

Eph 4.25-32 New Creation Orientation, Part 1

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[0 : 00] There's a Latin word called viator, which means those who are in via, which means really a pilgrim or those who are on their way, those who are on the road, those who are traveling.

And it's really quite a good word for the Christian because the Christian walk is a walk which is on a particular path, on a particular way, with a particular destination and a particular orientation.

Now, a contrast is made in the book of Ephesians. We're currently looking more at the new, but it has been contrasted from what has previously been examined of the old.

So we see a contrast of the old path with a new path or an old life with a new life. And the old, of course, followed after the course of the world, after the prince of the power of the air.

And in Ephesians 2, we see, and you he made alive. Being made alive, you were dead in trespasses and sin. So the old path follows the course of the world, is lost in sin, and the new is made new and reoriented.

[1 : 06] So with that contrast in mind, in that context of what we've worked through previously in Ephesians, that is where we are now. So I'll present to you two questions, rhetorical questions for consideration.

In the context of the Christian walk, the viator, in via, the pilgrim, on their way. This walk, is the Christian walk merely theoretical?

That is, is the goal of the Christian to retreat from the world, to retreat from society and contemplate divine things? Or, is the Christian walk merely practical?

Is the goal to tell me, in short, ten easy steps, and I'll look at my day minder and I'll find out how I can fit it in? Well, in short, the Christian walk is living to God in Christ Jesus.

And as such, the Christian walk is both theoretical and practical. It involves both what you ought to believe and what you ought to do, both faith and conduct.

[2 : 10] Both right doctrine and right practice. It is to embrace which is true and that which is just. And that is an overarching theme that we have seen in Ephesians, particularly one to three, right doctrine, that which you ought to do.

And then verses, sorry, chapters four to six is practice. Theoretical, then practical. So, living to God in Christ Jesus means having a renewed heart and being united to Christ by faith alone, having a change of mind.

If you remember the last sermon, having a change of mind or a renewed frame of mind about sin and this world with full purpose of and endeavor after a new obedience. So, given the emphatic of chapters, sorry, of verses seven to 14, which is having been made a new creation, given the emphatic, the imperative follows.

Walk the new creation, walk. Having been made a new creation, walk the new creation, walk. So, we're going to read in Ephesians chapter four, verses 17 to 5, 2.

Our particular focus today will be verses 25 to 32. But Ephesians 4, 17 to chapter five, verse two.

This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart, who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

[3 : 56] But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard him and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus, that you put off concerning your former conduct the old man, which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man, which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

Therefore, putting away lying, let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor, for we are members of one another. Be angry and do not sin. Do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil.

Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.

Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God and Christ Jesus forgave you.

[5 : 18] Lord, we thank you for your word, and we thank you for this, Lord, today and the time which we have to sit under your word. We pray that indeed you would be in our midst, and that you would be at work through the proclamation of your word.

I pray, Lord, that you would use me and attend the preaching of your word by your power, and make your word effectual to the hearers, according to all their needs. Pray these things in Jesus' name.

Amen. So as I said, our focus today will be on verses 25 to 32. So we are going to progress through those verses and draw out the meaning of the text and the message that is within it.

So in these verses, 25 to 32, what's going on here, what's being said is this. To walk in a manner worthy of your calling, is a new creation orientation in thought, word, and action.

So it speaks to the reoriented walk, both with negative precepts and positive precepts, and then it gives us reasons why, or rationale, if you will, stated both negatively and positively.

[6 : 33] So first of all, the reoriented walk. The Christian walk is not just a matter of behavior or conduct, or of do these ten steps.

Rather, as a walk, it is an orientation. An orientation, of course, when you're walking, you're walking in a direction. That direction in which you're headed is your orientation. For example, if you put your hand to the plow, you don't look back with regret for taking on the work, you look forward in order that your work will be straight.

It is your orientation. So as a walk, it is an orientation. Someone who has turned and left the old behind and is on their way to a specific destination and is oriented towards that end.

And for the believer, it is a changed citizenship, and we are currently in a foreign land on our way to an eternal kingdom of glory. We are on our way with other believers in new creation harmony.

If you remember, the unity in the new creation harmony. Harmony and unity, therefore, put off or abandon the socially destructive sins that disrupt unity, that cause dissension and alienation.

[7 : 47] And instead, walk in a way patterned after Christ. That is, pattern your walk in the truth revealed in Jesus. So our text gives us some very specific examples.

And what our text speaks to, it gives us imperatives first negatively and then positively. So if you notice in chapter 25, what it first speaks to is lying.

It says, put away lying. So, the negative imperative. Put away lying and then the positive imperative. And let each of you speak the truth with his neighbor.

This is a ninth commandment moral principle. That is, the maintaining and promoting of truth. So lying is harmful and inflicts injury to the truth and as the truth relates to one another.

And it is forbidden in the ninth commandment. It is a socially destructive sin. Next, if you look in verses 26 to 27, it speaks to anger. It says, be angry and do not sin.

[8 : 51] Now it says, be angry. This is not a precept to go find things to be angry about to or have a perpetual disposition of anger because 31 says, let all anger be put away from you.

Rather, it is a warning to beware if you do become angry. Take heed of ungoverned passions. Take heed of the ungoverned passions of anger.

John Trapp wrote, he that be angry and not sin, let him be angry about nothing but sin. And this calls to mind the sixth commandment moral principle which requires all lawful endeavors to preserve life, not just in action but also in thought and speech.

We can think of the sixth commandment principle about taking life or about violence but the moral principle behind it is not just that of the actions but also of our thoughts and of our speech.

This is unlike, so this moral principle and what this text is telling us is unlike the world's glorifying of sinful retributive anger inflicting punishment out of revenge and word, thought or deeds which is contrary to love and contrary to the sixth commandment.

[10:05] Of course, the world's way of thinking and we even see that in some movies is you crossed the wrong guy, I'm going to show you and it's that retributive justice of their anger being inflicted on them because what they've done injury to them.

Take heed of ungoverned passions. And when I say passions, sometimes we don't always understand what that word means. We might associate it somebody who is passionate has strong feelings of something but passion isn't the affection itself.

Passion is the movement of affections. To have an affection is to be affected by something or by somebody. You're affected to move from one state to another.

The passion is the movement to pass from the one affection to another. So as humans, as creatures, in our temporal experience, we pass from different affections.

Take heed of ungoverned passions. We should be zealous for the glory of God, not zealous for the revenge of injury to our own glory and reputation. Be angry at your own sin.

[11:16] On verse 26 to 27, it says, Do not let the sun go down on your wrath. This means to be at rest in wrath. Having overshot an ungoverned passion will roost or brood or incubate malice.

If coals smolder underground, if there's a fire in the bush, and I'm sure you can picture it if I describe it when there's duff, so if you kick the ground and it's partially decomposed matter and you can just kind of dig a hole by continually kicking, obviously you wouldn't see this where it's just all clay, but in the bush where there's lots of partially decomposed matter and it's all duff, a fire can burn down into the ground and coals can smolder.

Although there may not be any flame above ground, the coals can smolder underground and they can do so for days, they can smolder for weeks, they can smolder for months, they can even do it in the winter time when it's covered in snow.

And then when those coals that are smoldering underground find their vent or when oxygen is produced to it, then they erupt in a fury of flame that spreads as destructive wildfire.

take heed of ungoverned passions. Watch them carefully and speedily suppress them. This does not mean that discord must always be reconciled by the end of the day.

[12:45] Sometimes persistent unrepentant sin requires us to mark and avoid certain people. Mind you, scripture does give us procedures for that, for example, Matthew 18.

Rather, as Luther said, peace if possible, truth at all costs. So, throw off your anger, wrath and malice, and vindictive spirit.

When men deal with each other in anger and revenge, do you know who is injured by it? When men deal with each other in anger and revenge, it is to the injury and destruction of both and to the gratification of the devil.

So, give no place to the devil. John Calvin wrote, instead of resisting the devil, we yield up to him the possession of our heart.

Before the poison of hatred has found its way into the heart, anger must be thoroughly dislodged.

So, in our text, in verse 28, it then speaks about theft or stealing.

[13:46] And again, it gives us a negative imperative, and then it gives us a positive imperative.

The negative imperative, let him who stole steal no longer. And then the positive, but rather, let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.

Seft or stealing is the deprivation of property and defiling one's privacy by force or by fraud. This is the Eighth Commandment principle. The Eighth Commandment principle speaks, of course, to stealing.

The lawful, and so the positive, the moral principle behind the Eighth Commandment, is the lawful procuring and furthering the wealth and outward estate of ourselves and others.

Therefore, stealing, or theft, is contrary to it. Theft unjustly hinders our or our neighbor's wealth and outward estate. It is forbidden in the Eighth Commandment.

The inverse, then, of theft is not just to be neutral. What I mean by that is it's not just don't sin and that's all that there is to it. It is not just a command to not steal, but being diligent and industrious to provide for self and others.

[15:00] It's do not steal, plus do labor to provide, plus work that you may do good, that you may have something to give the one in need. So the new creation walk or the new creation orientation,

which would be characteristic of being made new, we see in our text that then continues on to talk about corrupt speech or filthy communication in verse 29.

And here it gives us a negative imperative and then a positive imperative again. The negative imperative is let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth and then the positive imperative is but what is good for necessary edification that it may impart grace to the hearers.

So again, it's not just the imperative do not to do, but it's also the positive, the moral principle underlying under it. So corrupt speech is like foul breath, stinking, rotten, putrid, filthy breath.

So like foul breath, so is corrupt speech. Not only that, but foul speech is also irretrievable, irrevocable, poisonous, and infection. Once those words come out of our mouth, we can't snatch them out of midair and prevent them from reaching the ears of those around.

Mortify it and put on what is good and edifying, what is profitable information, what is wise counsel, and what is loving reproof. That is, what is good for necessary edification that it may impart grace to the hearers.

[16:37] So along with the imperative of the new creation walk, the orientation of the new creation, we are provided now with underlying grounds.

Those underlying grounds, it gives us reasons why, or rationale, or motivation, if you will. First one, you'll notice, the first reason we are given is stated as a negative imperative.

Do not grieve the Holy Spirit. In verse 30. Now something to understand is that sometimes scripture uses figurative language, attributing human traits to God who is not human by means of creature accommodating language.

It's kind of a big span of words there, but creature accommodating language means according to our perspective as creatures. Some examples, I'll start off with easy ones, is he shall cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you shall take refuge.

Our scripture also says, the Lord is my rock. So we don't presume then that God has wings and feathers, nor do we presume that he's composed of a chunk of granite. Scripture also uses human traits predicated of God.

[17:53] For example, smoke went up from his nostrils, devouring fire from his mouth. a mighty arm, your right hand. Or it says, heaven is my throne and earth is my footstool.

We don't presume that God has go-go gadget legs, that his legs project out to the earth for it to be his footstool. Scripture sometimes uses figurative language. Now, we know from spirit, from texts that speak about who God is, that God is spirit.

God does not have a body. So when scripture speaks of God's strong arm, for example, the literal sense is not that God has such a corporeal member, but what is signified by it, namely operative power, God's strong operative power.

Similarly, human feelings, affections, and passions are predicated of God or figuratively applied to God. Now, the word for this, okay, this is a big word, this is an eight-cylinder word, so you might want to hang on to your seats for this one.

The word for this is anthropopathism. Now, if you can remember that word and use it to tell your parents about it sometime, I'm sure it would impress them. But what does this word mean?

[19:05] What does anthropopathism mean? If you know, anthro or anthro is concerning human beings, and pathism is suffering.

So, human being suffering, the attributing of the sufferings of humans. So, attributing of human sufferings such as feelings, emotions, and passions.

Now, sometimes, scripture uses creature-accommodating metaphoric language according to the capacity of our nature. It's not so that God can understand who he is, it's that we can understand how God acts.

Spiritual truths expounded figuratively from corporeal things, so that which cannot be grasped by our senses, we cannot grasp God by our senses, that which can be grasped by our senses may adequately be understood.

Now, if you have a gas oven, when you turn on the range, so you turn on the flame on the range to high, and you step back, let's say, ten feet, you stick your hand out, the flame is set to high, but it's not going to burn you.

[20:14] Take ten steps forward, put your hand out over top of the flame, the flame setting hasn't changed, and substantially, the flame is still the same, except this time, the flame will burn you.

The flame itself has not changed, what has changed is your temporal, proxemic situation. What's changed is your movement, while the flame remains constant.

Now, Christopher Ash wrote, to be moved means to have the stability of one's life overtaken by the chaotic dimension of reality so that plans do not come to fruition. Like that illustration with us moving and the flame remaining the same, we are moved while God remains the same.

And this is very comforting, that in the chaos of life, God is not moved. God's plans do come to fruition. So to summarize, metaphoric language like this is not a proof text for the attributes of God. Like a text that speaks of God having feathers and being under his wings, that's not a proof text for the attributes of God. Rather, it is telling us something about the grievousness of man's sin in our text against the unchanging holiness of God who has no shortcoming and no corruption.

[21 : 36] God's disapproval of sin does not wax or wane, it remains constant. Man's perspective, according to temporal circumstances, moves into the realm of God's constant abhorrence of sin.

God doesn't at any time decrease or become corrupted from his abhorrence of sin, but rather our circumstances moves us into the realm of God's constant abhorrence of sin and away from God's favor.

So in essence, there are no shortcomings to God. Rather, there is movement of man's perspective according to our temporal circumstances which offend the honor and majesty of God, like moving a hand over a flame and removing a hand from a flame.

The temporal circumstances change your current perspective of a reality that remains constant.

What is the point? What is the point then of our text that says, do not grieve the Holy Spirit?

The emphasis in our text is on that which is done, that is offensive to God. Now, there's some background to this. If you've read in Isaiah 63 verse 10, you read, but they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit, so he turned himself against them as an enemy, and he fought against them.

[22 : 57] Now, what's going on in this text? In Isaiah 63, what happened? God redeemed them. That's an important word. So God redeemed Israel from Egypt. He redeemed them, he delivered them from bondage and slavery.

And what happened? They grumbled and they complained. So what did they do? They rebelled.

The action was that they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit.

So what is it that is grievous? That they rebelled. Now, notice that in this text, in Isaiah 63, it was when God redeemed Israel from Egypt, a temporal redemption geographically.

He redeemed Egypt, and in our text, we see redemption. But this is not a temporal redemption. This is an eternal redemption.

It is not a geographic redemption, but a spiritual redemption. So what is the point? What is it that is grievous? It is acting contrary to God's holy nature and will.

[24 : 02] And in our text, there is the negative imperatives, which is contrary to a new creation orientation, which is grievous and offends God. So, because God loves righteousness, he hates unrighteousness.

He does not have mood swings, but constantly loves righteousness and hates unrighteousness. It is mankind that moves in and out of such relational distinctions as a hand moves further and closer to the constant flame on a gas range.

And as such, man's perspective of God is subsequently affected. So, evil and destructive speaking, which God abhors, should be grievous to the people of God who are sealed with the spirit of God till the day of redemption.

And we see that in our text, don't we? Sealed the spirit of God till the day of redemption. The day of redemption is something that should trigger our memories from what we have read in Ephesians 1.

So, obviously, it also, we think back of God redeeming Israel out of the land of Egypt, out of bondage and slavery. Redemption, as we see in the New Testament in Ephesians 1, is God's eternal purpose of redemption.

[25 : 15] So, what is it specifically speaking to when it says sealed till the day of redemption? Now, redemption, we have, obviously, need to understand that in its bigger picture, as in Ephesians 1, we see the father purposing redemption, the son accomplishing redemption, paying the ransom price, the spirit applying redemption, but then we also see in Ephesians 1, 13 and 14, sealed with the spirit, and this is what this is pointing to.

The day of redemption is that we're sealed by the spirit of God till the day of redemption, that day of redemption being the resurrection and new creation, the consummation of Christ's eternal kingdom

of glory.

That kingdom has been inaugurated, Christ is making all things new, and we're believers are sealed with the spirit of God till the day of redemption, until the consummation of that kingdom, the resurrection and new creation.

So, these socially destructive sins that we see in our text are in opposition to God's reconciling, unifying, renewing, new creation work.

So, it's not a matter of ten steps of what we ought to do, it's not a matter of obey these things or you'll be cut off, it's because, and that's the motivation behind it, it's because you have been made new, it's because you have been redeemed, it's because you have been sealed with the spirit of God till the day of redemption, it's because of these things, it's because you're a new creation, it's because of your reorientation that you ought to do these things.

[26 : 53] And then in our text we see a second reason. The first reason was a negative imperative, do not grieve the Holy Spirit. And now we have a second reason, which is a positive imperative.

The second reason is, for reoriented conduct is not just a matter of avoiding what is grievous, but a positive impairment is that we are called to be imitators of God.

Now it's reaching a little bit into 5.1 here, where it says to be imitators of God as beloved children.

Now this is important and is connected to our text specifically, do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

So this is specifically speaking to believers. It's not speaking to those who are unsaved, but the reason, the rationale, the motivation behind why our orientation ought to be set this way is because the Holy Spirit is in us, because we are beloved children of God, and as such we are called to be imitators of God.

And obviously these things that are representative of the old way, of the ways of the world, is not, or is contrary to, being imitators of God, which we are called to as beloved children.

[28 : 11] So the corresponding activities of socially destructive sins are cohesive and build up. So while socially destructive sins destroy and tear down and are destructive, the corresponding activities are cohesive and build up.

Take speech, for example. Speech that imitates God does not tear down but builds up. as we see in verse 29. I'm sure everybody, or most of us, will recognize the Thumperian principle, famously spoken by Thumper the Rabbit and Bambi.

If you can't say something nice, don't say nothing at all. And this is along the same lines of what this is getting at. Speech. Speech can tear down.

So don't do it. Recall not to say that which tears down. Say nothing that will tear down. And when you do speak, speak a word in due season.

Speak what builds up. A word fitly spoken. If you've read the book of Job, recall Job's friends. Now, Job was blameless.

[29 : 30] He wasn't sinless, but he was blameless. This world is a world, this is a sin-cursed world, and there is much suffering. Job suffered, and it wasn't as a specific response to his sin.

He was blameless. But yet, because it is a sin-cursed world, there is suffering, there is pain. And Job particularly suffered significant loss. And in his loss, remember what his friends did.

His friends, the best thing they did was what they did at first. His friends said nothing. They just sat with him. They just sat with him and comforted him. And sometimes that is the best response.

We might feel pressured to have to say something that will alleviate the suffering, but sometimes mourning is necessary, and sometimes suffering is necessary, because this is a sin-cursed world.

And sometimes the best thing to do is to say nothing at all, and just be there in comfort, and wait for the right opportunity.

Now, this is where Job's friends went wrong, although they had a lot of good knowledge. It was misapplied, accusing Job of his sin when what happened wasn't a reaction to sin.

[30 : 44] So speak a word in due season. Speak what builds up a word fitly spoken. And Matthew 12, 36 tells us that we will give account for every idle word. So again, it's not just the negative. It's not just don't say what tears down, and then be idle.

But then we'll have to give an account for every idle word. So right conduct is not neutral. It's not just a command to not tear down. It's not just idle words. But imitate God with words that impart grace.

Words that edify. Words that build up. Examine and consider every word and its connotation, and how you will account for it to God. And finally, our text speaks about bitterness, wrath, and anger in verse 31.

These words, it speaks of violent inner resentment, which vents itself through clamor, threats, intemperance, and evil speaking. So like those coals of the wildfire that smolder under the ground until they find their vent, and then erupt into a fury of wildfire.

So also being restful in your wrath, which broods malice, smolders like a coal, and then when it finds its vent, vents itself in bitterness, wrath, and anger.

[31 : 52] And evil speaking, such as railing, reviling, and reproachful words rooted in malice, which is ill will towards others out of anger.

Such conduct does not imitate God, which is what we are called to do. So instead of anger that tears down and destroys, believers should, the imperative, be kind, tender hearted, and forgiving. Verse 32. These things, to be kind, tender hearted, and forgiving, is contrary to the ungoverned passions that are socially destructive, which we've looked at already.

Rather, benevolent and merciful, the outward expressions that flow from love in the heart. So in conclusion, someone who is hard and unforgiving shows no evidence of one who has been radically forgiven and subsequently reoriented.

The one who has experienced such forgiveness is broken, not hardened, knows that nothing is owed to them by God, and that the mercy and grace of God is not deserved, but a free gift.

[33 : 00] Now there's a contrast here between the one that has been forgiven and the one that is unforgiven. What is that contrast? The contrast is one of two different legal declarations.

Legal declaration of being forgiven, or legal declaration of being unforgiven. It is also of two different orientations. It is two different walks, it is two different paths, two different destinations, and two different ends.

The difference is that one was on the old path with the old orientation and the old walk, following after the course of the world, following after the prince of the power there, following after sin and self in the world.

But being invaded and shocked by the gospel has been disrupted and dislodged. The old abolished, being quickened to new life, renovated, reestablished, and reordered with a renewed state of mind, reoriented, and endeavoring after new obedience, that is gospel obedience.

The right practice, which is to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called.

This walk is a pilgrimage with a specific orientation. Christians are not at home in this world.

[34 : 10] We do not cling to this world. We don't look back. We don't turn back. We are viators. We are travelers. We are pilgrims. We are on our way. Hebrews 13, 14 says, For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come.

The new creation orientation of the Christian walk is this. It is being oriented to God in Christ Jesus and his eternal kingdom of glory.

I'll say that again. The new creation orientation of the Christian walk is being oriented to God in Christ Jesus and his eternal kingdom of glory. If you have not been shocked by the gospel, dislocated, and reoriented, consider your path and the destination to which it leads.

So kids, pay attention to this. This is important. If you have already grasped this, excellent. It's great to be all the more familiar with it. If you haven't grasped it, this is of utmost importance.

So we live in a sin-cursed world. Because of sin, because of original sin, because of Adam's sin, all are born sinful and do actually sin. And because it is a sin-cursed world, God's judgment is on this world.

[35 : 28] As such, there is pain, there is suffering, and there is death. Now, it's not necessarily that particular pain or injuries or suffering is a response to a particular sin, but because it is a sin-cursed world, there is suffering, there is sin, there is pain, there is sorrow, and there is sickness.

Because we live in a sin-cursed world. And this life and this sin-cursed world will come to an end.

And when it comes to an end, if we are not in Christ, then we will be self-represented, and all that we will have to show is our sin, and we will stand condemned and under the wrath of God.

And the suffering and the sorrow that we experience in this life is but a mere foretaste, a mere glimpse of God's judgment. And those who are not in Christ after this life will experience an eternity of the fullness of God's wrath and sorrow and suffering.

Those who are in Christ will be brought safely through judgment into Christ's eternal kingdom of glory, where there will not be any pain, there will not be any sorrow, there will not be any suffering, there will not be any sickness, and there will not be any death.

So those whom desire the latter as opposed to the former, that is those who desire to be in Christ, to be redeemed by Christ, to be sealed by the Spirit of God till the day of redemption, are those who believe on the Lord.

[37 : 03] Those who receive Christ Jesus, those who rest on Christ Jesus for faith alone. Those who believe on the Lord shall be saved.

Back to our text, verses 25 to 32. Therefore, putting away lying, let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor, for we are members of one another.

Be angry and do not sin. Do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil. Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.

Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

[38 : 08] Our great God, we thank you for your word. We thank you that you speak to us through your word. We thank you that on the Lord's day, as the saints gather together, and that we come expecting to hear from you, and that indeed you are at work by your spirit and the hearers.

We pray that indeed you would make your word effectual in the hearers today, that you would cause us to contemplate what your word says today and tomorrow and this week, and continually seek to turn our gaze upon you, upon your excellencies, upon your wondrous works.

We pray, Lord, if there are those who are not saved, and as we think even of our children, we pray that you would save them and that you would advance your kingdom. Pray that you would be with your people this week and guide them in all of this life and all that we encounter.

We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. We'll stand and close by singing hymn number seven, Now blessed be the Lord our God. So in your hymnal, it's hymn number seven.

Now blessed be the Lord our God, the God of Israel. Amen. Amen.

[39 : 28] For he alone doth wondrous works in glory that excel. And blessed be his glorious name to all eternity.

The whole earth let his glory fill. Amen. So let it be. Amen. Amen.

Lord, we thank you again for your work of redemption. Thank you that you are making all things new. We thank you that the Lord Jesus Christ will return and will bring all things in unity under him.

We pray, Lord, that you would go with your people this week. We pray that you would bless your people, that you would be glorified in our thoughts and in our speech and in our actions. That as a new creation, that we would be oriented towards living to God in Jesus Christ.

We thank you for all the ways which you bless us and all the ways which you provide for us. And we thank you that we can take those blessings and provisions and share them with one another. And we ask that you would bless the food to us and our time together.

[40 : 42] We pray this in Jesus' name. And may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.