

Ephesians 14-05-25b

We're picking up our study now in Ephesians chapter 4. We're also going to pick up the pace a little bit. The truth that we're focusing on in this section is that the Lord Jesus has given each of us individually a tailor-made grace package and there's going to be a measure of whether we have attained the height and the fullness of function in that. Now immediately people get into this deal.

Well, I've got to figure out what my gift is and make sure I'm functioning in it. What is the name of my gift? And you know, do I need to go to gift school and get a gift diploma and you know that no because the key is in this verse 13 where it says to the measure unto the measure of the stature of the fullness what comes right before that until we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God the unity of faith and knowledge. This is the means well, you're doing part of the means right now.

This is part of the means. Getting through the provision of communication gifts, which includes the Apostle Paul and the proclamation of the good news that encouraged you to become a believer and to pursue the truth of God and a walk in the light through diligent pursuit of that goal and through the function of a pastor and teacher gift to take this particular passage and bring it to our attention and try to focus on its truth. That's that's what these gifts have done.

You were given a specific. Grace package grace measure from the Lord Jesus Christ and this truth activates it. This is the gas in the tank.

This is the battery connected to the laptop here. You know, you got all of the stuff you get the program you got the data but you got to have power to make the thing go the power comes from God's word that is distributed through these communication gifts the word knowledge in verse 13 is epi gnosis epi gnosis and you remember there's gnosis and there's epi gnosis epi gnosis is a kind of knowledge that isn't just acknowledged. It isn't just assented to you don't just hear it and say well, yeah, I think that's true.

It makes a difference. It works itself out in application. It becomes a part of your working toolkit.

Okay, so this is the means and we've seen this over and over again, right? It doesn't depend on us in any sense other than willingness. We commit we say I'm going to pursue this goal. I'm going to live this life.

I'm going to return to the Lord Jesus the investment of grace that he has made in me with interest. I'm going to return it with interest. It's the parable of the pounds.

It's the parable of the talents and the way we do this is through this the one faith it says unity of the faith, but it's the one faith. It's the one truth and we have to be careful that we're getting the one truth the real truth. That's why I mentioned truth decay and Douglas Gruthius in the first

session because it is easy for the shell game to take place.

There is bait and switch about which Paul is about to speak. We need the one faith that he spoke of earlier in the first part of this chapter one body one spirit one hope of your calling one Lord one faith one baptism one God and father of us all these are solid connections to reality. This is the real universe the real God the real plan for believers.

There is one Porsche except no substitute. There is one truth so unity of the faith and the epinosis of the son of God. Why doesn't say the epinosis of Christ or the epinosis of Jesus? Why does it say epinosis of the son of God? It reminds us of the gospel accounts the son son of man is the son of God.

He has come to seek and to save that which was lost his come to do the father's will remember how many different times Jesus states his purpose. I have come not to bring peace but a sword it will divide people into those who are faithful and who get it and those who are unfaithful and who don't the obedient and the disobedient the faithful and the unfaithful the righteous and the unrighteous the wheat and the chaff the sheep and the goats. I this is why I have come Jesus says I have come that they might have life and have it more abundantly.

There's so many purpose statesman Jesus knew as the son of God come to earth his mission and that is what is being referenced here till we come to until we arrive at this is the destination. This is the purpose unity the faith epinosis of the son of God to a telios man a complete someone who is fully functional. It's it always impresses me when I listen to and I make a lot of reference to instrumentalists.

It's just an area of interest, but when I try to play the piano I hit the cracks. I miss notes. I do the wrong thing when I play the guitar.

I I miss I'm imperfect at it and it always impresses me when you listen to someone and it can be live. Here's someone playing the guitar behind a singer. Here's someone playing the piano and it's it's silent.

You know, it's the introduction to don't let the sun go down on me or whatever and you got Elton John playing that piano yet Billy Joel playing the piano and it's perfect. You've got the piano part behind a bridge over troubled water and Art Garfunkel saying that Paul Simon song and here they are on stage. It's live and somebody is playing and it's absolutely perfect.

They they don't do what I do. It's not sloppy. It's not unpracticed.

It's it nails it. They play it perfectly. That's what this means a perfect man.

Now the pianist is not perfect. The guitarist is not perfect. The singer is not perfect.

But in this particular performance in this particular area, they nail it. It's flawless. It's exactly what

it needed to be.

That's what it means by the standard of a mature or perfect man to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. That we should be no longer children. Telios means mature and this is more of a connection in Greek than it is in English.

But in the preceding thing where it said a perfect man. This is a grown-up a mature someone who's fully functional not a *napias* a child which you expect to be imperfect and to stumble and to make mistakes who hasn't got it figured out who doesn't have the experience and the *Epinosus* type knowledge. We want to come to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ be no longer children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine.

This tossed to and fro doesn't really say to and fro in Greek. It says tossed and it's a nautical term about rough seas. Now you're trying to the metaphor here is a stable functional entity think of a lighthouse.

They actually had lighthouses back in this day. There's a very famous one. That was one of the wonders of the ancient world, but it's stable a mature man stands on his feet stands on the ground is ready for whatever task is at hand no longer tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine.

This is a ship on the sea subject to two different kinds of forces. Tossed is the waves. And this is not a contrast between a great ocean liner or a an aircraft carrier, you know, that's just too big to be bothered by the waves in the wind.

This is between being on land and on the sea between being grounded and rooted in Earth like a mighty Oak or being a sailboat on the ocean like a fishing boat on a tossed ocean. You there is no way to stabilize a small boat on a tossing wave ocean. There's there's just no way to stabilize it.

It is going to be subject because it is supported by unstable water. There are waves and it can't not be that every seasick person that has ever lived wish there was a way to stabilize what they're what they're writing in or on and there just isn't and he says we need to no more be these children incomplete ill-equipped then he switches to this nautical notion tossed to and fro by the waves. This is the best translation of the word here is wave tossed.

It's a nautical term for rough seas water that is moving in a way you can't control and you're on it like a cork wave tossed and carried about with every wind. So you're on an unstable support and you are blown about by the wind above it. The water and the wind is everything you're exposed to it's what you sit on and what you travel through both of them are blowing you off course controlling you in ways that you can't overcome.

We don't want to be this we don't want our culture to control us. We don't want our television set

or our internet connection to control us. We don't want our friends or our employment or our education to control us.

We don't want our family or any other cultural or legal malfeasances that take place around us. We don't want to be controlled by that. What is the solution? Well, he says that we should no longer be this it was the preceding verse right concentrating on achieving that measure that corresponds with the measure of grace.

It was given to us unity the faith epinosis of the son of God focus on that and we will no longer be incomplete unskilled not able to complete the tasks that are assigned to us. Bobbing around like a cork on the sea blown about by the winds of what? Doctrine didaskalia teaching and this is another link to the preceding he himself gave some to be Apostle some prophets some evangelists and some pastors and didaskalos teachers. He gave us teachers so that verse 14.

We should no longer be blown about by winds of teaching see the connection. There are Christ authorized God-given teachers of truth. That let us get hold of epinosis so that false teaching doesn't blow us around so that the waves don't toss us notice.

It says by the trickery of men the word trickery you may have a note here from preceding adventure into this verse trickery is kubios k-u-b-i-o-s from which we get the word cube. Cube C-u-b-e this is tossing the cubes. This is dice playing.

This is a really fascinating term because he could have just said lies. He could have said poor Naya. He could have said any one of a number of things but uses dice playing it's not trickery and I don't care how many commentaries you go to this.

Otherwise, I'm going to give you the real truth. This is the truth that connects to reality and I'm going to tell you right now Paul meant exactly what he said it's dice playing why dice playing he's going to talk about intentional deceit later on but this is dice playing because how does playing dice work it's chance and you're saying you know lucky 7 lucky 7 right you throw the dice and you're hoping to get you know 7 come 11 you want you want there's a specific number you're looking for what happens when you throw the dice. Do you get your number when you throw dice? What's the answer to that question? I want to throw I've got two dice one is a die right? I've got two dice and I need to land on the right square on my Monopoly board.

I want to miss Park Place, you know not have to pay the rent. So I need an 8 out of my two dice. I need an 8 so when I throw the dice what happens do I get an 8 yes or no, maybe sometimes I do sometimes I don't that's the inherent nature of kubias it's sometimes it hits and it hits just often enough.

Why do you think people gamble? Why do you think you up here to Choctaw casino and all these other places and gamble? What are the odds the odds always favor the house or they wouldn't be in business. They make more money than they lose right even though people occasionally win

the house makes way more. But every once in a while you hit every once in a while you win and you win just often enough to make you think that this is working.

You know, if I get my girlfriend to blow on him right before I throw them down that I'll get my number if I if I roll my eyes and Pat my foot and you know, where my lucky earring or whatever it is. I'll get the number. It's a false system that occasionally pays off.

There's just enough payoff to make you think it's legit. It's dice playing and there is sometimes it works sometimes it works and this is the this is the insidiousness of it. Is it sometimes it works? Dice playing and people who know this this is the house.

He's talking about they get you to come in and play dice and they give you enough of a payoff that you think it's real and that it works, but they're making a lot more than you are. It's the dice playing of men. They this is taking advantage of your gullibility.

People who gamble are it's a combination of an addiction and a gullibility. You think you're this time. I've got it worked out.

I know which machine I think this machine is different than the others. This one arm bandit, you know this one. I don't think they said it right and I think it pays off because I saw somebody playing that machine last time I was up there and it paid off and I was just over there a minute ago and it paid off again.

I think you know, there's a gas pump right around the corner down here that for a while was broken and I didn't really realize it until about the third time. I used it and I thought wow, you know, I know my tank was empty and this it was just broken and I was inadvertently getting more gas than I was paying for and I went I said, you know, I don't think that pumps working right. You said well, we haven't been inspected and well next time they renew the inspections.

I noticed it started acting normal again, but for a while I would always go to that pump because hey this pump gives me gas and I told him and look if they're going to give me free gas. I'm going to avail myself. I don't know.

Maybe I maybe I need to confess that but I don't I don't feel sorry. I think they've gotten more than more than their share of my money, but that's what this is that it's the dice playing of men that they stack the odds. They let you win just often enough you think it's working and there are whole churches and structural systems that are set up this way that you not be subject to the dice playing of men in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting and the thing about this is they this isn't always malicious.

But it's what is it? Not it is not the fullness of Christ. It's not the stature of Christ. It isn't Christ oriented.

They're plotting and sometimes they're plotting things and they justify it in their own mind saying

well, you know, if we build this building our church will grow if we really put the squeeze on people they'll give money and with this money, we will do good things. They deceive themselves as much as they deceive others in many cases and the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting here is sometimes intentional and sometimes unintentional cunning craftiness is pawn or Gia and the lying in wait here. The deceitful plotting this is method is where we get the word method.

There is a method. There's a method for Christianity. There's a you know, there's a prayer you can pray.

There's a sequence you can follow you can game God's system, you know, you can find the pump that gives more gas in God's system. You can you know, if you give in a certain way if you pray in a certain way you can it's this is these are gaming terms. You can beat the system.

You can you can work the system to your advantage. You can count cards you can you know, and there are people who will encourage you to think this way and then take advantage of you and rip you off while they're doing it because they've got their own agenda and all of this if you just want to summarize verse 14 that you don't get it taken advantage of by people with an agenda. Their own agenda, but verse 15 speaking the truth in love speaking the truth in love.

How can you speak the truth if you do not know the truth? This is why you have communication gifts commissioned directly by the Lord Jesus Christ. And that's why those are the four that are mentioned. They are truth delivery gifts.

And with that with that epinosis from verse 13 verse 15 speaking the truth in love. We may grow up in all things into him who is the head. Verse 13 said till we all come to the unity of the faith.

Verse 15 says that we may grow up in all things into him who is the head Christ from whom the whole body notice that into Christ and then from whom Christ verse 15 and 16 were back to that when he ascended he received and he gave we grow up into Christ and in Christ. He is the one from whom we receive these benefits the more in Christ we become through understanding the truth and I said there are two parts of what we're doing right now is part of it, which is hearing the truth looking at the truth seeing the truth revealed in the pages of Scripture, but this is not the whole thing when we're done here. We're not done.

Speaking the truth in love this means we've thought about it. It's on our mind. We see its application.

We see the way it relates speaking the truth in love and this is really an interesting construction in Greek in verse 15 because there is no word for speaking. We've got lots of Greek words for talking speaking proclaiming telling none of them are here. This is truthing.

This is a verb, you know, we have we have aletheia which is the word for truth in Greek. Well, this is the verb from aletheia. This is aletheo and it means and and guy after guy after guy that is that

is a Greek scholar has said you can't get the meaning of this word over into English easily.

Now, some people have just translated it truthing, but that's kind of weird practicing the truth speaking the truth being truthful. But but it's more than being truthful. It is there's an inner and an outer component, but you're this is aletheo you are living the truth.

It's in you and it's coming out of you. You are a walking representation and manifestation of truth. That's what this means speaking the truth doesn't even begin to get it.

When we avoid this false deceitful system that people set up that men with their dice throwing and their agenda. Set up as a substitute and most believers fall for it. Most believers end up in some form.

You're somewhere in the casino. You're either playing roulette or you're you're cranking the arm on the one-armed bandit or you're throwing dice or you're playing 21. You're in there somewhere getting fleeced and you win just enough that you keep keep playing but operating in love might be one way to say it embodying love being both a recipient and a product and a producer of of truth in love because there is a truth that is unloving and we've all had exposure to this a tactless truthfulness and insensitive truthfulness.

We saw the movie that they made Disney. There's no truth in Disney that I know of but Disney made and it's doubly so it's like exponential if Disney makes a movie about the making of a Disney movie, which is what we watched last night. It was a saving Mr. Banks and it's a Disney movie about the making of the Disney movie Mary Poppins, but the the Emma Thompson character that the author peel Travers of the original Mary Poppins book and then books they portray her as excessively truthful harsh harsh truthfulness and she's she's against this whole making of the movie, you know in the conceit of this movie about the movie and so when anytime somebody talks to her she uses truthful statements to harsh everybody's mellow, you know to put them off their stride and and it's it's a harsh truth.

This is truth in love. This is embodying truth operating in truth communicating truth reflecting truth in love. This is a loving truthfulness and sometimes the most loving thing you can do is to be an example rather than a teller you all of us have an impulse to tell and to preach and to explain when many times a better way to truth a better way to get the truth across or to make the truth an issue is to simply be the example of truth.

This is how women can win their husbands without a word. There is a truth. You know, like James talks about there is faith and you can talk about faith or I will show you my faith in what I do.

So this is all part of the grace think back now measure measure. There's a measure in measure out. You've got a measure.

I've got a measure. What do we do with this measure? How are we going to survive the evaluation at the end? It is faith and knowledge epinosis and it has to be incorporated in us. So the first part is to listen and to learn and to write it down and to be inculcated to have it become an issue in our minds, but it has to now absorb it's got to become the warp and woof of our operation.

We have to be Aletheo. We have to be a living walking piece of truth in love and that's the constraining factor. All things are lawful.

That's truth. All things are not edifying. I am free to do any number of things.

But if I cause my brother to stumble love constrains that truth. I'm not going to flaunt my freedom if it causes hurt to someone else. That's a good example of I can live a truth and there's some truth.

I don't live because I'm constrained by love may grow up. This is potential. This is what we aspire to grow up in all things into him.

Who is the head Christ from whom as the more we grow into him the more we receive from him and this goes back to that ascending descending giving gifts receiving gifts. There is a reciprocal benefit here. The more we are in him the more we benefit from him from whom the whole body joined and knit together by what every joint supplies every joint.

So this joint thing is accurate, but it's not helpful. This is when you think of joints. What do you think of? I think of elbows first joint.

I don't know why somebody says joint. I think of an elbow. Maybe it's the first one I ever could see and recognize.

That's not what it's talking about. This is not talking about where two bones and I've talked before about the aptness of this where it determines direction and there's a lot to do and that that's all true. But this really is the connotation here is connection point.

It's connections not so much and you have the metaphor of an actual physical body here. But these what joints supply this speaks also of the circulatory system of the nervous system of the endocrine system of the the connections. In a body you're connected to the head not just by a whole bunch of bone joints, but we're connected by circulation were connected by the nervous system and all of those are involved in this idea of joints joined and knit together by what every joint supplies.

I am conscious. I ran a splinter into my hand yesterday carrying something. Well, my mind knew about it pretty instantly and when I was picking it out of there with a needle and realizing that it had gone down into the meat.

Well, I had all kinds of interaction of the rest of my body. Have you ever been inflicting pain on yourself trying to you know, get the skin off a blister or get a splinter out or a thorn or whatever and it you can feel it in your back. You can it raises the hair on the back of your neck when you're when you're jabbing in and you're having to endure that pain to get something out other parts of your body have like sympathetic response.

Have you ever had an itch and you're scratching it and you feel it in the middle of your back and suddenly the middle of your back itches because you've got an itch over here or you've got a pain here and you feel it. You know, we're linked were connected in ways other than just bone joints. You can put pressure on an artery up near your shoulder and your fingers go numb.

How does that work? It's nothing to do with the bone joint. It's the circulation link and if I cut circulation off here pretty soon my fingers can no longer talk to me. I think this is the most amazing thing by the way, when you fall asleep and your whole arm goes to sleep and you wake up that it comes back to do everything about that comes back to life.

What are the first time you fell asleep in your arm went to sleep it never came back. What if that loss of circulation? Well, the nervous system is dead and you just got a inoperable insensate appendage now because I fell asleep when I woke up it was gone. It's the most miraculous thing to me that that that your arm can be completely dead.

You can't feel it. You can't operate it. And as circulation is restored it resurrects from the dead.

It's miraculous. It's a good thing. Otherwise, we'd all be walking around unable to open doors.

So that's what it's talking about knit together by that which every joint supplies according to the effective working by which every part does its share. Every part does its share. Every part doesn't do all things.

The whole body is not a mouth. Whole body is not an eye. Whole body is not a hand.

What is the measure of the gift of Christ to you? If we focus on our opportunity our allocation of grace and try to make sure that we maximize the return on that investment Epinosus and faith the whole body benefits because we are connected. Inevitably so and as we grow up into the head into Christ, we are drawn closer together to each other and we are more and more of a benefit to each other, but we don't concentrate on improving the links between each other as the first priority we concentrate on growing into Christ as the head that is what truly unifies us. That's what brings us to the unity of the faith one Lord one faith one baptism one God and father of all who is overall through all and in all.

So this all hangs together, but this is the application section notice we're post 4 1 through 3. That's the foundation. For and following is application. We have heard the doctrinal communication this morning.

What do we do after we leave? application application walking standing growing not being tossed not being deceived not being played and given just enough to keep us coming back for more which is the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting but living in the sphere of truth operating in truth. Alephio in love growing up in all things into him who is the head and these are present participles. These are ongoing activities.

This is what we do all of the time whether we're in Bible class or not and we're mostly not but this is this is practice. This is pattern. Into Christ and once again as I mentioned to somebody earlier in this week, you know that the emphasis, you know that the teaching is sound when it focuses on the Lord Jesus Christ Christ centeredness is a feature of sound teaching if people are focusing on getting a building built if they are focusing on an outreach that has some sort of numerical headcount if they're focusing on subjective things eyes on people even eyes on self.

Well, we're going to we're all going to make our marriage. We're going to have a marriage seminar. We're all going to come and everybody's marriage is going to be better.

That is subjectivity. We grow into Christ who is the head focus on him learn the truth about him appreciate his work his role as mediator as the son of God as the son of man learning about the Lord Jesus Christ and being like him because his body is gone and we are his body now this will unify us you don't have to shoot dice. You don't have to play the roulette wheel you can grow up in him and in growing up in him.

It knits us together and the connections form and benefit because we are unified our shared appreciation of Jesus Christ our shared understanding of what this life is the reality of how it works. Unifies us it is the strategy of the indirect approach most of our problems get solved not by tackling them head-on but by focusing on fundamentals getting back to the basics and the truths suddenly the problems resolve. It's just a feature of the plan of God every part does its share causes growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

Notice verse 15. I like a wing in love the body builds itself up in love. What is this love it is putting the interest of others ahead of our own it is putting God's plan and purpose ahead of our own plan and purpose it is love for the Lord your God and love for your neighbor in love in love.

This is the bracket that surrounds this whole thing. So yes, it is kind of high-flown and theological but it is very grassroots applicable. Next time we will pick up in verse 17 which kind of turns a corner this I say therefore is a marker that he's going to kind of move in a new direction and so this is a good place for us to pause and we'll pick up in our study next time father.

Thank you for the truth of your word. Thank you that we have a life that is grounded in truth that is defined by truth that partakes of truth and reflects truth that prepares us for a future life that is only communicated to us as truth in the present. We we don't have empirical evidence.

We have the communication of truth. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will impress these things

on us so that we can truly grow up into Christ appreciate him and reflect him as we represent him on this earth in our love for you our love for him and our love for one another. We pray these things in Jesus name.

Amen.