

Ephesians 14-08-10a

This is Rebecca's birthday. Oh, excuse me. This is August the 10th 2014 we continue our study in Paul's Epistle to the Laodiceans, which we know is the book of Ephesians.

We pick up today in chapter 5 We'll take a moment to prepare ourselves and go to the Lord in prayer and then we'll begin Father thank you for granting us another day another space of time to practice the things that we've learned from your word to learn new things to reinforce what we already know to refresh our perspective and our perception of this life and the Opportunities that you have given us before the return of the Lord Jesus to be prepared to To learn to be good servants and good stewards to Practice the skills that will enable us to reflect the glory of the Lord Jesus in the ages to come we thank you for this passage of Scripture and the clear light of truth that it shines on our path and we pray that your Holy Spirit will be with us in the presentation and in the reception and in the Fellowship together as we look at what the Apostle Paul said so many years ago that is so pertinent and so practical for us As it has been throughout the generations. We pray that our worship this morning will be pleasing in your sight will be a an offering and a sweet-smelling savor as we think about the Defining truths of our faith and the wonderful gifts that you've given us through the Lord Jesus We pray these things in his name. Amen We come to chapter 5 we have given a very thorough Effort I think to the first four chapters and There is a very beautiful symmetry to this letter.

It's very carefully thought out each Statement in it as we have seen in these First chapters is Part of a plan part of a progression and What is its purpose? Why does God give us this letter through? The apostolic gift he conferred on Paul. Why do we have it? What's it for? Well in a nutshell it ought to make a difference it should equip us Thoroughly for every good work. That's what the Word of God in general does.

This specifically is Church Age truth. These are truths that are unique and Applicable to us because we are church because we are in Christ Previous believers weren't in Christ. We are Moses was not in Christ Daniel was not in Christ Job Noah Abraham Isaac Jacob Name your Old Testament Saint as great as they may have been as faithful as as diligent as as Desirous as Solomon may have been they kept hitting that glass ceiling Sooner or later We fall short because we are not enabled we in the flesh must inevitably fail This was the message of the Old Testament that without him we are not complete This by the way is the false premise of Arminianism if you ever get into any the fringes of the Calvinist debate Calvinists will call anybody who's not a Calvinist an Arminian Jacob Arminius got some things right and he disagreed and Argued with some of the points of Calvinism, but he had his own erroneous beliefs one of which was that you can that your will is so free that if you want to you can just choose to Do good If that were the case, we wouldn't have needed the change of dispensation.

We wouldn't need the indwelling and filling and sealing and gifting and active ongoing Enablement and empowerment that comes from God's Holy Spirit God had to confer the Spirit in

Short bursts and in temporary ways to a few selected individuals to keep things going in the Old Testament Kind of reminds me of a child who hasn't learned to ride a bike and when you first take the training wheels off You've got to run alongside They can go a little ways and they're gonna start to fall over and you prop them back up or somebody learning to ice Skate, you know an experienced skater It's the best way to learn to skate is somebody that knows how to skate hanging on to you hopefully you're a child and easily manipulated and You somebody, you know, you can go for short bursts, but somebody's got to grab you before you fall and hit the deck this is Roughly the case in the Old Testament, but now we all have Enablement and this is what Paul talks about. It is one of many gifts that come to us in him so we saw this and how many times have we reviewed the first three chapters, especially the Cross is a great metaphor for the first three chapters of Ephesians first You have the vertical in him in relationship with him All of these unique privileges and provisions are ours in him in him in him It stands like that great seven-branched menorah. That's what we compared it to Paul moves from that to the to the horizontal because of that we are related to each other in him if I'm in him and you're in him, then we are related and He talks about the fact that this has dissolved the former basis for Division and for conflict and for opposition and for separation we are united in him.

Well, so then we come to chapter 4 and There are Sections in chapter 4 we basically have these Sections and they're they're conveniently marked off for us With the word therefore you start in verse 1 therefore I the prisoner of the Lord beseech you to walk worthy and that is his summary of the first three chapters of Positional truth Position in Christ position relative to one another and so those first six verses in chapter 1 Review and solidify and provide a transition to build on top of position The next therefore you have is in verse 8. Therefore he says But the transition really starts or the new section begins in verse 7 to each one of us grace is given according to the measure Of Christ's gift therefore he says and so that next section in in verses 7 through 16 This is the provision that God has made for us because of that position there is provision for us to operate in a practical way now before the mellifluous tones of my voice cause you to drift off in a wave of euphoria or Distraction think about this now. This is the operators manual for Presence of the Spirit the power of the word the soul of the believer in the church age You've got one of these this is just like getting a new electronic device I was Thinking this morning about how you know, not all the time. Do we really know how to how to work things? You don't avail yourself of all the features You didn't know that it would do that.

You find it out later or somebody else has got one and you say How are you doing that? Oh, it's right here. Just look in the menus Look at my look in the setup for my iPhone look what it will do Look at this little thing and you say well, why didn't I know that? Well, it has to be shown to us. It has to be detailed.

You can get it reading the manual you can blunder around and try all the features and you know reset and reload and Do whatever you have to do, but there are things in there that are Useful That's what these Chapters, that's what this material is for us. This is how to do it. This is how to

get it done This is how to be able to stand at the judgment Justified vindicated with something bringing something to that altar Ourselves a living sacrifice holy and acceptable to God There's gonna come a time of evaluation is the sacrifice blemished Is it disqualified or the priest not even going to let it near the altar because it is not fit This is how we ensure our fitness for service This is how we learn our skills if you were a priest You didn't just walk up there at the age of 20 and say well, you know for the next 20 years I'm gonna be serving as a priest.

Let me Adam hand me a knife. Show me a bull. Let's do it These guys spent the first two decades of their life learning to be priests How do you? Safely and effectively Perform a sacrifice.

How do you slay the animal? Where does the blood go? What kind of sacrifice is it? What are the details? Who does what when where how and why how is this done on a day-to-day basis? You can't be a priest without learning Priest craft the skills Are you a priest yes or no, are you a priest? Do you know your priestly skills? If you didn't know them, thank you for not answering I wasn't really wanting an answer on that if anybody said no I'd Probably just be crestfallen If you need a review if you need a refresher if you want to be sure that you know them all and you're not surprised By somebody come up and saying well, you know, let's do the fellowship offering and you say fellowship. Oh gosh fellowship offering. Oh Sure, you don't want to do a whole burn offering.

I got that one down. I do that one all the time, you know Fellowship offering and you're pretty you've got a sack of grain here and I'm I don't you know, I do I'm the bull guy I do the oxen sacrifice, you know Uriah over there. He does the he does the grain thing.

Just move on down there. You would want to be prepared We don't want to be unfit. We don't want to be unskilled.

We don't want to be ignorant We want to know how to do this. You are a priest you're in the business of offering sacrifice to God on a daily basis Well, this is how to do it this is how it is done and Paul has begun by describing as it were the holy precincts the The court of the tabernacle or the temple this is in him. This is in Christ This is the hallowed ground in which we dwell and operate in our priesthood He has gone on to talk about here's how you deal with your fellow priests, here's how you work together Here's who does what different guys do different things.

Not everybody is an actual priest Some are Levites and they have other functions So he detailed the gifts and so we had this provision that was given to us in the second part of chapter 4 He has given gifts some are apostles some are prophets some are evangelists some are pastors and teachers if you're one of the Kohathites You've got specific functions and you want to do them. Well if you're one of the sons of Aaron and You're an actual priest. Well, you've got responsibilities there everybody in the operation of worship and Glorification of God has an assigned function and it works smoothly when everybody knows their function and everybody does their part You are one of those people Sitting here right now listening to the sound of my

voice.

You are one of these people We've got to know how this stuff is done how embarrassing when it comes time Somebody blows the shofar and it's time to do the action and you don't know the words to the song and you're a singer You don't know the order of the sacrifice I'll tell you an embarrassing thing that happened to me when I first became a Pastor of a brick-and-mortar church the first time we did the Lord's table. I Did it backwards? I did the cup first and then the bread The guy just wasn't practiced. I knew it.

I had the scripture right in front of me, but it's kind of flustered I was trying to remember, you know you've got to give cues so that people can play and ushers can can do stuff and and You call them forward and you have to have somebody pray and if they if they pray for the cup You don't then hand out the bread. I mean I and I goofed it up. I was inexperienced.

I wasn't skilled. I wasn't practiced at Leading that kind of formal ritual. I can promise you that having messed it up.

I never messed it up again and You know, we're flexible or nothing if not flexible it it all happened at the end there were empty cups and empty cracker trays and it all got done, but It is a reminder of how important it is for us to know our skills and to practice them and to learn from our mistakes Well again chapter 4 is marked by these therefores therefore verse 1 Therefore verse 8 which gives us that second section the provision that God has made in the body of Christ to get these different functions done The next one we have if you look at it, where do you see the next therefore? Do you see it? Your new King James is conveniently Divided in 17 this I say therefore and it's a transition. This is a new topic a new emphasis here and 17 through 24. This is our personal preparation my Dallas seminary mentors would be proud of me because all of my points this morning alliterate 1 through 6 position 7 through 16 provision 17 through 24 Preparation personal preparation.

This is what you personally have to do Do you see it? You should no longer walk like the Gentiles walk alienated in the dark giving themselves over to bad things You have not so learned Christ if you have heard if you've been taught that you put off concerning your form of conduct and you Put on the new man This is what you have to do in order to do the function that you were given in the previous section because you enjoy The position that you were given in the section before that which was greatly detailed in the first three chapters See how beautifully Paul has constructed this this argument this appeal this exhortation He lays the foundation he paints the background He puts us in the context and he says now look here is how to get it done Here's how to do your priesthood. Here is how to function so that when you stand at the judgment seat of Christ You are a workman What it needeth not to be ashamed. I You don't want to be ashamed you don't want to be ashamed of me I don't want to be ashamed of you.

We don't want to be ashamed together the grace of truth ashamed Bible Church Not gonna

happen. We've got it right here. He's giving us the practice Whether you are young whether you are old whether you are unmarried whether you are married whether you are a student whether you carry it And hold a job whether you're a student and hold a job whether you are neither Whether you maintain a household Whether you have a function as child whether you have a function as a parent whether you have a function as an employee whether you have a function as A husband or a wife son or a daughter Anywhere, you are all of these instructions are absolutely pertinent absolutely essential because all of those things are just details subordinate to our identity in Christ He is our high priest we are priests we have a function to fulfill and it is a daily function Sacrifices were offered how often in Israel? Let me ask you this way was there ever a day in the life of Israel where sacrifices were not offered when they were functioning under the Mandates of God's law was there ever a day that there weren't sacrifices.

They had morning sacrifices. They had evening sacrifices They had feast day sacrifices. They had Sabbath sacrifices.

They had Optional sacrifices they had voluntary sacrifices they had involuntary sacrifices somebody got to file had to come down Sacrifices happening all the time every day. There's blood running as high as the horses bridles down there around the tabernacle in the temple why? focus on Relationship with God you can't forget that there is a God in his heaven with whom you have a covenant relationship every single day That's us In the spiritual house the spiritual temple So this stuff's important, right? We have position we have provision we make personal preparation verses 17 through 24 got to put off the old man got to put on the new man and Then the section we've just covered verses 25 through 32 What is that starts with a therefore doesn't it right there in 25 therefore? What do we do? This is the practice? You've got the position You've got the provision. You've got the preparation now.

Here's the practice. This is getting it done Put away the deception. Let's get on with the true nature of our life Speak truth however In this section we also have a little bit of a wrinkle everything is going great with our Position with our provision with our preparation, but in the practice what happens? Lying and thieving There's lying and thieving going on.

What's one of the earliest priestly? malfunctions After the people get into the land that you can think of I'm not talking about core dathanabir. I'm not talking about the strange fire once they get in the land What what can you think of that is a priestly malfunction? Who's a famous priest that launched the first famous prophet? Eli a Couple of guys named Hophni and Phineas. What are they? sons of Eli and they are priests and What do they do? They lie and thief right? it's one of the one of the first things that besets the priesthood is Lying and thieving remember they put the flesh hooks in and pull meat out of the pot for themselves And there's some hanky-panky going on with the women at the gate, and we studied all that in in first Samuel God has to send Samuel to rebuke Eli Because it's his responsibility He's responsible for what his sons do and You remember what happens with the ark? There's an awful lot of bad things that happen well Lying and thieving so even as we have the practice here is the practical solution This is how to deal

with the inevitable failures What happens if a priest is defiled what happens if someone in Israel is defiled you've got to have a coping mechanism Because the practice is not perfect Okay Practice In this life will not ever make you perfect.

You just have to try to practice to make fewer mistakes, right? So we have the dealing with imperfection. Have you ever had a problem, and you had to figure out I what should I do? There's sin in the camp. There's death in the pot.

What do I do well? It gives it to us here in in a nutshell in a principal form Because putting away lying let each of you speak truth with his neighbor. We're members of one another he's harking back We're positionally related We have got provision to Overcome what would divide us we have got personal preparation that gives us the strength and the means to do so So putting away lying putting away the deception Let's speak truth because we are members of one another because we are members of one another We are defined By in Christ and that defines our relationships with each other when we have to deal parents dealing with children children Dealing with parents siblings dealing with each other employees and employers employers and employees husbands and wives whoever it may be the first Definition, how do I address this problem? The first thing to remember is we are members of one another in Christ first Foundational thing that's how Paul started this letter. We're all in him So to do this properly to do it in a God honoring God glorifying Jesus Christ pleasing way What how do we do it? Remember we are members of one another the bond is love so Why does the next verse say be angry and do not sin? If everything was roses if it's Who be up do be did be I'd be I'm saying my early morning singing song.

It's just all Flowers and it never rains in California, you know if it's all great. Why does it say? somebody's angry Where does the anger come from? Within the membership of one another's somebody goofed somebody failed. I failed you failed.

We all failed Something went wrong and this creates the spark of anger And he says look when things go wrong and somebody messes up somebody fails It's okay to get talked about it, but don't sin Let me ask you this if we sin does God in heaven get angry Is God angry with sin just as a concept and as a as an element of disobedience and so on If it wasn't for the blood of Christ interposed what would hit us the love of God? Oh, you poor thing you fell down again. What would hit us if it weren't for the blood of Christ interposed? Remember the words of the hymn Interposed his precious blood interposed between what between the wrath of God and us What stops death at the door on Passover Blood on the lintel. What if there's no blood on the lintel? Somebody dies, right? That's the wrath of God against sin So be angry do not sin somebody messed up What is the solution remember now? We're in the practical section here.

This is the practice This is how to do it day by day Something has gone wrong and we're a this is not anger at the government. This isn't anger at the foreigners This is an anger at something abstract in the news. This is in the body.

Somebody has malfunctioned and It is Serious enough that anger wells to the surface You've failed. Why did you do that? You committed an act? Why did you do that? What's the matter with you had weren't you listening etc. There's anger He says look when the anger starts don't sin.

There's got to be a short duration for that anger Remember the par or gay there's or gay and there's par or gay the things that accompany that anger You've got to stifle those things. You've got to stop that stuff Because if you don't you're going to give an occasion You're going to give a place to stand to the devil and he will use it If you let him in the fence, he's going to do damage You know, there's all of this the latest thing. I think this past week they said They found out that that some untold billions of names and login names and passwords have been compromised They discovered these things of Any name and password you've got apparently has been compromised The only security you have is there's like 1.6 billion of them and you know, what what are the odds? It's you know 1.6 billion to one that they're going to pick yours and exploit it, but they've all been cracked.

They Found a database someplace and all your Amazon all your bank all you all of these allegedly secure stuff It's all been cracked. It's all in a big database and Now they're busy trying to figure out what to do well the whole point of HTTPS and and passwords and the rest of it is to Wall things off and keep them secure the reason you lock your house and have an alarm system Especially if you're traveling is to try to secure the place. So somebody doesn't get in.

Well if you don't Use these practical steps if we don't listen right here right now to what Paul is about to say You've left the door open Do you ever go off and come back and realize that your big garage door is open and all your stuff's been sitting there in the door into the house from the garage, it's just all open and Miraculously, hopefully when you come back nothing is gone, but you think oh my gosh I you know Something fell over and when I closed the garage door and drove away the door went right back up and said well I don't want to crush a little kid and up it went and you've left everything exposed It has happened to me, you know, it stacks up too close to the door shovel falls over door comes down Oh, I might be crushing a little kitty up. It goes away I go Invite the world in look at what I've got take what you want You've given a place To somebody you don't want in there if we are not careful about what happens when there is failure If we're not careful about what happens when we sin against one another we're going to give an opportunity to the devil We're leaving the door unlocked and don't think he's not smart enough to come in and do the worst possible Damage with that opportunity hand somebody your bank password Somebody nefarious somebody with ill will and see how long it takes for bad things to happen Just one little password one little word It'll be exploited. Don't give place to the devil.

He says Now in this case the the he wraps up all of these failures under theft Stealing and we talked about this Pretty much any failure that we commit against one another Takes something that belongs to someone else. They they needed honor. They needed obedience.

They needed respect They needed consideration. They needed fellowship They needed a

sacrifice on our part and we didn't give it. We are a priest.

We are to be self-sacrificial Looking out not only for our own interests, but also for the interests of others The mind of Christ ought to be in us to put ourselves Behind the interests of others and we didn't do it. If you don't do that What have you done you have stolen the sacrifice and kept it for yourself? You've been Hoffney took the old three-pronged meat hook plunged it in the pot and ate The sacrifice because our self-sacrificial treatment of each other is a sacrifice not to that person Are we ever told to sacrifice to each other? Who is the sacrifice to if we are kind one to another tenderhearted and forgiving one another? That's an offering to God That is a sweet smelling savor Jesus said if you've done it to the least of these my brethren you've done it to me Remember the sacrifice is not to the person the sacrifice is to God lift your eyes Above the mundane lift your eyes above the immediate object who gets a benefit and remember Just pretend the person is the Lord Jesus How hard is it to go the extra mile if the pack you're carrying belongs to the Lord Jesus? He's not a Roman soldier. He's the Lord Jesus if he asked you to go one mile go with him, too Why when I look at him, I think if this was the Lord Jesus pack I would carry this thing until I Wore away and there was just one big long smear on the road That was me to my last breath carrying this pack because it's my Lord and Savior.

What would I not do for him? Right. It is a sacrifice to God As a part of our priesthood when we are kind tenderhearted and forgiving one another Well disposed you Spock now remember that So when he says let him that stole steal no more this addresses both sides We're not giving a free pass. By the way, all of this is essential to understand chapter 5 We're going into chapter 5 chapter 5 makes no sense If we don't understand this foundation that Paul is laid in for and that's why we're reviewing it and summarizing it because to get to 5 1 What does it mean to be an imitator of God doesn't mean what a lot of people think it means? God is not simplistic God is not You and I faceted he is multifaceted God has more than one policy at work and We are to be imitators of him.

How do we do it? Well, we've already been given the clue here If you are the person stealing Stop it. If you are stealing the sacrifice if you are aggrandizing yourself at others expense stop it and Start doing work that is beneficial and profitable so that you can be a giver to others rather than a taker You should be giving not taking isn't that the import of this? Give give give never take That's the principle if you're a taker quit being a taker and start being a giver in the sense of what you Decide to do Let him that stole steal no longer. Let him labor with his hands doing good So that he can give good to ones who need good good of all different kinds Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth Whose mouth is this the angry person? What would make a corrupt word proceed out of your mouth? I've stolen this stuff and that's corrupted my mouth.

No, it's the person from whom you have stolen that is going to be tempted to assassinate verbally persecute verbally get recompense and vengeance verbally Paul says look in the practice of these things in Christ stuff is going to happen there's responsibility on both sides of the breach the person who was selfish and Acted selfishly and stole has got to quit By the way, that is a

requirement for the other things that follow here. Let him the stole steal no more and when that person adopts that attitude and starts walking down that road of working and Earning what is good by profitable labor? These other things can take place So in that process don't corrupt it by talking With this person has a genuine turn and is making amends is trying to go in a different direction Then they're selfish ways Shut up Don't keep bringing it up Don't resurrect it. Don't use it as a club.

Don't threaten them don't hold them accountable morning by morning because I'm your mentor and you're more my little charge here and I'm gonna lead you to holiness by the force of my Interrogations day by day Tell me what you were thinking I'll judge whether it was good enough or not No corrupt word proceeds out of your mouth angry man who was wronged angry man who saw the wrong angry person who Assigns the failure to someone else. Don't let it corrupt your speech What should come out of your mouth is what is good for necessary building up of whom? The person that fell the person that stumbled the first person that came short if something's going to come out of your mouth It should be to encourage and aid Repair Progress edification building up What comes out of your mouth should impart grace to those who hear it whether it is the person that is in recovery Is is making amends for this whatever this lapse was or for anybody else that's in the vicinity If it isn't going to impart grace don't say it If this person doesn't need to know that there was a failure don't tell them No Corrupt communication coming out of your mouth and do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God by whom you were sealed for the day of Redemption again Remember the foundation you have been sealed into the body and don't strain the seal The idea here is God the Holy Spirit has done this divine work of assembling us and uniting us and bringing us in Christ Through all of his ministries don't Push against the bond of the Spirit the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace if you start yakking and start trying to get Recompense by cutting somebody down verbally Abusing them verbally making them feel bad verbally instead of building up this Strains it grieves the Holy Spirit who's trying to hold this thing together. It's all made out of corrupt parts He is holding it together by his divine power Don't split the atom with your corrupt communication Bitterness wrath anger clamor and evil speaking put it away from you with the motivation behind it of malice Why would you have malice because you have not forgiven? Why have you not forgiven? Hear me now.

Why have you not forgiven? You have forgotten that you are a forgiven one parable of the Debtor who was forgiven and then he had a debtor and wouldn't forgive him what happened to his debt His forgiven debt was reverted to be unforgiven If we confess our sins, he's faithful and just to forgive us our sins guess what happens if we don't forgive each other It reverses first John 1 9 It undoes the work of Christ now, who do you think is angry if the Lord Jesus? Paid that dear price and we undo that now, who do you think is angry? It's not worth it to try to hold on to our anger try to hold on to our malice and not forgive one another Because that is going to send the malice right upstairs to God and God There Remaineth no sacrifice for sins read Hebrews chapter 10 a certain fearful expectation of judgment why The judgment with which you judge others is the judgment with which you yourself will be judged We just have to remember that right we get in the

moment and we forget who we are and why we're here We forget the parameters we forget our priesthood. We forget that we dwell in That space We give place to the devil. We team up with the devil.

He he and we become partners in crime and it strains The power of the Holy Spirit So be kind to one another be tender-hearted Be ones who forgive one another Even as God in Christ and remember this is not just forgiveness. This is Disposition toward remember that we saw that this is not offie Amy here This is being Gracious toward Grace in all different comes from Chorus. Well all of this leads up now We saw those their fours in verse 1 in verse 8 in verse 17 in verse 25 We have four Foundation stones here.

What is the first word in chapter 5 verse 1? therefore So we're going to have a new emphasis a new Point that he's going to build on these previous four We'll pause here and take our break when we come back. We'll begin chapter 5 at verse 1