

Ephesians 15-01-18b

We pick up our study now in Ephesians chapter 5, transitioning into chapter 6. Before we leave chapter 5, just a few quick notes on the text, and you will have seen this on my handout, and they're more in the realm of interesting than important perhaps. But there has been the helpful hand of the scribe at work in a couple of places in the text that you have before you in the New King James, beginning with our theme verse up there, verse 21, submitting to one another in the fear of God is what it says in your New King James, and you'll notice on the handout it's submitting to one another in the fear of Christ. And I think you can see how important the presence and example of Christ is in what follows, and as an introduction to that, I am confident that the Nessel Allen UBS text is correct here, that this is Christos and not Thaos.

There's been a little bit of editorial work done on this portion of the letter by some later hand, and I think for stylistic reasons perhaps, looking at verse 20, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, they thought well, having just mentioned Jesus Christ you wouldn't say Christ again, it must be God. And I'm not real sure why they felt like they needed to change it, but the better text here, the NU as they call it, the Nessel Allen UBS isn't always best, but here it is, and it's the fear of Christ, and you can see that reflected in what we just covered. The second and more interesting to me change is down in verse 30, we are members of his body, in your New King James, of his flesh and of his bones.

Of his flesh and of his bones. And we are members of his body, and we are members of his flesh and of his bones. What do you think about that? Let's talk about the words of the Lord Jesus, if you want to keep your finger here and turn back to Luke chapter 24, the resurrected Lord Jesus appearing to his disciples, and they are immediately disturbed when they see him.

Even though they've had the report of Peter and John, even though they've had the report of the ladies who went to the tomb, the tomb is empty, John looks at the folded cloth and believes, when Jesus actually appears, they are affrighted, they are disturbed, they are troubled. So in Luke 24, 38 Jesus says to them, why are you troubled and why do doubts arise in your hearts? Now, just as an aside, because our subject here really is faith, just like the music we had during the break, faith is the victory, and it's a matter of faith. And people say, well, if you just give me enough evidence, I would believe.

You know, I just don't find there to be enough evidence for my faith. Good, good save. Preventing someone from sitting in the plate of cheese.

Good, good call. That's what you get for moving around during Bible class. But think about this now.

There is often the objection, well, I would believe if I just had enough evidence. People, look, here's a group of men who have followed Jesus Christ for over three years. He has just appeared

in their midst.

They know Him better than anybody. He is standing there talking to them and there are doubts in their hearts. It's not a matter of the quality of the evidence.

It's not a matter of the quality of the evidence. It is a matter of how prepared and motivated we are in our hearts. The Pharisees watched Jesus heal a man with a withered hand.

Watched it happen right before their very eyes. No tricks, no stunt doubles, no mirrors, no green screens, no puff of smoke and substitutions. They watched the guy stretch his deformed, you've seen people that have been paralyzed or have not had use of a limb and how the muscles contract and shrivel and make the thing just painful to look at, much less to possess.

You've seen people that have perhaps a genetic problem or a deformity, a birth defect, something that happened at birth and there's just this terrible abnormality from our point of view. Jesus tells this man that's got one of these, this twisted, deformed arm. He says, stretch it out.

While they watch, this arm as it stretches turns into and becomes a fully functional, fully operable, all of the nerves, all of the muscles and he instantly has the mental ability to control it and use it. Just like the sight to the blind, not only do their eyes now work, but all of the mental programming that we learn as babies to parse three dimensional space, to recognize objects, to interpret the signals that go to the brain. It takes months and months to figure that stuff out when you're a baby and all your wiring is going together.

The guy not only has his eyes fixed, but all of the software and all of the data that we accumulate in a lifetime is instantly supplied. And he looks around and he can not only see, but he can perceive, just like everybody else. This guy stretches out his hand.

These miracles are done in the presence of skeptical witnesses and even though they see this, I mean, what is it going to take? Do you want the angel Gabriel to grab you by the hair and grab you and take you to the throne room of God in the third heaven and say, look, there he is as you fry and shrivel and crisp in the presence of God? No man has seen God at any time, right? What is it going to take? It's not a matter of the quality of the evidence. It is a matter of the disposition of heart and the disciples, even up to this point, have had great trouble learning to exercise faith the way the Lord Jesus has taught it. This is why they all fled at the arrest.

This is why Peter denied the Lord three times. It is an issue of the heart. And listen, when there is an issue in the heart in one area, it will reflect in other areas.

This is what nobody wants to talk about with regard to various forms of perversion like they are trying to promote and celebrate in a city ordinance here in Plano. The deadline for signing that petition I think is tomorrow. So if you live in Plano and haven't done so, I rarely talk about politics here, but I am telling you there is a time to speak up and this is a time to speak up.

If you've got a Plano address, I hope there is enough of us who will speak up on that thing and get it stopped. It is perverse in its execution. They hired outside advice.

They were given a set of talking points to stick to. They purposely launched it during the holidays hoping nobody would notice and the church would find it a fait accompli because they were busy putting their Christmas trees on the curb. But it is disposition of heart and disposition of heart will reflect itself in a number of different ways.

One of many problems with homosexuality is it is not just what you do behind closed doors or who you choose to hold hands with, it manifests itself in other places. The fear and unpreparedness of the disciples was manifest when the three head of the class pupils couldn't stay awake in the garden with the Lord Jesus. When the disciples all fled and scattered at the arrest of the Lord Jesus.

When Peter, warming himself by the fire, trying to be brave in human strength, is intimidated and caused to recant and deny three times by a servant maid who just says, I think you are one of those guys. There is no power, there is no presence, there is no courage from God. Why? Well, the Holy Spirit has not yet been given.

The ability to rise above our fallen flesh relies entirely on the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus has tried to imbue them, he has told them how they can gain access to the Spirit in that time. At that time it was by request.

And he says, look, pray. If they prayed in the garden and said, Lord God, I know this is a troubled time. I can tell by looking at the Master that something big is happening.

Give me the presence of your Spirit. Give me the courage to remember what I have been taught. Give me the courage to stand with him.

They didn't pray that, they fell asleep. So here is what we are talking about. When Jesus appears to them and he says, why are you troubled and why do doubts arise in your hearts? They are looking at the resurrected Lord Jesus.

The evidence is not good enough? Seriously? He is standing there. And he gives them many proofs. He eats some fish and a piece of honeycomb.

He says, look, touch the scars. It is I myself. But they have to have so much help to accept.

He says in verse 39, and here is our point, see my hands and my feet that it is I myself. Touch me and see. For a spirit does not have what? Flesh and bones as you see that I have.

Flesh and bones. What is the purpose of the reference here to flesh and bones? What is it contrasted to? An apparition. A vision.

You are not seeing a vision. This is the real deal. I am here literally in the flesh.

Feel me. You feel the flesh. You feel the bone under the flesh.

There is substance here. And with this help and encouragement and reasoning from Jesus. This is the kind of reasoning that God the Holy Spirit supplies to us.

It is counsel. I will send you another counselor. I will send you a helper.

He will enable you to reason with the truth. And this is what enables you to not only look at the evidence but to draw valid conclusions in the spiritual realm from it. In the physical realm you do not see resurrections.

In the spiritual realm with God all things are possible. So it is the reasoning. Look the Lord Jesus does not just keep standing there and saying, hey, come on.

Come on. He helps them. He gives them rationale.

Look at my hands and my feet. Touch me and see why. A spirit does not have flesh and bones.

Get your mind working. Draw some conclusions. Think your way through this.

When he had said this he showed him his hands and his feet. But the point here referencing Ephesians chapter 5 is he says a spirit does not have flesh and bones. The reference to flesh and bones is in contrast to what is insubstantial.

Now to say that the church is his flesh and bones, you might kind of be able to make that work. But think about the upper room, the bread and the cup. And think about the application that Paul makes of that over to the Corinthians.

Does he say the same night that the Lord was betrayed he took bread and broke it and said this is my body which is broken for you. And then he took bread sticks or something and said these are my bones. None of them will be broken.

He doesn't make reference to that. That's not the identity. And remember back in John chapter 7, where people thought he was talking about cannibalism.

And he says unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood you can't have a part with me. Maybe that's not 7. Maybe 6. Back in that part of John before 9. He says unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood. That's identity.

It's identity in that passage in John. It's identity in the upper room. Flesh and blood.

It is the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanses us from all sin. We are his body. Those are constant references.

Where else in scripture do you have any reference to the bones of Jesus except when he is assuring the disciples I'm really standing here and you need to process this with faith. And believe what I told you. Did I not tell you that after three days I would rise from the dead.

You've got to draw some spiritual conclusions here. You've got to get your mind working and exercise faith. Well for that reason when you see in verse 30 of Ephesians chapter 5, we are members of his body.

There should be a period after body. And that's where the better manuscripts end the verse. Somebody added of his flesh and of his bones because they did not understand the difference between flesh and blood and flesh and bones.

They serve two different purposes in scripture. And if Paul was going to say something about the identity of the church with the Lord Jesus Christ, which he didn't hear, he would have almost certainly said flesh and blood. The bread and the cup.

The identity that Jesus spoke of back in John. And this is why you have the omission of that phrase in your outline. We are members of his body.

And then I move on to verse 31. And that is John chapter 6. I missed it by a chapter. I am the bread of life.

And he goes on from that. Bread of heaven. My flesh is real food.

My blood is real drink. Verse 55 of John 6. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in them. Identity.

And the in Christ idea of this letter, of course, would take that form if Paul had chosen to use it. Anyway, I just wanted to point those out because there are a few differences in the actual text from what you have reflected in the New King James. Moving on from that, chapter 6. We are members of his body.

And it says, children obey your parents in the Lord for this is right. Children obey your parents in the Lord for this is right. One of the first things that stands out as we look at this verse is the same thing that we noted in Ephesians chapter 5. Verse 31.

Verse 19. Making melody in your heart to the Lord. Verse 20.

Giving thanks to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Verse 21. In the fear of Christ.

Verse 22. As to the Lord. Verse 24.

Just as the church is subject to Christ. Over and over again it is in the sphere of this vertical

recognition. This is the kind of thinking that God the Holy Spirit enables in our hearts.

It is not enough to see that, well, Christ is the head of the church and the husband is the head and the father is the head. So it is an analogy. This is like Jesus standing before the disciples in the upper room.

We can still be troubled. We can still be unsure. It is the presence and power of the Holy Spirit that enables us to see that we can do this as to the Lord.

We transcend the human level here. We transcend just a mere analogy. So it is children obey your parents in the Lord for this is right.

Now we have an interesting difference in verse here and it is reflected in the English. In verse 22, referring back to verse 21, talking about wives and husbands, it was hupotaso. Remember that? Here it is hupakuo.

This has emphasis on what you hear. Acoustics. Akuo.

It is responding to what you are told. These are the policies. These are the preferences.

These are the guidance. These are the instructions that are given by parents. So tatekna, children, people who have not reached their majority and their independent ability to think and do for themselves, they are under the roof of their parent or parents, are to hear and do what their parents require in the Lord.

Encurio. In the Lord. There is a limiting feature here.

There is a condition, a qualification. Well son, would you go down and take this 45 and rob the liquor store? I need some cash. No, that is not in the Lord.

There are moral constraints. There are ethical constraints. In some cases there are spiritual constraints.

In the Lord. Now how do you know if something is in the Lord or not? Because we all rationalize. Well, I just don't think that is biblical.

I don't think that is godly. I don't think in all of these, and I emphasize again, if I haven't emphasized it strongly enough in the past, in any specific case, whatever authority, if it is authority in the home, authority in the workplace, authority in the classroom, authority in government, this is something to be done very thoughtfully and in the filling of the spirit, and that means in prayer. The disciples failed in the garden because they did not pray.

They did not pray. If you are going to make a decision and say, I don't think respecting and hearing and obeying this authority is in the Lord, pray first. Ask God for wisdom and insight to ensure that if you are going to depart from this God-ordained authority, which permeates our

society at almost every level, if you are going to depart and say, we are breaking off and forming our own country, King George, we are leaving, me and the kids, husband, if you are going to do a thing like that, it needs to be done with preparation in prayer to ensure that we are not rationalizing, that we are not doing something superficial, knee-jerk, emotional, whatever it is.

Pray. Ask, seek, and knock. It will be given to us, the knowledge.

When is enough enough? When is it too much? When has a line been crossed? When is it time to make a change to get out from under that authority, to not respond to that authority? Pray. Pray. This is not something to be done lightly, but it is always to be done in the Lord, in the fear of the Lord, in the filling of the spirit.

It has got to be a godly thing, not just expedient, not just more comfortable, not just less traumatic, not just, well, I just don't want to make waves, and if you are having trouble deciding that you need to disobey that authority, pray. Strength will be given to us in that hour to do what is pleasing in God's sight. How could God not answer that prayer? Lord, I want to do what is glorifying to the Lord Jesus.

I want to do what is pleasing in your sight. It is murky to me. I can't see clearly.

I am not sure. I need to have peace in my heart that I am doing what pleases you. Looking upward, having the vertical in place before we try to do something in the horizontal, good, bad, or otherwise, in the sight of others.

It has to be good in the Lord. Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this, obeying your parents in the Lord is righteous, dikaios. How do we lay hold of righteousness? What is the handle on righteousness that enables us to reach out and grab it? Faith.

Righteousness by faith. We are trusting, we are claiming, we are leaning on the everlasting arms. So obeying your parents in the Lord, if you are a believing subordinate child, and maybe it is not easy, maybe it doesn't seem fair, maybe you are Cinderella and the other two sisters are out shopping and you are having to clean up the house and you never get to go anywhere, in the Lord.

This is righteousness. The circumstance may not be satisfying. The circumstance may not be fulfilling.

The circumstance may be extremely unpleasant. But the offset, the benefit is, this is righteousness. You are laying hold of, storing up for yourself, treasure in heaven because you are grabbing righteousness by faith.

But it has to be in faith. This is why it has to be in the filling of the Spirit, going all the way back to verse 18 of chapter 5. That's how you do it in the Lord. This is right.

This is righteous. How is it righteous? Where are you aiming your faith? Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise. And what is the promise? That it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.

This is another one of those little Greek asides that I appreciate, a little language deal. What's the very last word in verse 3? Earth. What does it mean? If you go back to the command back in Deuteronomy chapter 5, take a look at Deuteronomy chapter 5, just flip back over there.

This is Deuteronomy 5.16. Honor your father and mother that your days may be prolonged and that it may go well with you. Where? In the land that the Lord your God gives you. Now, did the Lord give Israel the whole earth? Gave them the land.

And we always have to be alert when we see references to Eretz or Adamah in Hebrew, just like you have to be alert in Greek when you see references to the earth or to the world because is it universal or is it local? And the ge, the geis here, epites geis, upon the earth, well geis can mean land in the same way that Eretz, Eretz Yisrael, land of Israel, or how big is Eretz, how big is geis? Well, it's determined by context. And so it doesn't mean that you may live long on the earth to the Deuteronomy readers. It's the land the Lord God gives you, the Adamah the Lord God gives you.

This is the land. This is when you are in the land of promise. This is when you are obedient.

You didn't drop in the wilderness and you are in that realm of inheritance. People dropped in the wilderness. What was their inheritance? The dust of their own flesh and bones rotting away.

It is those who enter the land, the Caleb's and the Joshua's in that generation that had the faith to cross the Jordan that inherited the land and took hold of the tribal assignments, the tribal allotments. So children, and remember it wasn't the parents, the parents except Caleb and Joshua all died in the wilderness. It was the children who went in and inherited the land.

It was the next generation, right? Children obey your parents, honor your father and mother that it may be well with you and that you may live long in your inheritance is the idea. If you are one who overcomes by faith, if you are one who crosses the Jordan into the land of inheritance and promise, if you want that to remain a possession and if you don't want to jeopardize it or lose it, this is one of the areas that you have to pay attention to. You can't transgress in this area without jeopardizing your inheritance.

What happened when the Israelites no longer honored their parents, no longer honored the tradition of the fathers in worshiping God and following the commandments? They lost the land and they are out of the land today for essentially the same reason. And then it says in verse four, and you fathers do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord. Now this is an oft quoted verse and it deserves a session unto itself.

I will point out by way of introduction and anticipation that you have a parallel construction here.

You have two lines that balance and inform each other. The first one being fathers do not provoke your children to wrath.

Then the hinge point is, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. As preparation for next time when we look at this in detail and we will do a little bit of review on obeying parents because these are complimentary. They are given together just like the wives submit and the husbands love.

This is the same structure in miniature. But look particularly at verse four and ask yourself the question, are we talking about weather or climate? Weather or climate? Are we talking about episodes or are we talking about trend? Are we talking about something momentary, something perhaps exceptional or are we talking about the long haul? And you already know the answer to that question. But if the part of the exhortation after the adversative conjunction is talking about long term, bring up over the course of their young lives until they leave home, then so is the first part.

And there are implications for that in terms of application that are worth note. But we will look at this in detail. We are going to see some interesting things in the language here and in the freight that is born by some of these words that really does illuminate this and help us to understand it correctly.

But once again, we are still under the umbrella of the filling of the spirit. All of these are expressions. All of these are enabled and empowered by the filling of the spirit.

You cannot do it without. If you get into a mode where the presence and power of the spirit are not active, you are more drunk with wine wherein is excess, you are more drunk with some sort of emotional anger, emotional impatience, something is motivating, driving and defining other than the presence and power of the spirit, then fulfilling these commands is not going to be possible. Do not be controlled, do not be influenced, do not be driven by something in the environment.

Be motivated, controlled, influenced, driven by, motivated by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. This is what enables all of these to achieve their ultimate goal, which is right in the center of the chiasm. Be the glorious church.

Be the body of Christ in its fullness, accomplishing its purpose. Let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you.

We are so grateful for the standing that we have in the Lord Jesus Christ, the potential, the opportunities, the privileges. Unlike any time in history, in this fullness of times, we are so gifted and so blessed to have access to the world of truth that is in your word, the presence and enabling, active, energizing presence of your Holy Spirit. We pray that as we meditate, as we reflect on these truths, that your spirit will help us to see the pertinence and the application in our personal, individual circumstances, that we will see the context as we interact with one another,

as we spend time in fellowship, as we come together to share our appreciation for the Lord Jesus in songs and hymns and spiritual songs, as in our hearts throughout the days and throughout the weeks we enjoy the many benefits that we have as your children.

We pray that in all things the Lord Jesus will find us worthy, that he can present us to himself as a church without spot and without blame, worthy to represent him on this earth now and in heaven in the ages to come. We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.