can say about the Christian life.

There are so many things you can talk about in terms of being a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ on this earth, in this time, but you can't get any more central, you can't get any more focused on this is how you do it than right here. If you have any interest at all in living in a way that pleases God and that glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ, there's no better passage than this to clarify how it is done. Isn't that what we all want? I can't tell you how many times I go to Google to find out how it's done.

I am trying to configure a router with multi-net, multi-network address translation. I want multiple public IPs to be transferred to multiple private IPs. The router allegedly can do it, but when I type in the rules, it doesn't happen.

And I say, what is the matter? There's something I don't know here. I can't make this happen. How do I find out? I go to Google and in that particular case, I got no help at all.

I finally had to buy a completely different piece of equipment with a different set of instructions. And on that piece of equipment, it told me, oh, by the way, if you want to do multi-net, you have to go to a completely different obscure place in the software and type in the list of public addresses you want. Then when you create the rule, they will be available and they will work.

Who knew? So glad somebody wrote down how to do it. Now I've got a fully functional multi-netting router all day long and it works great. All I needed was somebody to tell me how.

Have you ever had a task you wanted to complete? Seemed like something within the grasp of a reasonably proficient person? I just need somebody to tell me how. If you want to live the worthy Christian life, if you want to walk in accordance with this wonderful calling that Paul has been describing, this is how. With this kind of thinking, Taipano Frosune, a non-elevated view of myself.

I am not out for number one here. I am aware of and am pursuing the greater good within the body of Christ. I'm not promoting myself at the expense of others.

I am not punishing others to make myself feel better. I am not causing others to stumble. I am not slowing them down.

I am not producing weakness in the body of Christ because I want to feel stronger. I am strong in Christ and I don't need all of that. I am more interested in the unity of the faith and the bond of peace.

I'm more interested in the brother-sister relationship than I am on proving how right I am, how vindicated I am, how justified I am. That's not my main goal. As long as we are in the business of self-vindication and self-justification, we'll never have a worthy walk.

You cannot put one foot in front of the other spiritually as long as that is the goal. As long as that is a priority, it ain't happening. And Paul tells us so.

You've got to have this objective, not subjective approach, attitude, view. Secondly, praotētos. This is our word for this morning, praotētos.

Translated, gentleness. This is... These words overlap. Taipeino fursune, praotētos, they overlap.

You really can't have one without the other, but they emphasize different things. And we've seen that the emphasis in praotētos... Taipeino fursune is how I view myself. This is one way of looking at it.

In the realm of connotation of these words, Taipeino fursune is the way I think about myself. I don't elevate my self-importance to the point that I am injuring others, I am dividing the body of Christ, I am creating more problems than I solve, I am divisive, I am intractable, I bear a grudge, I just can't quite get over something, I fix myself. This second one, praotētos, you can see from the context of the passages, just the two we've looked at, that this is how we interact with others, based on that first one.

I get myself off the high horse, now I can deal with others in love, in a unifying, restorative way. This is the worthy walk. You don't do this, your walk ain't worthy.

Might as well hang it up, go be a Buddhist. Praotētos. We saw Galatians 6.1. If a man is overtaken in any trespass, not just some trespasses, not just the ones I can personally get over, any trespass, you who are spiritual, if you're walking the worthy walk, you can restore such a one in a spirit of praotētos, a spirit of gentleness.

This is bigger than me. This is more important than me. Considering yourself, by the way, the rest of that verse, didn't read it in the first session, what's the rest of Galatians 6.1? Restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, praotētos, considering yourself, lest you also be tempted.

There is an element of self-preservation here. You'd better be forgiving and willing to restore somebody that's overtaken in a fault, lest you yourself also be tempted. This is going to be a stumbling block for you, almost by definition.

If you cannot follow this instruction, you're already on the path out of the light, off the straight road that goes through the gate to life. We saw 2 Timothy 2.25, in praotētos, in humility, in gentleness, correcting those who are in opposition. These people aren't just in a fault.

They didn't make a mistake or goof. They didn't verterly or inadvertently do something wrong.

These are in opposition.

They genuinely think they're right and they disagree with you and they're flogging this agenda, whatever it is they're doing. In humility, correcting them, responding to them, countering their points, fixing their misapprehension of Scripture, explaining to them where they haven't taken all of the witness of Scripture into account, trying to correct them if God perhaps will grant them a change of mind. If God is going to be able to grant them a change of mind, it's not going to be because you're reigning all over them and criticizing them and mocking and deriding them and telling them how stupid they are.

It's going to be because in gentleness we have shown them what is right and we've left them a path to change their mind. Leave people a road to come into the fold. Don't bar the gate and put armed spear throwers up there.

You don't deserve to be in our midst. You're too wrong. Get back.

You're dumping hot tar on them. Stop that. In humility, this takes strength.

It is easy to mock, deride, punish in some way people that we think are wrong. It is hard. It is really hard to absorb a wrong and to point out in a gentle fashion, this is where your case has holes in it.

This is where you don't have a foundation. And leave people a chance to say, well, after thinking about what you said, I kind of see your point. I'm thinking maybe I need to revisit my opinions.

I need to rethink my position. I appreciate you pointing this out in a spirit of love and gentleness and not forcing me to defend my fort to the last man because your attack is so strong and severe. Praotetos.

Colossians chapter 3 verse 12. The other letter that was in the bag with Ephesians. Colossians chapter 3 verse 12.

Therefore, as the chosen of God, as the elect of God, as the designated ones belonging to God. Is that you? Anybody here not elect of God? Anybody here not a part of the family of God? The Lord Jesus Christ died to save us. We know that we're not good enough to qualify for eternal life with God.

We accept. It's very simple. I know that I cannot qualify for eternal life.

The Lord Jesus Christ does. He offers His qualification to me. If I claim it, if I trust Him as my Savior, I'm saved.

When you make that decision and say as you approach God and the heavenly future and God says, well, what am I supposed to do with you? Should I throw you into oblivion in the lake of fire

or should I allow you into the eternal golden future with me? What's our response? I have no other righteousness. I have no other plea but the Lord Jesus Christ. He died for me and I have claimed Him as my Savior.

I have placed my faith and my trust in Him. That's why, oh Lord God, you must let me in. And He says, good answer.

Come on in. It's that simple. If you have made that decision, you are elect.

You are chosen. You are body of Christ. You are church.

You are saved. You are indelibly marked with the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. It's unique in this age.

We are privileged. We are special. We are elect.

Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved. Now, are we holy? Are we lovely? Are we worthy of love because we're so wonderful? That's our sparkling personality. It's our fund of stimulating conversation and God can't wait to get us in heaven because we're such a kick.

We're so much fun at a party. When it says holy and beloved, why are we holy and beloved? In Him. The Lord Jesus is holy.

The Lord Jesus is beloved. And in Him, we partake. We share.

We undeservedly are given the holiness and the belovedness of the Lord Jesus. The elect. Holy and beloved.

Put on like a garment. It isn't us. Your naked body doesn't sprout clothes.

Clothes are something we put on, right? We're not like a dog that grows its own hair and then sheds it to be vacuumed up later. We're not like a cat that sprouts fur. We're not like the animals that produce their own clothing.

There's only one speaking of whom there's only one other, there's only a few other animals or a few animals I should say, not other animals. See, it's the propaganda leaking into my brain. We're not animals.

But there's only a few animals that put on their clothing. You've seen hermit crabs. They put on clothing.

They borrow a shell and put it on. You can't think of very many animals that clothe themselves. We have to put on clothing because our body is insufficient in and of itself.

Put on. Clothe yourself with tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, long-suffering. Put

these on.

Acquire them. Obtain them. Wear them.

Manifest them. When somebody looks at you, what do they see? Oh, nice mold between your shoulder blades. No, they see your clothing as they should.

Oh, nice love handles. Nice, you know, now everybody wears shirts that are too short. This is another thing.

People that used to try to hide your flaws, now they flaunt their flaws. I've got love handles and I'm proud of them. I'm going to wear a short shirt and I'm going to do this muffin top thing and everybody's going to admire my flab.

Man, there's nothing that you want to get rid of quicker than whatever grows just above your waist that didn't used to be there when you were young. But now people flaunt it like it's a feature. Well, that's what clothing is for.

You drape yourself, you adorn yourself to look good. Not to expose your tattoos or your piercings or whatever else it is that you've marked yourself up with. Adorn yourself, clothe yourself, put on.

This is a biblical command. Put on. And when you read this list, one of them is praotetos.

Now, let's think about this. We've seen what a great feature this is. We've seen that praotetos is the way we treat each other.

Especially when the other is in the wrong. We saw it in Galatians 6.1. We saw it in 2 Timothy. When the guy is overtaken in a fault, when the person has screwed up or when somebody is actively in opposition, when they are, you know, pushing a different agenda, a different view, we are to have this attitude.

And here it says put it on. What's my next question? Starts with an H and ends with ow. How? How do you put this on? I get it.

Need to have that. Can't have a worthy walk. Can't stand before the judgment seat.

Not going to be approved by God. Not going to inherit. Not going to advance.

Not going to be pleasing in God's sight. Can't reflect Christ's glory. If I don't have this, just tell me how because when I look inside my own soul, I'm not made of this.

I don't have this attitude. I enjoy feeling superior to others. I enjoy judging and criticizing them.

I've got a bigger vocabulary than they do and I can eviscerate them and I enjoy it. It's fun. It satisfies me.

I get a little bit of a charge out of finding fault with others makes me feel a little better about myself. So how am I going to put this on when it's not a part of my nature? Ah, there's another passage where this term occurs, praotetos, and it tells us where it comes from. This isn't something we reach into the top hat of our soul and pull it out like a rabbit.

It's not in there hiding. It has to come from outside. It has to come from a different place.

Turn to Galatians 5 22. Galatians, Ephesians. We're back in Galatians.

We saw chapter 6. Now we're going to go back to chapter 5. Galatians 5 22, but the fruit of the spirit is. Second to the last term, remember in 23, gentleness, self-control. It's the first word in verse 23 of Galatians 5, gentleness, that is praotetos.

It is a fruit of the spirit. Now, let me ask you, where do we get this attitude? Do you have a how now? How now? How do we get the fruit of the spirit? Cultivate the active presence and power of the Holy Spirit. Do you know how to do that? Do we understand this? If we tolerate the presence of unconfessed sin in our hearts, we've wronged others, we have sinned in our minds, we've sinned with our hands, we've sinned in our walk and we don't acknowledge that before God.

We do not humble ourselves before the throne of grace and homologeo acknowledge that what we have done is wrong so that He can faithfully and justly cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we haven't done that, guess what? No fruit of the spirit can be produced because the fruit of the spirit doesn't grow in a trash pile. And as long as our soul is a trash pile, the seed of the Word is not going to sprout and grow and produce.

The fruit of the spirit is not going to be there. You cannot be loving, joyful, you cannot enjoy peace, you cannot have patience and long-suffering, you cannot be gentle, you cannot be good, you cannot be faithful, you cannot be praotetos and you can't have self-control so long as you make an environment in the soul that is hostile to God the Holy Spirit. These things are not native to us.

They are not a part of us. These things come from the presence and power of God's Holy Spirit and so long as we propagate, produce and tolerate the presence of sin in our souls, we're not going to produce the fruit of the spirit. You can't.

And if you think you can, you just committed another sin. We have to humble ourselves, come before the throne of grace, acknowledge that we are hopeless, helpless and useless, we are sinful, we have sinned, we name those sins to God. He is faithful and He is just.

It is right for Him to do so because of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, to forgive us and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Now there is a place where the Holy Spirit can be heard, where He can bring to our minds those things that we have learned, those verses we have memorized, that perspective that comes to us from the Bible, that comes to us from our Bible

studies and we become objective instead of subjective. We can see things from God's point of view, divine viewpoint, instead of human viewpoint.

We see it from the parent's perspective and not the child of two perspective. Child of two riding in the grocery cart, I see it, I want it, I grab it along with the rack and it all comes down and there is a big mess, you know, clean up on aisle four, you know, these little grabby two-year-olds riding in the grocery carts are the bane of anybody that has ever worked in a grocery store. I have been there, I have gotten the mop and done the clean up because somebody's little grabby kid thought, I see it, I want it and grabbed it.

This is the perspective of a two-year-old. The parent says, wait till we get home, I've got some actual food instead of this delightfully packaged trash snack that you're grabbing for, that's not good for you. I will feed you what is good for you if you will wait a little bit.

Perspective of a two-year-old, don't want to wait, I'm cranky, I'm hungry and I kind of delight in watching the, you know, the adults dance to my tunes so my little manipulative self grabs the thing, pulls it over and now I can watch with hysterical amusement while all the adults, you know, do stuff because I made it happen. Little self-gratifying, little evil two-year-olds. If you don't think the old sin nature doesn't come out as soon as you're born, you've never watched a baby.

Perspective. Perspective. Get out of the human two-year-old perspective and see things from God's point of view.

It is so much better. It is so much more productive. This is the fruit of the Spirit.

This praetos is fruit of the Spirit. The spiritual perspective, the carnal mind can't understand the things of the Spirit. The two-year-old cannot understand the thinking of the adult because it's adult thinking.

We are ever stuck in the terrible twos until God's Holy Spirit can start to work within us and give us a perspective that does not come naturally. We cultivate the ministry and the power and the presence and the active, energetic working of God's Holy Spirit in us. That produces the fruit.

So, I'm back to Ephesians chapter 4, verse 2. How do I walk worthy? Well, I've got to have these attitudes. How do I get these attitudes? I go back to my basics. The most fantastically talented golfers in the world, when they get ready to tee off, they go back to the basics.

They start with their stance. They put their feet in the right place. They start with their grip.

They put their hands in exactly the right place and exactly the right configuration on the shaft of the golf club. They position themselves. They sample the wind.

They look at the distance. They look at the terrain. They synthesize a whole lot of information and when they do their backswing, they do it the way they've practiced it a thousand times.

There are elements of the backswing. This is the elbow you bend. This is the elbow you keep straight.

This is how far back you go. This is the way you swing. This is the way you lean.

This is what you do with your weight. This is how the club contacts the ball in this particular part of the swing. It's not while the club is still on the way down.

Have you ever seen those little hoppers that go about four feet? That's because you hit the ball and the club was still on the way down. The club has to be just so slightly on the way up so that you get loft. You can't slice it.

Well, you can. You can slice it and hook it, but you shouldn't. If you go back to your fundamentals, if you go back to your basics and you execute your basics perfectly, you get a beautiful drive that goes just where you want it to go.

It stops right there on or near the green. That's basics. That's fundamentals.

How do we produce the fruit of the Spirit, which is this attitude which allows us to have a worthy walk? Go back to the basics. It is the Word of God and the Spirit of God. How does the power of God come into the life of the believer? Spirit of God and Word of God.

It's not hard. You are here right now getting the Word of God. It's going to drip off like drops off a duck if it isn't rehearsed, if it isn't brought back to memory, if we don't think about it later.

Everything sounds great while we're sitting here, doesn't it? Oh, yes, I am on my way to glory. My mansion is going to be so big. God is going to say, oh, come up here.

I've got another chair at my right hand. Lord Jesus, can you scoot over a little bit? I want Sam to sit right here because he's doing such a good job. All sounds great in Bible class.

This is not your life. This isn't what's going to get judged. Sitting here doesn't count.

It's what happens after. You want to produce the fruit of the Spirit? It ain't sitting in Bible class that gets it. It is what we do afterward.

You've got to bring it back. What did we learn Friday night? What book were we in Friday night? What part of the story? What was the point of the story? And most importantly, what difference does it make to me? Am I going to be the son of the prophets that gets it right? Do I remember where the Word of God comes from? Who the man of God is and what a difference it makes and how important it is that that presence be with me? And if I'm off on a wrong tack, this is the way I'm going to find out. If I make a mistake and get myself in a tight spot, this is how I am going to be delivered because I have not utterly abandoned and forgotten about God and His power.

Does it make a difference? Do I think about it later? If Bible class doesn't come back to you, it's because you have not retrieved it. And if you have not retrieved it, that's on you. In His law doth He meditate day and night.

Think about it when you get up in the morning. Think about it when things slow down in the evening. Call it to mind.

You know, we had an interesting class Friday. We saw a really powerful passage on Sunday. I really ought to think about that.

Let me review what I've done today, maybe what I've done over the last couple of days. Am I really living in the light of that or is it drops off the duck? Just spray the duck. He's not any wetter afterward than he was beforehand.

He dives. These ducks over here at the trail dive clear out of sight. You dive and you think, wow, a turtle must have got him.

He didn't come back up. And like, you know, 40 seconds later, pops the duck and he's just dry. Dry as he can be.

Dry as I am. And I think he was submerged. He was underwater.

He was down there using his bill to get who knows what out of the mud down there in that lake. He pops back up. He's dry.

I don't want to be a dry duck. I want to be absorbing, metabolizing, taking in, having it change me, have it become a part of me. We have to do this.

You have to do this. Nobody's going to do it for you. Pastor can't do it.

Relatives can't do it. Friends can't do it. It's you.

Can't recruit some people to stand with you at the judgment seat of Christ. We shall each one individually stand there. Lord, wait just a second.

Before you start on this judgment thing, let me just get the family. We'd like to be done as a group. And if you just kind of take the collective average and just don't single me out.

I happen to know my mom is a really super strong believer. If you just take an average, it'll pull me up over the line. It's not going to happen.

We have to make this happen. It is a fruit of the Spirit. So, Ephesians chapter 4, verse 1 and 2, I therefore the prisoner of the Lord beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called with by means of making the transition going from the caterpillar into the butterfly lowliness and gentleness and this is how it's done.

Isn't that great? God doesn't leave us hanging. We don't have to sit and become monks and beat ourselves with whips and wear hair shirts and agonize and crawl up the Skala Santa on our knees and get all bloody and make pilgrimages to find out how to be good Christians. It isn't far off.

You don't have to go to heaven. You don't have to descend to hell. It is near us.

It's right here. It tells us exactly how to do it. So how much excuse do we have for not being tenderhearted and forgiving one another? How much excuse do we have for not walking worthy of our calling? No excuse.

Just like Romans chapter 1 for the unbelieving world. What needs to be known has been made known by God. They are without excuse.

And when you go to Romans chapter 2 it says, oh man, you that are looking at them saying, well, they've got a deserved fate there, you're in the same boat. It's been revealed to us as well. We have no excuse.

No excuse. There's one more term here, bearing with one another in love, and that will be the subject of our study next week. This is perhaps the central point made in this entire letter.

Everything that precedes it leads up to it. Everything that comes after it depends on it. This is the heart.

This is the center. This is the point. If we can get this, if we can grasp it, and most importantly, if we can implement it, if we can make this happen, God the Father in heaven will be so pleased.

The Lord Jesus Christ will smile and find His work on the cross on our behalf worth it. Because somebody figured it out. Somebody got it.

Somebody changed their life and lived and walked worthy of the calling. It makes it all worth it. This is the reason God created the human race.

This is the reason Christ died. If we can do this, and how many Christians do you think actually figure this out? There are some, but it is not anywhere near a majority. It's not even a healthy minority.

It is the few. The road to destruction is wide and well populated. Narrow is the road and straight is the gate that leads to life, and few there be that find it.

Well, look, we've got a clear view right here. There's not a reason in the world why you and I, by the power of God and the grace of God in Him, can't do this. It cannot be more clear.

It is up to us to choose. We don't even have to come up with the strength to make it happen. We

don't have to grit our teeth.

We don't have to strain. We don't have to get sore. All we have to do is think, choose, decide, to follow the steps.

It is all in the power of God. By grace you are delivered through faith. The fruit of the Spirit comes by the power of the Spirit.

We don't have to generate it. We're the soil. The power of God's Word, that seed, will sprout and produce a hundredfold if we just make sure we're good soil.

Clear out the rocks. Get rid of the thorns that choke it. Get rid of the self-created impediments that come from our pride.

Clear the field. Burn the thorns. Prepare the soil.

Let the Word of God sink in deep. Let God the Holy Spirit bless it. It is all of God.

It is all of grace. And what could be better? It has eternal weight of glory attached to it. It's all a matter of choice.

We see it. It's just a matter of deciding. Let's close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank You for the truth of this passage. Thank You for Your grace in providing a way of deliverance and giving us the means to escape our fallen nature, the evil that surrounds us in this world, the principalities and powers that conspire against us, that are constantly suggesting and introducing counterproductive thoughts, just as Satan did in the garden to Eve, something that sounds good, something that appeals to the baser part of our nature. Father, may we put on these attributes, clothe ourselves in them as a garment, as we are instructed to do in Your Word.

You have made it clear to us what it is. You have made it clear to us how it can be done. We know that in so doing we can fulfill our purpose, we can achieve our objective, we can walk worthy of our calling and bring glory to the Lord Jesus Christ.

We pray these things in His name. Amen.