

Ephesians 14-06-29b

We pick up our study now in Ephesians chapter 4. We are trying to figure out exactly what Paul is talking about here when he says, put away falsehood, put away deceitfulness, apotitheme the sudos. What does it mean? Well, we get some help in this from what follows, because he goes on to say, let each of you speak truth. Now to say or to speak or to talk is usually the Greek verb lego.

And this is not the verb that's used here. Instead, this is laleo. And laleo gives us great insight into what is on Paul's mind when he's exhorting us here.

I can do a pretty good job of not telling an outright whopper, as can you. It's the implied stuff. It's what we don't say.

It's the coloring and the shading and the presentation that leaves an impression that we have to work with. Laleo, even in its form, is a bit onomopoetic. La, la, la, la, la, laleo.

This is not talking about a single statement, okay? It's not, I cannot tell a lie, I did it. That's not really what this is talking about. Laleo is more oriented toward conversation, toward the wider use of communication, not just a simple statement.

So kata laleo meant to plead with somebody in a speech, going to give a big, long peroration on a thing. This has been done in songs in more recent days. You have a song about the Blue Water Line that's entered into folk song history.

Different ones, the Kingston Trio and the Brothers Foreign Guys have sung the Blue Water Line. If you can't give a quarter, then you ought to give a dime to save the Blue Water Line. The whole thing about the MTA, that was actually a campaign song for a guy.

Tongue-in-cheek and humorous, but it started out as a campaign song. There's the desire to influence somebody to support a thing, to engage in a thing or whatever through laleo. Many sermons are laleo.

State of the Union Address by the President can be laleo. He wants you to climb on board the train. Well, here, this comes to mean, what impression do you leave with someone? When Paul says, leaving behind, setting aside, putting out of reach, that which deceives, that which doesn't leave someone with the truth, your conversation should be characterized by truth.

This is primarily testimony about other people. This is really talking about not political issues, not who bent the fender, not why does the cat not have any hair on its tail today. Oh, I did or I didn't have something to do with that.

How did this get spilled? Why did this get left out and now it's no good? Who let the dogs out? None of that. This is talking about other people. And laleo is in the realm of what reputation you

end up assigning to someone.

How you speak about others. Now, here's the thing. Leaving aside falsehood, we think, oh, well, you know what that means is that we need to always be telling the truth and being, you know, so that people are not impugned.

They're not slandered. Not necessarily. You can fail to speak the truth by not being honest about shortcomings.

You cannot speak the truth by hiding. What needs to be known in terms of someone's failure or their incapacity or the danger that they pose. That is also failing to speak the truth.

And sometimes we get in more trouble not being honest, not being forthright about. What needs to be known about someone. This happens a lot in Christian organizations.

We're always quick to point out, you know, gossip and things that are clearly forbidden in Scripture. But we don't often remember that it is important also to speak the truth where this needs to be known. There's people who end up in ministry.

There are people who end up being priests in the Catholic Church. And their malfeasance and their lack of responsibility is covered up. That violates the spirit of this passage.

That violates what Paul is saying. This is all kinds of truth. Not just what's good.

Also, what is in fact bad. And notice, this is speak truth with his neighbor. Now this goes back, and particularly the people in the Jewish persuasion who had come to faith in Christ, they would have recognized this.

And you can see it in italics, I think, in your New King James. Yes, they've got it in italics, which tells you this is an Old Testament quote. And you've got Zechariah 8.16. These are the things you shall do.

Speak each man the truth to his neighbor. Give judgment in your gates for truth, justice, and peace. So this helps us understand the kind of truth that we're talking about here.

What truth does your neighbor need to know? Don't need to know gossip. Don't need to know hearsay. I heard this, that, and the other.

Truth is what we know for a fact to be true. I have seen this with my own eyes. I have heard it with my own ears.

I have verified this in my own experience. This is what is actually true. And this is a need to know.

What is the purpose of it? In Zechariah 8.16, give judgment in your gates. This is the place where decisions are made, where verdicts are rendered. Remember, the gates is sort of the courtroom.

That's where adjudication takes place. Give judgment in your gates for truth, for what is fair. Your neighbor, your one another in the New Testament church, notice how it changes from Zechariah to Ephesians.

Instead of your neighbor, it's one another. Who is my neighbor? It's my fellow believer. It's the one that I have conversation with.

And there needs to be justice. It is unfair. It is unjust to hide truth from people.

Why is it that they didn't ask me to do this and so? Oh, well, you know, I'm sure that was just an oversight. If there's a reason, you speak it. It might be kind of a harsh truth.

But if that person needs to know it. Now, there's a time when the roast is overdone and it's dry and there's not enough gravy to get it to wash down. And, well, you know, did you enjoy the meal? There's courtesy and there's politeness and there's sparing people's feelings that is in the nature of harmless expression of It's more important that that person not feel bad than anything else.

It's not an issue of justice. It's not an issue of being harshly truthful. You know, does this make me look fat? There are times when somebody needs to know that if it's an occasion where they really don't want to have an unflattering appearance.

And you might say, you know, that might not be your best outfit. You know, have you got something else? There's a time to be truthful. If it doesn't matter, then it doesn't matter.

This is where judgment, this is where being in fellowship with God through the presence of his spirit gives us discernment. The prophets of God were not always harshly truthful. You're not in the right place.

I'll take you where you need to go. Not strictly bald-facedly honest. Not like the gal in prison camp in World War II.

Who am I thinking of that could not tell a lie? Corrie Ten Boom. If you read the Corrie Ten Boom story, you know, in comes the German prison guard. Where is Sarah hiding? Oh, she's over there behind the thing.

You know, cannot tell a lie. This, I think, is misguided honesty. And, you know, if she dedicates herself to God, God will handle the consequences.

But look at Rahab. Have you seen the guys? They went that way. I think they're just over that hill.

See that hill? I think I just saw the dust. If you hurry, you might catch them. God honored Rahab and her family.

She's in the line of Christ. So this requires some discernment on our part. Where do we get discernment? The Spirit of God and the Word of God.

There is a time to be brutally honest. And there is a time when there's not an issue of justice, when there's not an important issue of someone's reputation, good or bad, that needs to be known. And there's a time when it takes courage to speak the truth in love.

This often takes courage. It's easy to prevaricate. It's easy to dissemble.

It's easy to avoid the sharp point and skirt the issue. There's a time to do that. And there's also a time not to do that.

Paul says, put away what is false. He doesn't say put away tact. He doesn't say put away brotherly love.

Put away kindness. Put away concern for the feelings of others. He doesn't say put that away.

He says put away falsehood. If I'm going to step onto a board that is a part of a suspension bridge over a chasm, I don't want it to look like a good board when it's really not. That would be pseudos.

And if I step on it and rely on it and it fails, and I go through and fall to my death, I'm going to hunt down the person that told me that was a good bridge in the afterlife and hit him over the head with what remains of that board. Pseudos is a false object of faith. There are pastors, there are preachers and ministers and Christian figures today who are perpetrating pseudos on the church of God, on believers in the Lord Jesus Christ by presenting things such as the prosperity gospel, by presenting things such as the feel-good gospel.

We've got some right here in Texas down south that are dangerous, dangerously misleading the body of Christ with pseudos. And it is important that people who know the truth point this out and say that individual is preaching falsehood. And we've got plenty of people who do.

Read the Berean Call, read the ministries that were begun by Dave Hunt and look at Unmasking the New Age. Gruthius, another one of his books, Beyond Truth Decay, Unmasking the New Age. There are a number of exposure ministries which are good and benefit the body of Christ.

They're speaking the truth and they're pointing out this is error, this is falsehood, this is wrong. This is what we are to do. Putting away that which is false.

Now, suppose you're in a group of believers and they're all jumping on board one of these falsehood things and they want you to join in. You have to make a decision at this point. If I am in the position of being the watchman on the wall and these people are headed into error and if they knew it was error they would not do it, then I need to speak the truth.

If these people are in love with error, if that's what they're looking for and they have found it, you're wasting your time speaking the truth. There is a time to remain silent and time to speak. Look at the Lord Jesus when He was arrested.

Sometimes He spoke, sometimes He remained silent. How do you know? What is the promise that the Lord Jesus gave His disciples? You're going to be called on the carpet and you'll know in that hour whether to speak or remain silent. Be in prayer.

Be prepared. Know the truth. Keep this passage in mind and you'll know in that time, in that hour, in that conversation, with that person, in that situation, should I speak or should I remain silent? There is no rule.

We don't live in the age of the law. There is a time to speak up and point out falsehood and point out error. When is that? One rule of thumb is, is there anybody present who in your experience and in your observation is genuinely seeking the truth? If everybody there is all harmonious and they're all on board with this error and they're the engineer pulling the whistle rope, throw on more coal, let's speed this thing up and go.

Do not cast your pearls before swine. So you have to make a judgment. You have to make a discernment.

Am I in a room full of swine? It's harsh, but it's the truth. Jesus didn't say don't cast your pearls before puppies. He said don't cast them before swine.

Swine are self-interested, bullishly dedicated to going their own way. It's sort of an oxymoron, isn't it? It's like a biological, it's a zoological oxymoron that swine would be bullish and go in their own way. But they are.

And you make this discernment. We put away falsehood first in our own heart. We know what's right and what's wrong.

We have to make a second decision about whether it is the time to speak or whether it is the time to remain silent. But this helps us here because it says, let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor, with one another. We are members of one another.

If people are dedicated to falsehood and we're not, guess what? That's not a one another. We're not of like mind. These are people who are going their own way, who have fallen for the lie.

And you generally know whether or not speaking up is going to do any good. Maybe you've tried it before. Maybe you tried it in this instance and it is met with resistance.

It's met with hostility. It does not promote peace. What does it tell us back in Zechariah 8, verse 16? Justice, truth, peace.

If all it's going to do is cause an explosion, you're wasting your time. You're casting your pearls before swine. They will turn and tear you to pieces.

Not the time to speak the truth. This is speak the truth with your neighbor. This is someone of like mind, someone who is at least willing to hear the truth, possibly will respond to the truth.

That's a one another. That's a neighbor in the genuine sense. And you see this as you go on to verse 26.

Be angry and do not sin. Be angry and do not sin. So this again is a category of truth that causes indignation.

That's why I say sometimes someone's good reputation is being sullied and you're setting it straight. Other times someone has an undeserved good reputation and that needs to be set straight. Speak the truth.

You might be angry. I get angry listening to people distort the word of God and lead gullible believers down 40 miles of bad road. It's okay to be angry.

Orgizo, by the way, Orgizo, we were talking about the difference between reek and work in the first session. Those two words come from similar Proto-Indo-European roots. One is werg, W-E-R-G, and the other is reg, W-R-E-G.

And you can tell that they are similar. One means to urge and the other means to do. You can urge something forward.

You can push it forward and you can do or accomplish. And the reason people make the mistake I made in terms of reek versus rot is on the analogy of, say, seek versus sought. But orge has the same roots as the word work in the sense of an accomplishment in a particular area.

But this is anger. This goes to an emotional reaction, wrath. This is often translated wrath.

Be wrathful and do not sin. We call this righteous indignation. It's not just indignant.

Indignant is kind of like a woman who comes in and sees that the table's been set with the spoons on the wrong side. You know, how dare you type of a thing. No, the orge is stronger than indignation.

And sometimes it's translated indignation in the New King James to sort of not be so harsh, especially when it comes to God and His wrath. This is a strong negative reaction to a thing. This is hot anger, orge.

But you can't sin. And that means that this emotional response has to be governed by reason. It has to be limited and held within its banks.

You can have a very high rate of flow of water, say through a fire hose, but you don't want the fire hose to break. This anger, this wrath, needs to be channeled. It needs to be governed.

It needs to be held in. There's a lot of force in an internal combustion engine. And it is useful as long as it is contained and channeled in the right ways.

That's what this means. There is a time to be really ticked off in the spiritual realm. Something is evil.

A great injustice has been perpetrated. It's fine to be angry about that, but it has to be contained. It has to be channeled and limited so that it does not become sin.

And so he goes on to describe this. Do not let the sun go down on your wrath. The word wrath here is *parorgizmos*.

It's the same word, but it's got *para* on the front of it. *Para* means alongside, like parallel lines. A paralegal is somebody that works alongside a lawyer.

A paramedic is somebody who is providing medical care that is auxiliary or alongside formal doctor-based care. They come alongside and provide medical help until you can get to the hospital. *Paraorgizmos* here.

Do not let the sun go down on your wrath. Now, why would it be *orge* in the first case and not *parorgizmos*? Why is it *orgizo*, which is a verb? Be angry. Notice that's an imperative.

Be angry. It's in the imperative mood. Be angry.

It doesn't say allow anger. It says be angry. You ought to get worked up over things that are wrong.

What's the matter with you if you don't have the thinking of God? God gets angry when He sees evil. We should be angry. Be angry about falsehood.

Be angry about people being misled. Be angry about apathy and indifference. Be angry about those things that are counter to the truth of God and to the plan and purpose of God, to the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It ought to make us angry. Be angry. It's a command.

Get angry. Do you not care enough about spiritual things to get torqued when you see unrighteousness and evil in the midst of the church especially? Be angry. Just don't sin.

There's a time to get angry at your family if you're a father. There's a time to get angry at your kids if you're a parent. There's a time to get angry at your parents if you're a child and things are going wrong.

But don't sin. There are commands about how to treat your children. There's a command about how to treat your spouse.

There are commands about how to treat your parents. You can be angry at your parents and still honor them. You can do both.

Be angry. Don't sin. Dedicate yourself to truth.

Put away that which is false. And if you're angry, hear me now, if you're angry and you don't let that be known, that's falsehood. If something has made you angry and you're sitting on it, you're containing it, you're hiding it, you're not letting someone know that what they have done has made you angry, that's falsehood.

It's not right to hide anger. You may think you're right and you're not. How are you going to find that out if somebody else doesn't speak the truth to you? If somebody else doesn't point out that you are in fact sinning when you think you're not.

This is what we do for one another. You can be calm in expressing it. I have to tell you that what you just said, what you just did, or what you failed to say, or what you just failed to do has made me angry.

And here's why. Speak the truth to one another in love. Don't deceive.

We always think, oh, don't tell lies and tear down somebody's reputation. This is in the area of our unity. What has he been talking about in this last chapter and a half? Unity.

Don't let divisions divide up the body. One of the quickest ways to dissolve the bonds of the spirit, the bonds of love, the bonds of peace, is to have a one-sided anger that isn't communicated. Don't let the sun go down on par or gizmos.

This is what accompanies, this is what is beside. Right? The paraclete is the one who is alongside for comfort. He's called alongside.

Par or gizmos, these are the concomitants. What accompanies anger? What accompanies anger? Well, you start dredging up old stuff that should be separated as far as the east is from the west. Well, you know, the last time.

Anytime you start thinking last time, that's par or gizmos. This is baggage. This is suitcases coming along with the anger.

Do not let the sun go down on that. That stuff is going to come up. We can't help it.

We're falling. But you've got to get it resolved soon. Keep short accounts.

We're encouraged to keep short accounts when it comes to committing sin. Go to the Father.

Confess our sins.

He's faithful and just to forgive and to cleanse. These things should not simmer. They shouldn't sit there and fester like an infection that just gets worse and worse because the boil has not been lanced.

The badness has not been let out. You can pretend that you don't have an infection under the skin. But if it's there, the truth is it's got to be dealt with.

Be angry. It's a command. Do not sin.

It's also a command. One is positive. The other is negative.

Be angry. Do not sin. Here's another command.

Do not let the sun go down on your wrath. And this is what accompanies. You may wake up the next morning and you're still just as incensed over this wrong or this injustice as you were the day before.

But what is it that you did not let the sun go down on? The talk. The reaction. The histrionics.

The emotional outbursts that may accompany it. That's got to stop. Your attitude may not have changed, but you have spoken.

You have let it be known and that's it. This doesn't become a running pattern where you're going to harp and you're going to complain and you're going to chide and ride and deride and continue to flog this issue. It comes up.

It's addressed. You speak about it. The sun goes down.

Your attitude may remain. The orgy may still be there, but the par or gizmos, that was confined to the day. Let it go.

Nor give place to the devil. This is the simple word for give, didymi, and tapas. Topography, you're looking at the places.

This is the lay of the land. They say this is opportunity. No, it's a place.

Think of the physicality of these commands. Put away, put aside, apatithy, deceit, and speak the truth. The truth is going to occupy the place where this prevarication and dissembling and reinventing reality was.

Truth is going to occupy that place. Don't let the devil occupy that place. Now, Scripture has a lot to say about deceit and about Satan.

Let me just give you a few Scriptures here real quickly. We're going to see in the next chapter,

verse 11, Ephesians 5, 11, have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. That's what we're talking about here, unfruitful works of darkness.

It doesn't say hide them, don't talk about them, let somebody else figure it out for themselves. It says don't act like you're in communion with them, expose them. In the following chapter, when we put on the whole armor of God to stand in the evil day, this is what we are going to stand against.

Take the shield of faith, quench the fiery darts of the wicked one. What is his nature? Well, he is a liar from the beginning. This putting away of falsehood is something Jesus mentioned in Mark 10, verse 19.

You know the commandments, do not commit adultery of the ones that he picks. Listen to what accompanies. Do not bear false witness and do not defraud.

Don't murder, don't commit adultery, don't steal, honor your father and mother. But two of these that he quotes are do not defraud and do not bear false witness. Don't be a false dealer.

John 8, 44, Jesus talking to the Pharisees who were religious deceivers. You are of your father the devil and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth.

Because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie he speaks it from his own for he is a liar and the father of it. To deal in deceit, to fail to speak the truth when it is time to speak the truth is to line up with Satan.

You think about Ananias and Sapphira, they sold a field, they got the proceeds, they came to the church and they said we have taken the entire proceeds of the sale and we are giving it to the church. What was the problem with that? What did Peter say in Acts chapter 5? Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie? Satan has filled your heart to lie. You think, what is the harm? He said he gave it all and he kept back a part of it.

The keeping back part wasn't a sin. Selling the field wasn't a sin. Peter goes on to tell him this.

While you had the field, was it not your own? After it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God. It's the deceitfulness of it that caused his death and his wife's death. This same idea is repeated of course over in Colossians chapter 3 verse 9. Do not lie to one another since you have put off the old man with his works, with his deeds.

Liars and perjurers are lumped together in 1 Timothy chapter 1 verse 10 with fornicators, sodomites, kidnappers. It's not a light thing to depart from the truth. Revelation chapter 21 verse 8. The cowardly, the faithless, the abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, this is

your drug addicts, idolaters, and all liars shall have their portion in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone which is the second death.

Practicing a deceptive life, deceptive speech, and it's repeated in Revelation 22 verse 15. That was 21 verse 8, 22 verse 15. Outside the New Jerusalem, outside the city, outside the gates are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral, murderers and idolaters and whoever loves and practices sodos.

Whoever loves and practices a lie. Sodos, very same word. It's important that we be dedicated to the truth.

Positive truth and negative truth. You think how much better off the Catholic Church would be if they had purged out that which they chose instead to hide? They deceived people, they didn't point out where there was failure, where there was abuse. It needs to be pointed out.

There is a time to speak up and we need discernment. We need to cultivate the ministry of God's Holy Spirit. We need to cultivate our knowledge, our understanding, our reflection and meditation on the Word of God so that we will know when it is time to speak up and speak the truth.

To stand for the truth, even to be angry when it is an issue of truth versus falsehood. But to not sin in it. To not have it become a crusade or an issue that we flog day after day.

We see it, we address it, we speak on it and we let it go. Well, these are powerful words. If we fail in this, we will be giving a place to the devil.

And this is just like admitting cancer into the body of Christ. We are His body. We are members of one another.

And to admit falsehood, to give a place to the devil is to tear down the defenses and to make the body and its members vulnerable to attack. We don't want to be responsible for that. So this is something we pray over, something we think about when we encounter falsehood, whether it's in ourselves or in others.

We need to think about it. It's important to identify it, to set it aside. In some cases, for it to be set aside from a body point of view, it's got to be spoken about.

It's got to be pointed out. Other times, it's not the issue. It's not anything that is going to divide the body, create an injustice, and you're actually preserving peace by not making an issue out of something that isn't an injustice and isn't a dangerous falsehood.

How do we know the difference? This is what we pray to God for, discernment, wisdom. Well, we'll pick up next time at the injunction not to take things illicitly but to work for them licitly, honestly, properly. That'll be verse 28, where we'll pick up next time.

Father, thank You for the truth of Your Word. Thank You for the clear instructions that You give us. You call us to live a holy life.

You call us to reflect the glory of the Lord Jesus, and You give us all of the necessary guidance and enablement to bring it to pass. We pray that God, the Holy Spirit, will impress these things on us, will convict us where we fall short, will give us discernment and wisdom in how best to follow and heed and fulfill these commands and this model that is presented for us in the pages of this book. We pray it in Jesus' name.

Amen.