

Ephesians 14-08-03b

We pick up our study now in Ephesians chapter 4 verse 32, we are looking at the exhortation, the imperative that says in the Greek word order here, keep, you all keep on becoming with a view toward one another, *krestoi*. It's a noun. This is something ones.

What does *krestoi* mean? It says kind in the King James and the New King James. What does *krestoi* really mean? Well in the ancient Greek world, the history of this word, the usage of it in times before the New Testament day, it was when used of persons, when describing people, meant worthy, decent, upright, and honest. It was an integrity word.

It was a truthfulness word. It connoted genuineness. You can always bounce these meanings against the usage that I mentioned earlier by the apostle Peter when he describes the Lord Jesus and he says, taste and see that the Lord is *krestoi*.

And we'll turn to that shortly, but you can see that it has a moral quality. It describes not action, but character, not the nature of what someone does, but the nature of who they are. And you see that reflected even here in a later day in Paul's usage.

Keep on becoming yourselves. This doesn't say keep on doing or performing kindnesses. Keep on becoming ones who are something with respect to one another.

Krestoi. It's a personal quality, not the nature of your doings. What is that character or characteristic? Worthy, decent, honest, upright in the moral sense.

For example, Paul uses this word in 1 Corinthians. 1 Corinthians chapter 15, verse 33, do not be deceived, he says. Oddly enough.

Do not be deceived. Evil company corrupts good habits. Evil company, *kakai homiliai*, or *homilia*, *homiliai*, corrupts *krestos* ethos.

We get ethics from this. But not just, not *agathos* ethos, evil company corrupts *krestos* habits, *krestos* ethics. When you keep bad company, what you think is your moral compass is going to be deflected.

I've told you many times about the situation I encountered when I was sent to Lebanon back in the early 80s, around the time of the barracks bombing there. My mission, the reason I was in Lebanon when that happened was to assist the Lebanese army with their artillery. They were shooting and having very limited success in hitting their targets and they couldn't figure out why.

We had also supplied them with some new state-of-the-art howitzers and these delivered a much more powerful projectile and there was fear that they would wreak havoc on themselves if they didn't figure out how to shoot straight. So I was sent there as a gunnery instructor to fix that problem. I had a team of enlisted men and I went there and one of the first things I discovered in going to the battery emplacements was that the reference used, it's called laying the battery.

You lay them for direction. You get them oriented and you say, all right, we're going to set off deflections and this determines what direction the rounds are going to go. Well obviously you

would say, well I need to find true north and figure out how many degrees or in artillery it's how many mils.

It's a much finer graduation. There's a lot more mils in a circle than there are degrees. How many degrees in a circle? 360? Well there's 6,400 mils in a circle.

There's a lot more. So it's a very fine gradation. 3,200 mils is 180 degrees.

So they were emplacing these batteries but because the rounds were impacting in the wrong place they said, well, we don't know what's the matter with our directional control. Well this is what I discovered. Because they don't paint big map lines on the ground to show you lines of latitude and where true north is, how do you determine north? Use a compass, right? What principle operates a compass? It points to magnetic north and there's usually a slight discrepancy between magnetic north and true north but it's printed on the map.

And so you make that adjustment and if magnetic north is here, true north must be here. You adjust it by maybe a degree and a half or two degrees depending on where you are. So they had laid their batteries using a magnetic reference, an aiming circle that has a compass in it, kind of like the binnacle and compass on a ship.

It's got a floating needle and they had done this but they had set up the aiming circle right next to a power pole because they could plug into it and get light and power a lot of other stuff. Well the aiming circle was right there. And what did that do? The presence of the huge powerful magnetic field that surrounds current going through gigantic cables on a power pole deflected the needle significantly.

So when they thought they were shooting in degrees, let's say they thought they were shooting at 45 degrees, they were shooting at like 25 degrees. I think it was about a 200 and something mil error which is several degrees and projected out at that distance it was enormous. They were blowing up their own people.

So your reference makes a difference and you don't want your reference to be deflected. And what Paul is saying here in 1 Corinthians 15.33 when he's talking about Christos is your set of values, what you believe to be right, what you believe to be true, what you believe to be profitable, you're going to think... These guys swore up and down, they said, we don't know what the problem is, it must be this American ammunition we're firing, the powder is bad, the weapons are bad, something is wrong because we have followed the procedures to the letter and we've got these guns laid, check it, look at our aiming stakes, check the weapons, check the aiming circles, check it all yourself, you will see. Of course they're doing all this in broken English with their Arabic accent.

Check it and see, you will find, we have done everything correctly, everything is perfect, we have done it perfectly, we do not understand why this stuff is not going where it should go. Check it all, check it out, it is perfect, it is correct. And they were just, they were angry at America because their stuff wasn't going where it should go.

And when I went and checked I said, well, you've done everything right, but your aiming circle is in utterly the worst possible place you could put it because it has thrown your master reference off. This is what evil company does to your mental compass. You'll think things are fine, you'll

think they are righteous, you'll think they are just, you have no qualms, and it is a very, very disturbing thing.

This has happened to me, and maybe it has happened to you a few times, where I was so utterly convinced in the clean sunlit landscape of my mind that I was in the right, what I was saying was right, what I was exhorting and encouraging for others was right, and then I discovered to my dismay, and it greatly undermines your self-confidence, to discover my mind did not tell me that I was in fact grievously wrong. Why didn't I get an alert? How am I supposed to know what's right when everything in me is good to go, sounds great, proceed, forward march, yank the lanyard, fire the rounds, it's all good, and I ended up blowing up my own people, almost literally, in the moral and philosophical sense, I was doing damage thinking I was in the right and I was just grievously wrong. How does that happen? Here's one way, keeping company with those who do not adhere to divine standards will move your compass, this is the ethos, this is your sense of moral right and wrong, will fake you out, will deceive, and there's no alert, there's no light, you're out of oil and the oil light is not coming on, the sender has been unplugged, the sensor is not connected, there is a way that seemeth right to a man, the ends thereof are the ways of death.

Why does it seem right? Didn't God give us a conscience, hasn't He put the knowledge of Himself and moral right and wrong in us? Yes, but you can corrupt it, you can screw it up, that's what 1 Corinthians 15:33 says and it tells us a lot about what Christos means, evil company. It's not corrupts good habits, like, well, you know, I had the habit of, you know, doing this healthy stuff and now I don't, or I had the habit of, you know, only drinking orange juice and now I drink whiskey, it corrupted my habits. No, it falsifies your moral compass, it makes you think things are right that aren't, you feel justified and vindicated and you'll argue in favor of things, you'll believe the things, it all looks right, but your whole aiming circle has been influenced and you don't know it, you can't detect it unless you have an outside reference.

By the way, the way we solved the problem, not only by moving the aiming circle and relaying all the guns, but in order to get directional, because there was power and power lines everywhere in that position, we couldn't move the whole battery, not right then, so how did we get true directional control?

I used an absolute reference, I went out there at night and I did a Polaris Kolchab, it's a standard celestial observation, you can determine true north by looking at the stars and using the tables and making the calculations, you know what your latitude is and so on, you use the stars, Polaris, the North Star.

Believe it or not, I don't know, they probably all got GPS now, but in the absence of that, the North Star, and it's just like magnetic north, it's not actually at north, but you can calculate based on where you are and taking a sighting with the proper equipment and I figured out an absolute reference, it's external, it doesn't depend on the physical impediments that might be in the position, it's in the sky, it's immovable and unshakable, it's one of the fixed references that God put there, Polaris is like the word of God, it's not a planet, it doesn't move around, so we used that and got directional control and it was amazing, I was a genius suddenly, because the rounds went where they were supposed to and all these people have said, it's perfect, it's a, oh, you know, we bow to your gunnery knowledge, but it was gratifying at a professional level to figure out the problem and solve it, it is going to be far more than just gratifying to figure out

where our reference is off, get the external reference of the word of God and not have our ethos, the sense of what is right and what is wrong, our conscience, our understanding of what is and what isn't affected to straighten it out, to have it true and one of the things we have to do, remember the order, there is a background, there is a context that Paul established, then he said there is a sequence, get the background, start with an objective landscape, get the sequence and you've got to put some things away, put away the power pole, evil company is a power pole moving your magnetic compass in the wrong direction, you've got to get that away before your compass is going to work properly, use the absolutes that God has provided, don't succumb to evil influence, you say, well, how do I know which ones are evil?

Again, the word of God shows us, are people interested in God, is that a priority for them, are they in the word of God, do they base their standards and their evaluations and what they think is right and wrong on the values and the exhortations and the injunctions and the observations that are in the word of God or do they make it up themselves, well it just seems to me that it ought to be this way and there is a group of us and we all feel the same so it must be right, that's the ways of death.

So, Christos, do not be deceived, Paul says, 1 Corinthians 15.33, don't be fooled, to be fooled is to believe that something is true, don't be fooled, don't be made a fool, don't be deceived, evil company corrupts good habits and he goes on in verse 34 to say, awake to righteousness.

You ever had a dream and it seemed real at the time, I was telling Patty, not last night but the night before, I dreamed that I was sitting next to Mark Knopfler and he was about to show me how to play the guitar, I have no idea where that came from, except I know he is a really good guitar player and there he was, he was sitting next to me and it was like I won a prize or something and I got like half an hour with Mark Knopfler and he was like, well you know, show me what you do, let's see if we can help it and I thought, wow this is great and then I woke up, darn.

But awake, but see that's fantasy, that's wishful thinking, awake, wake up and contact reality, Paul says in verse 34, awake to righteousness and don't sin. For some do not have the knowledge of God. How do you know who evil company is? Who's got the knowledge of God? Are you spending a lot of time being influenced? This can happen over the media.

You've got to be careful even with supposedly good sources, you've got to watch the underpinnings even of Fox News, be careful. Conservative talking head commentators, be careful. Who has the knowledge of God? There are people who are politically minded, there are people who are agenda motivated and there are people who are hate motivated and if they hate the people who are in power maybe we might share a feeling that people shouldn't be where they are, but you've got to watch.

Don't keep company even media wise, even blog wise, even Twitter wise or Facebook wise allowing the constant stream of thoughts and comments from those who do not have knowledge of God. You've got to limit that, be careful. Look at it with caution, take it with a grain of salt.

Awake to righteousness, don't keep company with sin. Some do not have the knowledge of God. And he says, talking to the Corinthians, I speak to your shame.

You ought to be ashamed that you don't pay more attention to what you expose yourself to. You ought to be ashamed that you're casual about this, that you don't mind consorting with those who do not have the knowledge of God and you don't realize what it's doing to your ethos, to your compass, to your healthy apparatus for discerning right and wrong. Well, Christos, that's what we're looking at.

The idea that it is your plumb line, that's what upright means. We talked about this Friday night. Upright, this is your vertical reference.

Christos was used in secular Greek to talk about a worthy man, someone who is worthy of friendship, worthy of trust, worthy of association, in contrast to the sycophant, the one who is trying to gain personal advantage by cultivating acquaintance. It is used in contrast to the simple or the foolish. It was even used of a wound.

There was a Christos wound. And, you know, we say, wow, you've got a really good bruise there. What does it mean? It means as bruises go, that's a really worthy bruise.

You know, you say, wow, I got a good bump on the head. It doesn't mean good in the sense of beneficial. It means it is fulfilling of the definition of what a bruise or a bump is.

It's not just an insignificant thing. That is significant. It fulfills the meaning of what that is.

And this is Christos. In that sense, it's used of good. So, you all keep on becoming, with reference to one another, good.

Good ones. Christos. Worthy ones.

Valuable ones. Ones who fulfill the definition of what it means to be what you are, which in this context is in Christ. Be the real deal.

That bruise is the real deal. That bump is the real deal. With respect to one another, you all keep on becoming the real deal.

The genuine article. That which fulfills and meets in every detail the definition of what you are. Christos.

He goes on to say in verse 32, you all keep on becoming, with respect to one another, good ones. Beneficial ones. Worthy ones.

Tender hearted. Tender hearted. This is a shift in the area that is being described.

Christos, krestoi, has to do with your nature, your character, your integrity, your honor. You could even translate it as noble. Noble toward one another.

What is the noble thing to do? The noble thing for a young man dating a young woman, despite all of his rampant hormones and urges and whatnot, is to give a girl a quick kiss on the cheek and let her go inside to be dated on another night at another time, to be seen in another context. Not to be interested in self-gratification. Not to be interested in giving in to priority and urges.

Not to try to compromise her integrity or her future. That's noble. Self-denial in almost any context.

Military. Why do people constantly want to thank military people for their service? Because military service is recognized as partaking of subordinating self-interest to a greater good, a greater cause. The cause of the nation.

The cause of the population. The cause of what the nation stands for. Security.

Safety. Why do people feel motivated to be thankful that there are military people? Why is that different than thanking the postman or thanking the butcher or thanking the barber or thanking the manicurist? What's the difference? Those are service functions, but military service is recognized and almost emblematic of nobility and self-sacrifice and self-denial. You will risk being maimed.

You will risk being killed for the commitment to this particular cause, this particular function, this particular kind of service. Well, that's *krestos*. With respect to one another, keep on becoming noble, self-sacrificially beneficial to one another.

Then we have *eusplachnoi*. E-U, that means good. Eugenics or good use of genetic science, allegedly.

Eugenics, get the good genes, breed for the good genes, weed out the flaws. E-U, euphoria, I really feel good. Euphemism, it's good words in place of bad ones.

E-U, it means something good, something preferable. *Splachnos* is your guts. It's your innards.

It's your gizzard and your liver and your kidneys and your insides. And in the ancient world, this was considered the seat of feelings and emotions. *Krestos*, this is your moral integrity.

These are your norms and standards. These are your values and your character expressed toward others. Your personal policy, your outlook, your general disposition in terms of principle.

It's principle, it's policy, it's character, it's integrity. *Splachnos* and *eusplachnoi* means feeling good toward, having good feelings toward. Now this is a whole different area.

You can have great standards and good policies and be a pill when it comes to your attitude and the way you feel about other people, the one another. You can be right, but you can be so disgustingly right. You can be annoyingly right.

You can be abrasively correct. Yes, you're right, but look at the way you're being right. And this is a conviction for some of us who like to stand on our foundation of rightness, or we think we are, and yet it is not accompanied with genuine good will, good feeling.

Desiring from an emotional sense the well-being of others. Kindly disposed in the proper sense of kindness. I wouldn't put kindness with *krestos*.

I would put it with *eusplachnos*. But this is *eusplachnoi*, and again, this is an adjective made into a noun. These are people who are noted for, are characterized by, they are called this.

Kind ones. Good feeling toward others ones. Keep on becoming, with respect to one another, people with great principles, great character, and people with great sympathy, empathy, kind dispositioned ones.

Empathetic, sympathetic. Warm feeling ones. Well disposed ones.

Eusplachnoi. There is a triad. There are three of these O-I words.

Krestoi, eusplachnoi. The third one is karizamani. The root of it is karis, C-H-A-R-I-S, which is grace.

Gracious ones. Ones expressing favor. What is God's grace toward us? What is the quick toss-off gloss for the word grace in English? When you want to define grace with two words, what do you say? Grace is unmerited favor.

Right? You don't necessarily earn it or deserve it. Grace is unmerited favor. In linguistic studies, when you are looking at Greek or Hebrew, they say, what is just the quick and dirty definition? That is a gloss.

And the gloss for karis is grace. Well, in English, if you're going to gloss the word grace, what does grace mean? We're not talking about graceful moves like a ballet dancer or a figure skater. What is grace expressed toward other people? It's unmerited favor.

It is based on who and what I am, not who and what you are, when I am gracious. You have a gracious host. They're not gracious and generous and thoughtful and accommodating and making sure you are comfortable and supplied and have everything you need.

They're a gracious host. They're not gracious because, oh, well, you're a celebrity, you're famous, you're rich, you can do something for me later on. That's not who and what you are.

They're a gracious host because anybody that comes gets that treatment. It's the same for everyone. It's the kind of person they are, gracious.

Krestoi, usplachnoi, karizamani. Keep on becoming these three things. Keep on becoming, with respect to one another, people of good character, of nobility, of generosity as a policy and as a characteristic of self.

Keep on having a warm feeling, a kind disposition toward one another and keep on being gracious based on who and what you are. Because you have both the academic foundation, the spiritual integrity foundation, and you have the emotional foundation, now you get to the actions. There is character, there is feeling, and there's action in these three words.

Do you see it? Do you see it? Krestos, this is what you are made of that is beneficial to others, noble, generous. That's who you are. You're feeling toward others.

You have thrown out what is bad, you have kept what is good so that your emotions are in order. You no longer have a bitter, unkind, jealous, grudge bearing, or any other ill will. You are kindly disposed.

You have taken the ill will and exported it. You've put it in the hearse, driven it to the graveyard, somebody else buried it. It's gone.

The fiber of your being, your character, your norms and standards, your values, krestoi. Your feelings toward others. This is where once yourself is squared away, now you can begin looking at others and your feeling is good because of the first one.

Now, because of the first one, who you are, because you've squared away your feelings toward others, now you can do. Karizaminoi. You can be gracious, you can be generous, you can be long-suffering, you can be beneficial.

You can do for those who don't deserve the doing on their own. Who you are, how you feel about others, and what you do for others. All of this is in the context of eis alelus, with respect to one another, with a view toward one another.

It's not talking about the abstract. It's talking about the practical. In him, in the fellowship, members of one another, unity of spirit, bond of peace.

This is how you maintain it. This is how you express it. It's not an abstract.

The unity in Christ, the fellowship, forsake not the assembling, isn't an abstraction. This is how you do it. And it has to be done by each one of us.

It doesn't just happen. It's not passive. That's why this is an imperative.

You keep on becoming. You keep on expanding in these three areas. With respect to the one another-ness here that he's been talking about for the last chapter and a half or two, he says, this is what you've got to keep on doing.

Ginnomai, keep on becoming personally your developing biblical character, the mind of Christ. Your attitude and your feeling toward one another is good. And your actions, your expressions, your overt manifestation, charisomenu, gracious, just as also, kathos kai, just as.

What is the standard? What do you compare it to? How do you know if you've done it or not? It's great because it's one thing to say, try this. Have you ever been in school and you take a test and you fulfill the answers, you do your best, you study, you fit it in, but then you never get your paper back. They don't grade it.

You say, well, what did I get wrong? I'm coming up on the final and you haven't told me how I did. How can I improve if you don't tell me what I did wrong? Where is my standard? Where's the answer key? This is the answer key. This is the comparison.

Are you doing this or not? Do you want to know how? Just as also, kathos, God, in Christo, in Christ, ekarisato. He just uses the third one. We don't have to worry about the character of God.

We don't have to worry about the feelings of God. We understand God from his expressions, his actions toward us, right? And you can see the sequence. If you get the first one and get your heart right and your character right and your norms and standards right, that fixes your feelings.

You can now be kindly disposed without reservation, without deception, without fibbing, without telling white lies, without pretending to be something you're not, without hypocrisy. Let love be without hypocrisy. Remember that? How can love be without hypocrisy? Well, you know, I did have hypocritical love for you, but I've changed my mind.

Now my love for you is genuine. That's not how it works. How do you have love without hypocrisy? You've got to go back to square one.

You've got to fix the Christos aspect. Get that fixed. Your feeling, your eusphagnoï, can then be wholesome and true.

And with that, you can then proceed out of the heart proceeds, the actions and the words and the treatment that people receive. It's a sequence. There is a background.

Do you ever notice how when people are decorating in a house and they say, well, I mean, you could be walking around a store looking at chairs. You say, well, is this a good chair to get or not? Is this a good couch to get or not? Should we get this table or not? What do you immediately think of to know whether the table is appropriate or a good thing to get? Well, you think about where it's going to go. Where is it going to sit? This might be a great table in one house and a terrible one in another.

This might be great upholstery in one house, terrible in another. Why? Well, what color are the walls? What color is the other furniture? Where is it going to integrate? How is it going to fit? That's why the context of chapters one through three is so important to chapter four. Paul has painted the background.

We know the context. You say, well, gosh, should I do this act of generosity to this person or not? I just don't know. I don't know if I'm encouraging them in a bad course by being generous or by being encouraging or by showing up or spending time.

How do I know what to do? Well, you don't know if you haven't gone through this process. Start with the background. What does it mean to be in Christ? What does it mean to have the mind of Christ? Did Christ associate with everybody? Did Jesus spend as much time at the house of Annas and Caiaphas as He did at the house of Mary and Martha and Lazarus? Who did He spend His time with? Which Pharisees did He choose to dine with? Who did He spend His time with and who did He push off to a distance? People say, oh, Jesus was ubiquitous.

He was everywhere. He made no distinctions. That is so utterly unbiblical.

Jesus made all kinds of distinctions, and He was careful with whom He associated, and He chose them carefully. And He was very gracious, and He was very eusphognoi toward those who came for the right reasons, regardless of their background. He didn't hold their occupation against them, didn't hold their past against them, didn't hold their sins against them.

He spent all that time talking to the woman at the well that had all kinds of marital relations and was currently in a relationship that wasn't a marriage. He was very kind and gracious and spent time with her. There were many harlots in Israel.

There were many profligate, promiscuous women in Israel. With whom did He spend time? The woman who responded, the woman who asked the right questions, the woman who was interested, and who when she found that truth, went and called the whole town to come out and see the Savior. Jesus was very discriminating.

He discerned the difference. And that's the mind that needs to be in us. That's the kind of krestos we should have.

That's the kind of eusplognoi we should have, eusplognos. And that is the kind of charizomenos that we should exhibit. And when we do this, habitually, when we cultivate it as a daily characteristic, we become the krestoi, the eusplognoi, the charizomenoi.

It is now an adjective that becomes a noun. We are that. We embody it.

We reflect it. We define it. It defines us.

We're inseparable from it. Those three things, who you are, how you express who you are toward others in the sense of feeling and attitude and disposition, resulting in the actions that define grace. It says forgiving one another.

This isn't the release of sins. This is not afiemi. Afiemi is the forgiveness word.

This is gracious. It includes everything involved in forgiveness, but it is so much more than that. That's what Paul is talking about.

What is the standard? What is the measure? How do we know if we've done it? Well, look at God. How does God treat me? Am I worthy? Did He foreknow me and forelove me in eternity past because I am such a cool guy? I am such a great asset to God? I am hopeless, helpless, useless, corrupt, fallen, unstable, unfaithful, inglorious, profane, defiled, unholy. There is nothing in me that's any good.

In me dwelleth no good thing. It's like the song we sang this morning. All the fitness that He requires is to recognize your need for Him, is to feel your need for Him.

Don't dream of fitness. Don't think that you are fit for God's love and God's salvation. And when we look at one another, it's not a matter of fitness.

It is a matter of recognition of need. And that is the standard the Lord Jesus applied. That is the standard for us.

Even as God in Christ has favored, it includes forgiveness but is by no means limited to it. He has graced us. Is forgiveness gracious on the part of God? Yes.

How much more has God done beyond forgiveness in charis, in grace? Well, that's the standard. Well, I forgive you. I don't like you.

I'm not going to do anything for you. I have a bad feeling towards you but I forgive you. I've released the sense of injustice.

No, you're not there. Even as God in Christ has favored, has graced us. Interestingly, the word used for God is the aorist middle indicative.

It sums up everything God has done for us in grace. Everything in Christ. In Christ.

In Him. He ties back to chapter 1 and chapter 2. Everything in Christ. God in Christ.

Do you remember at all chapter 1? That's the standard. That's what ought to define our attitude toward one another. Well, that concludes chapter 4. And it is a tremendous challenge to us.

It is part of our calling in Christ. The upward call of God in Christ Jesus is first and foremost reflected in how we think of, how we treat one another. Based on who we become and are continuing to become in Christ.

We can choose the influence in our souls to come from one another. From the word of God. From believers of like mind who love the Lord Jesus.

Who love the word of God. Who perceive and are listening to and answering the upward call. Or we can keep evil company.

We can continue to allow influences from the world. From the internet. From the TV.

From associations. We can let that leak in and screw up our compass. It is a choice we make.

And this is the exhortation to pay attention. And not be deceived. Dwell in the truth.

Not in falsehood. Well, we'll begin chapter 5 next time. Let's close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for your word. Thank you for the gift of the Holy Spirit. To understand it.

So that it lives and breathes fire. It is the hammer that breaks the rocks in pieces in our souls. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will energize these truths within us.

So that the sharp sword of your word will pierce to the very center of us. Will expose what needs to be identified and eliminated. Expose those things that are good and should be cultivated and improved.

So that we can truly become those who both in character, in attitude, and in action. Reflect the mind of the Lord Jesus Christ. We pray these things in his name.

Amen.