

Ephesians 14-04-06b

Let's pick up our study now in Ephesians chapter 4 verse 2. Paul pleading with us to walk worthy of the calling with which we have been called says that it is accomplished through, meta, with. We say I am digging this hole in the garden with a shovel. There was no hole and at the end of the process there is a hole because I did it with a shovel.

This is how we do the worthy walk, with humility, with lowliness, but this isn't the kind of lowliness you associate with self-denigration or abnegation or inferiority or aw shucks, toe in the dirt, I ain't nothing thinking. This is a matter of prioritization. We prioritize the interests of others ahead of our own.

This is the mind that was in Christ Jesus. Nobody looks at the Lord Jesus and thinks that He was a wimp or a milk sop or some sort of wilting daisy that could just be pushed around. This was divine strength under control and subordinated to the will of God the Father and He did not look out for His own interests.

He was dedicated to the interests of others. Let this mind be in you. Let this mind, let this thinking be in you.

To accomplish this, it isn't just a reflex, it doesn't just happen one morning. We think our way into this attitude. I can afford to set aside my self-interest because I recognize that this is the path to my opportunities for service, this is the path to my reflection of the glory of God.

This is my path to inheritance and opportunity in the eternal future. I sacrifice something now for a benefit later. Everybody understands this in the material world.

If you want to have a retirement, you take some portion of what you earn now and deny yourself the use of it and you put it in a savings or in an investment or in a 401 or a 403 or whatever it happens to be and save it for later. Let the magic of compounding allegedly build it up and if you get it before the government does, you'll have it as a retirement. We invest, we deny ourselves immediate gratification so that we will have a better gratification later.

I will save now so that I can enjoy later. That's what Taipano Frosune is or what it can be for us, but we have to think. Why would I try to achieve this petty objective, win this petty victory now at the expense of a more wonderful and extended and eternal victory and set of opportunities later? I just have to stop and think.

Taipano Frosune. God resists the proud. God gives grace to the Taipanos.

You have a second term here with all humility in verse 2 of chapter 4 and gentleness. Gentleness. We began looking at this last time.

Prautes, Prautetos. There's a whole complex of words with this P-R-A-U beginning. Praus, Praea,

Prau.

This is a different facet of the same attitude and that's why they are linked with Taipano Frosune and Prautetos. The two are partners. They are a dynamic duo in our attitude.

This is found, for example, in 1 Timothy chapter 6 verse 11 in its adjective and in a related word here, Praupatheia. Remember what pathos is? Now, we have pathos as, oh, isn't that something to feel sorry for and to pity? It's pathetic. But pathos means to feel, to experience as an emotion in many cases.

You have an anthropopathism where an emotion or a feeling that human beings have is attributed to God. God is wrathful. God is jealous.

God has regret. We say this is an anthropopathism. This is ascribing a human feeling to God so that we can understand His policy and His actions.

God isn't subject to emotions the way we are. He isn't swept away on passion. But pathos, this is the feeling.

This is the emotional side. We had Taipano Frosune which is thinking. Now we have this Prau, in this case, Patheia because we're looking at 1 Timothy 6.11. You, O man of God, this is Paul talking to his son in the faith, Timothy, young pastor, going to be in the next generation after Paul, teaching and exhorting and encouraging believers in the Greek-speaking world.

You, O man of God, flee these things. And you can look in the preceding context to see all the things that he is saying should be avoided and set aside and fled from. Flee these things and pursue instead righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and praopatheia.

And it is translated here, gentleness. Gentleness. There are a couple of other words in this context that we have in ours as well.

But for now we're just looking at praotetas. You find the definition of this word comes out as you look at it in its context other places in the New Testament. It is either a synonym of other things or you find it in contrast as you do in that Timothy passage.

Instead of these bad things up above, gentleness. In Colossians 3, we have the same idea. We see what it means by contrast.

In Colossians 3.5, Paul says, Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth. Put to death fornication. Put to death uncleanness.

Put to death passion, evil desire, and covetousness which is idolatry. How do you walk the worthy walk? How do you promote and encourage and develop these positive attributes of humility and gentleness that we're seeing in verse 2? How do you do it? Well, you've got to make room for

them by eliminating, putting to death, carrying off and burying fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness. I mentioned in the first session, Hebrews chapter 6. Let us not lay again the foundation of change of mind away from dead works and faith toward God.

You can never fully develop faith toward God if you have not turned away from dead works. You've got to eliminate bad habits before you can fully develop good habits. There is a thing to be turned away from.

You cannot put your new car in the garage until you back your old car out of the garage. Right? There's only space for so much. We all know this.

And if you want to put some new stuff in, you've got to take some old stuff out or you're a hoarder. Don't be a hoarder. Put to death.

This is again Colossians 3.5. This is what we remove. Scrape it off. Sweep it clean.

Haul it to the dump. Put it on the curb. We had a vacuum cleaner.

We've got like five vacuum cleaners and there's only four of us. So one of them. Unless we teach major to use it, we don't need it.

But it's a nice vacuum. Nothing wrong with it. The others are better and more convenient.

They're longer hoses for doing the stairs and stuff. Perfectly good vacuum cleaner. Don't need it.

So found the bags that went with it. Found the attachments that went with it. I always hate to find something and nobody put the attachments.

Put all the attachments back with it. Sat it out in the alley with a sticker on the front that said, works fine. That thing was gone in 20 minutes.

Sitting in the alley. It's not like there's traffic in our alley. I mean 20 minutes later I checked and the thing was gone.

But moved it out. Now there's room for other things. Move it out.

Get rid of it. Let somebody else truck with it. Put to death these earthly things.

Fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness which is idolatry. And now, how did I know to put the thing in the alley? It was in front of me. I was looking at it and I identified it as something we do not need.

Check with the rest of the family. Do we need this? Should we save it? No. I was looking at it.

I considered it. I picked it up and I carried it to the alley and sat it out. How can you put to death fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness if you do not identify them, grab

them by the handle, and carry them out? This doesn't just happen.

It's not an accident. Well, I was looking around and that old sweeper's gone. I don't know what.

It must have rolled itself out. It doesn't happen that way. We take hold of these things.

We carry them out and away. We put them to death. This is an active verb.

Put to death. Execute it. Take the big sword and chop.

It is gone. It is no more. You do this.

It is an active process of identification and elimination. Examine yourself. See if you are in the faith.

If we judge ourselves, we would not be judged. This requires some thought. When's the last time we sat down in the solitude of our own thoughts, cultivating the active help of the Holy Spirit, and said, Is it possible that I am acquisitive in an unhealthy and sinful way? Is it possible that I am breaking covenants that I have made with others? This is what fornication is.

Fornication, porna, this is promise breaking. This is unfaithfulness to commitments. It is not just the physical act of engaging with someone else in some priorient fashion.

This is covenant breaking. This is promise breaking. This is commitment trampling.

Have I been careless about keeping my commitments? Have I violated and breached my promises, my word? Uncleaness. Am I allowing things in my life, in my conversation, in my associations that aren't pleasing to God? Have I just been kind of sloppy about it, just never really considered, Well, is God pleased with this or not? Does this represent righteousness or unrighteousness? Is this something God approves and condones and looks down upon and smiles? Or is this something God rolls His eyes and divinely groans at when He sees it in my life? Uncleaness. You cannot walk the worthy walk without eliminating these things first.

You cannot be humble. Because as long as you hold on, as long as we hold on to these things, we're putting self first. My pleasure in this thing is more important than the worthy walk.

My satisfaction in this is better than what God is offering in its stead. I prefer to keep the old sweeper. I prefer to keep the old car.

I'm not going to make room for the new and the proper and the God pleasing, because I prioritize this. How can you be taipei no frosune when you refuse to get the self gratification out of the garage? You can't. It is elimination and replacement.

We decide this. We choose it. And the first step in deciding and choosing is to identify that it is present.

Well, I rolled up the garage door and I don't know what was in there, but I couldn't pull in. I just rolled the door back down. I didn't even look.

Look. Identify. Eliminate.

Now you can pull in. Right? That's what he's talking about. Put to death your members on the earth.

This earthly, temporal, perishing stuff. Fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire and covetousness. Why do people do these things? Why do we and others in the world fornicate and participate in uncleanness and passion and evil desire and covetousness? Because it feels good.

People don't do it because it hurts. It'll hurt later. But they do it because in the moment it's gratifying.

It is attractive. It is pleasant. Why did Eve reach out and eat the fruit? It was desirable in the moment.

But the snake bite came after. The poison entered after that decision was made. But it was pleasant.

Pleasing to the eyes and desirable. This is what all of these things are. They have a faulty, false promise.

They promise gratification. But in the end, it is the sting of death. So, shovel them out.

And then in verse 8, you have the alternative. Now, this is Colossians 3, verse 8. Now, you yourselves are to put off all of these. Anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language coming out of your mouth, tacky talk.

And in verse 12, as the elect of God, as the called of God, get it? As the called of God, walking worthy of your calling, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, long-suffering. This is a list of five. And three of these five are in our passage in Ephesians chapter 4. Paul had the same topic on his mind.

Remember, this is the other letter he wrote on the same occasion. And so, what do we have here? Put on tender mercies. This is *splachnon*.

S-P-L-A-G-C-H-N-O-N. One of those words you don't want to be standing too close to people when you say it. It's like the letter chet in Hebrew.

Splach. But for an abrasive word, it represents a wonderful concept of mercy. Tender mercies.

Oikthirmos splachnon. Kindness. Humility.

Taipeino frosune. Very same one we have in Ephesians 4. Meekness. Proutes.

And longsuffering, which is coming up again in our passage. So three of these five words are our three words in Ephesians 4. Put them on. But he says put them on in verse 12 after verse 5 and verse 8 that say put off these things.

Shovel them out. Make some room. So, I ask you.

Ask yourself. Do I want to walk worthy of the calling? What does the instruction sheet say? In order to develop and cultivate and maximize my taipeino frosune and my proutetas and the upcoming makrothumia, what do I have to do? I've got to make some room. Can I do this? Can we do this? Absolutely yes.

We can put these things off. That's why it is an imperative. If you couldn't do it, it wouldn't be a command.

God does not give commands that we are unable to fulfill. If God gives us a command, he has provided the means to do it. So, I ask myself the question.

Have I looked lately to see what I can put off? What I can stop doing? What I can eliminate from my operation? I've got to quit certain things before I can start other things. And it's totally up to me. I don't have to.

I can continue to do the bad things. But I have no hope of walking worthy of my calling. Which means I have no hope in the eternal future of inheritance, of opportunity, of service, of reflecting the glory of God.

I will be in the darkness which is outside with the fornicators, and the coveters, and the idolaters, and those who love and practice a lie. Outside the gate, their vista is the smoke rising from the lake of fire, not the heavenly city. Not the New Jerusalem built four square.

Not the river of life coming out from the throne. Not the trees of life growing on each side. Not the wonderful privileges and opportunities of occupancy and citizenship in the New Jerusalem.

I will be rightfully and properly in the darkness which is outside. Cut in two and apportioned my inheritance with the hypocrites. Who claim the name of Christ, but don't live in the light of the calling.

Don't walk worthy of the calling. I get the name. I like the status.

But I don't actually do it. This is the way to do it. This is a command.

I beseech you. Walk worthy. This is how.

Got to put these things off. Shovel them out. Make room.

And now be praotetos. 2 Corinthians 10.1. Please turn there. Acts, Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians.

2 Corinthians 10.1. Now I, Paul, myself am pleading with you. Sound familiar? Pleading with you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ. I plead with you and I invoke.

I put before you the meekness, praotetos, of Christ. This is the foundation, the basis for his pleading. By the meekness and gentleness of Christ.

I who in presence am lowly among you. Taipeinos. You can read the rest of 2 Corinthians 10.

But Paul bases his appeal on the praotetos of the Lord Jesus Christ. And he says, when I am in your midst, I am Taipeinos. I put your interests ahead of my own.

I don't claim my apostolic status. I don't wear a pointy hat and wave holy smoke and expect you to bow and be in awe. I am Taipeinos.

Just like the Lord Jesus Christ. In the book of Matthew, chapter 21, verse 5. Tell the daughter of Zion, behold. By the way, this is a quote from Zechariah 9.9. Tell the daughter of Zion, behold, your King, capital K, is coming to you.

Lowly and sitting on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey. You remember the tragic entry? We're coming up on the Resurrection Sunday season here. The Passion Week, the crucifixion, the burial, resurrection.

It's coming up here this month. But you remember, just preceding that, what they like to call the triumphal entry. How did Jesus enter the city of Jerusalem? He fulfilled the prophecy of Zechariah 9.9. And what does it say? Tell the daughter of Zion, behold, your King is coming to you.

How? Lowly. Proutetas. Now, does this mean that He was hanging His head and dragging one sandal in the dirt as He went in? What does Taipeinos mean? What does Proutetas mean? There is the prioritization of the interests of others.

Why is He coming in at all? Why is He riding on the donkey? He is not coming to denigrate. He's not coming to oppress. He is not coming to subjugate.

He is coming to benefit. He is coming to rescue. He is coming to lift up, to make whole, to deliver, to be a positive blessing for others.

That's why He's riding the donkey. He says, look, I'm not coming in on the white horse. What's the white horse signify in the Revelation? Does Jesus come to the battle of Armageddon lowly and riding on a donkey? I don't think so.

That's a whole different purpose and a whole different picture, isn't it? It's the same Lord Jesus. It's the same King with a name written on His thigh in Revelation. Why is He riding a donkey and

the foal of a donkey in this passage? It is an expression of His willingness to serve, to benefit, to bless, and to be a blessing.

That should be our attitude. But we can't have that attitude if we don't shovel out these selfish, self-gratifying, this feels good to me, so I'm going to do it. This makes sense to me and I like it, so I'm going to do it.

As long as we hold on to those things, when we know better from the light of God's Word, you cannot walk worthy. You cannot inherit. This is why the Lord Jesus said, I have not come to bring peace but a sword and I will divide people in families.

I will divide fellowships. I will divide believers who walk shoulder to shoulder. But in the resurrection and in the eternal future, there's going to be a separation.

Why? Because some people take up their cross and follow the Lord Jesus in humility, in taipenas, in praotetas, and others don't. My stuff is too important to me. My goals and my pleasures are too wonderful to me.

I want them now and I don't really care about the future. Well, this is what divides us. This is what separates us.

This is why the road to destruction is wide and most people are on it. Narrow is the way. Straight is the gate.

Few there be. Why? Because few of us there are who will actually clean the garage, actually put off the old man with his passions and lusts and put on the new man, clothe ourselves in the righteousness of Christ, adopt His attitude, have His mind in us, take on the form of a servant, and be willing to sacrifice the things that might be pleasurable to us for the sake of our calling, for the sake of our Savior, for the sake of our fellow believers. That's what it means.

Matthew 5, verse 5, Blessed are the... What do you think it is? Blessed are the praous. They shall inherit the earth. Praous.

You can try to grab a little something now and you're going to lose it. Or you can develop this praous, praotetas. You can develop these attitudes that characterize the Lord Jesus Christ and you have an eternal inheritance.

Why struggle for that which you cannot keep when you can gain something you cannot lose? What sense does that make? It doesn't make any sense. But we're nonsensical because we're fallen, we're corrupt. What sense did it make for Eve to reach out and take the fruit? It didn't make any sense.

But we're fundamentally irrational when we fall into sin and we do stupid things. And it is stupid to grasp for earthly pleasures and earthly gratifications in the short term and sacrifice our

inheritance, eat the mess of pottage, and lose the double portion blessings. This is the means of fulfilling our calling that we are looking at here.

Matthew 11, verse 29. We'll close with this passage. The Lord Jesus says, All things have been delivered to me.

This is Matthew 11, verse 27. All things have been delivered to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and those to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. Come to me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am, what? Praus and Typenos, gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. My yoke is easy and my burden is light. The means by which we walk the worthy walk is not hard.

It is an easy yoke and it is a light burden. It is to walk in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is to have His mind in us.

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I myself am Praus and Typenos. Sums it up beautifully, does it not? This is our opportunity. This is our challenge.

This is our decision. Nothing hard, nothing difficult. This isn't crawling up the Skala Santa on your bloody hands and knees.

This isn't a pilgrimage to some far off land. This isn't building a tower trying to reach heaven. This isn't excavating trying to get down to Sheol.

It is near. It is practical. It is straightforward.

The only reason it isn't easy is because it crosses the grain of our fallen nature. We are not by nature ready to do this, but it is a decision and it is doable if we choose it. This is why Paul pleads with us.

This is why he invokes these qualities in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Lord Jesus Christ Himself does and says, This is what is essential. Now, what excuse do we have for not having a wonderful opportunity for service for God, both now and in the ages to come? What excuse do we have for not having a rich and wonderful sense of peace in this life and a rich and wonderful inheritance in the next life? What excuse do we have? Did we not know? Did God not tell us how it is done? Now that we have studied this passage and many others like it, there is no excuse. It is just like Romans 1. What may be known is manifest.

They are without excuse. This has been made manifest to us. We are without excuse.

But rather than thinking about the negative, I prefer to dwell on the positive. What a great

opportunity. Finally, it is explained.

Finally, the path is clear. All I have got to do is put one foot in front of the other and walk down this narrow road. It is not hard.

God has given us His Holy Spirit. He has given us His living and powerful Word. And in the motive force and in the power of God in those two forms, there is not a reason in the world why we cannot do this.

But it takes a decision. It takes paying attention. You cannot drift.

You cannot float. You cannot be blown about by every wind. We have to decide.

I have been called. I will respond. I have been asked to walk.

I will walk. Arise, take up your bed, and walk. If God has restored your legs, why would you not do that? What sense does it make? None at all.

Let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank You for the truth of Your Word. And thank You most of all for the Lord Jesus Christ and the provision for us, the grace for us that You express on a moment-by-moment basis because of Him, through Him, and in Him.

We pray that God, the Holy Spirit, will make these truths live and breathe in our souls, motivate us and encourage us and compel us to follow these exhortations and these encouragements to fulfill our destiny, the purpose for which the Lord Jesus came and died and saved us. We thank You again for the compassion and the love that You express toward us in these things. And we pray that You will never let us rest until we begin to live and walk in their light.

We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.