

EPHESIANS: PRECISION THINKING FOR ACCURATE THEOLOGY

SESSION 18 | EPHESIANS 4:27-32

PRACTICAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR OUR WALK | EPHESIANS 4:17-32

- Verses 17-21 included on session 16.
- Verses 22-26 included on session 17.
- Verse 27 –
 - Because the word **neither** is a negative conjunction, it must be connected with the previous phrase concerning sundown.
 - Invariably, if one harbors anger rather than expressing it, it will **give place to the devil** either by allowing the sin to continue or allowing the anger to build up to dangerous levels.
- Verse 28 –
 - Paul uses the illustration of thievery to display the change of behavior that should take place in a believer.
 - Those who **stole** should **steal no more** rather *labor productively with hands* in order that **he may have to give to him that needeth**.
- Verse 29 –
 - The word **corrupt** is σαπρός [sapro].
 - In English, a *saprophyte* is a "bacteria or fungus that grows on decaying organic matter." The words that would grow off decay rather than **to the use of edifying** are to be avoided by believers.
 - Notice that the KJV uses **communication** rather than **conversation**, as in v. 22, showing the precision of the KJV English.
 - Do the words you speak *build up* and **minister grace unto the hearers**? This can be done even when the words are words of anger (v. 26).
- Verse 30 –
 - Rather than deep speculation about what grieves the **holy Spirit of God**, we can take our first instincts if we have any Biblical concept of God at all. If it grieves God the Father or God the Son, it grieves God the Spirit.
 - In Ephesians 1:13 the sealing of the Holy Spirit was the first mention Paul gave concerning gentile believer's benefits.
 - While the Jewish nation was given the **earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession** (Eph. 1:14), the believer is given the *seal* of the Spirit.
 - In Revelation 7 we have the advance-record of the physical sealing of 144,000, to the extent that nothing could harm them.
 - The spiritual sealing of the believer must certainly be of the same nature, so that nothing can *spiritually* harm the believer (who is complete in Christ).
 - The hymn, *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God* displays this truth in poetic form.

- The Spirit was given in *earnest* on the day of Pentecost, and in *sealing* at the time of an individual's belief.
- Verse 31 –
 - While there is a *general* truth to this statement, if it is not read *specifically* a contradiction is created with verse 26.
 - How can the Apostle instruct his audience to **be ye angry** (v. 26) and to **put away** their **anger** in this verse?
 - When read carefully, the verse does *not* as *all people* to **put away** the **bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking**.
 - Rather, he is addressing **you, with all malice**.
 - One must recognize that **malice** is not an additional vice to put away, but rather a *description of those to whom the command is addressed*. The word **malice** is in the dative case.
 - One Greek scholar says, "The true dative is used to designate the person more remotely concerned." (<http://www.bcbsr.com/greek/gcase.html>).
 - Note that 2 Corinthians 2:4 uses the same English form, saying **you with many tears**. However, in this passage the word **tears** substitutes **wrath** and is in the *genitive*, an adjective describing Paul. Had the words been in the *dative*, they would have described the recipients.
 - In 2 Corinthians 12:16 Paul says **I caught you with guile**. Here the word **guile** is in the dative, and describes **you**.
 - Sadly, most modern translations confuse the grammar and make add words such as "along with," making **malice** an additional item on the list.
- Verse 32 - There is always room for kindness, tenderheartedness, and forgiveness. If our lives are simply anger, doctrinal purity, and moral righteousness, we forget the tremendous grace that God has given us in Christ.