

A New Wardrobe

Blueprint: God's Design for the Church

Ephesians 4:25-32

If you have your bibles, go ahead and stand with me as we open to Ephesians chapter 4. We are going to be reading verses 25-32 as we continue this morning with our sermon series called God's Blueprint, and we are studying the book of Ephesians. I want to thank all of you who held the rope for me while I was getting to minister on the bank of the Amazon River to over 125 pastors and church leaders. And of course, I got to help Espageto and his church dedicate their new sanctuary for the glory of our Lord and Savior. But I want you to know while you were holding the rope of prayer for me while I was there I was holding the rope for you while you were here. I can't tell you how proud I am of how you ministered to each other and how you ministered to our community through these past several weeks. It was just such an honor to be your pastor and just to see how this body was salt and light in this community, and I pray that we continue to do that. So just thank you, thank you for the privilege of being your pastor. I got to tell the pastors down there, I tell them every year, my second greatest honor is getting to come to Brazil and teach them, but the greatest honor is getting to teach and preach to you guys. I hope you know that what I teach down there is just the overflow of what I have gotten to teach you all the years that I've been here. So thank you for the privilege you've given me of studying God's Word and get to bring God's Word to you week after week. It's such a privilege to be the pastor of this great, great church, and I still get nervous every time I stand before you. I don't know if it shows, but just thank you for this humbling honor that you give me.

Ephesians chapter 4; I've got two titles this morning. I've got a title and then a subtitle. The title is 'A New Wardrobe.' Kory talked about a new walk last week, and how we are to walk new. So since this passage follows up the thought of last week, the official title is "A New Wardrobe," but the

subtitle is this, "It May Be Time to Clean Out Your Closet." I pray that this morning during the sermon that God convicts us if some of us need to clean out our closet. Ephesians chapter 4, let's begin with verse 25, reading through verse 32. Listen to what the Word of God says:

Scripture

" Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil. Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you."

(Prayer)

Father, once more we ask You to add Your blessing to the reading of this Your Word, and just do what only You can do and that's anoint. Father, I always just have that fear that one day, if You didn't show up and do what only You can do, Father, this would be a total disaster. But man, You've been faithful. As we proclaim Your Word, You anoint us to speak and anoint this congregation to hear, and there is just something that takes place, as we desire not to just be a speaker only or a hearer only, but a doer of Your Word. So Father we ask You again to just hold us in the palm of Your hand now, remind us that we're sitting at Your table with our knife, and our fork, and our plate, and You're getting ready to serve us Your Word. Let it be that Bread and that Living Water. We know, ultimately, that is You, but that is so pictured for us in Scripture, the written Word. So

Father, please, this morning just do what only You can do. In Your precious Son's name we trust You now, amen.

Some of you have heard me tell before that Celisa and I started out in a home that had wheels, 14x70 mobile home. We actually moved that from where it originally was to my Papaw's farm on Dexter Road. Then shortly after us making that move to Papaw's farm, Hardin Baptist Church called us to be the pastor. It wasn't long until we were driving down Dexter Road coming to Hardin when all of a sudden we saw a for sale sign on a little house on a little farm. Without much thought, but a lot of prayer, just believing it was closer to Hardin and it had forty acres of land, we went to the auction. When the auction ended, we were the proud owners of a house that was built in the early 1900's, and had 780 sq. ft. in it. When the insurance agent comes out, he said I'll insure the house, but not the roof. Then we wondered if we really did the right thing. But I'll never forget as we moved out of that house to where we presently live on Redbud Road, and when I look back at the prosperity of Celisa and I as we've been your pastor, we've literally gone from nails on the wall to walk-in closets. Now what I mean by that is this; when we bought that first house, we literally hadn't looked at the house probably thirty minutes, it was now hours, Celisa was walking through the house and all of a sudden, she made this comment just out loud, "Where are the closets?" She suddenly realized we had bought a house with no closets in any room in the house. I'll never forget my dad and mom were in the same room with us, and my dad quickly just pointed and said, "There is your closets." He pointed to nails, sixteen-penny nails that had been driven into every stud in the bedrooms. The family before us literally hung their clothes on the walls. And now, we have no sixteen-penny nails in any of our studs. We have walk-in closets. She thinks she has arrived.

But you know, when you have walk-in closets, from time to time, you have to stop and clean out the closet. It's just amazing when you have walk-in closets that sometimes when you walk into that closet you suddenly realize that there are clothes in the closet that are either outdated, no longer reflect who you are, or they've been outgrown by you and no longer fit you. They just would not look appropriate on you anymore. That's what we

are talking about this morning. Possibly, some of us spiritually need to clean out our closets. For see, if you were here last week you know that the Apostle Paul used the imagery of clothing of putting off and putting on to speak about the new identity that we have in Jesus Christ. This morning, we are going to continue that thought, of not only putting off and putting on which happens to us at the moment of our salvation, but this fact that the Apostle Paul is going to take that clothing metaphor and he's going to take it just a little farther, and he's going to remind us that we now have a new wardrobe. He's going to use clothing as a metaphor for our behavior, and he's going to remind us that each one of us have the responsibility to dress like a believer.

I think it was Mark Twain who said, "Clothes make the man." I'm not sure about that, but I do know this, in our society and in our church, clothes do many times reflect who we really are. I can walk into the Murray Calloway County Hospital, I can meet Dr. Swain, and when I see that coat, it distinguishes him from me, from the nurses, but I know that coat that he wears didn't make him a Dr., but it reflects that he's a Dr. I can't tell you how many times I've seen a man or woman in uniform and that uniform, whether it be a policeman, a fireman, a military person, while that uniform does not make them who they are, it reflects who they are. And that's the theme of the Apostle Paul this morning, for you and I to understand how our behavior says something to the folks in our lives, ultimately, whether we are a sinner, or ultimately, whether we are a saint of God.

I'll never forget when I first became the pastor of Hardin Baptist Church, Jack Dunigan owned the granary here in Hardin. My dad did business with Jack and I was in the granary a lot, and at one point Jack put in gasoline and was selling gas, and I would stop and buy my gas there. Jack had a man who worked for him named Doug, and Doug and I became good friends, and I got to minister to his family. Doug and I kind of had this thing where I would pull in to the gas station, and when I came in to pay Doug would look at me and he saw me in my boots, my dirty jeans, my dirty shirt, and I had my cap on, he would look at me and say, "Well, I see you're working today." I would say, "Yeah," and I would tell him what I was doing. Then I would come in a little bit later in the week and fill up

another tank of gas, and this time I would have my clean shoes, clean jeans, clean shirt, and when I would walk in to the granary to pay, Doug would look at me and say, "Well, I see you're not working today." You see, Doug, when he saw me with my dirty clothes on, he associated me as Ricky, the farmer, but when he would see me with my clean clothes on he would recognize me as Ricky, the preacher, Ricky, the pastor. We just had this little thing going; he would either know I was working or know I wasn't working by the clothes I wore. He would identify me by my clothes. You know that for years we've teased here whether I am Ricky the preaching farmer, or the farming preacher.

Spiritually, just as Doug used to look at me and make a judgment about me, you have folks that work with you, you have people that go to school with you, you have people that watch you in those places where you recreate, and they make a judgment about who you are and about who I am. You know we can tease about Ricky, the farmer, or Ricky, the preacher, but here is what Satan would love for us to believe; he would love for us to believe we have two identities. That in one sense, we are still Ricky, the sinner and we've not yet quite put off that old man. We still struggle with him, while at the same time we've taken on another identity. And that is we are a saint of God, so we're not supposed to sin, but we still sin at the same time. He would love for you to believe that it's ok to excuse what you do by just saying you are just an old sinner saved by grace. No, Paul clearly teaches that when we heard the gospel, and the Holy Spirit of God moved on our heart, when we put our faith in Christ we made the choice to put off that old man with his wardrobe and put on the new man. And the new man has been created in the image of God in true righteousness and true holiness. Therefore, with that new identity comes a new wardrobe that declares to all who we really are in Christ. Paul, when he wrote to the church at Rome, said the old man died when Christ died, and when Christ got up again, a new man got up in you and I, amen! We are no longer alive to sin and dead to God; we are now alive to God and dead to sin, and therefore, we not only have a new walk, we have a new wardrobe.

That's what Paul is going to talk about this morning. Now I just have to be honest with you, I've got a bias. I can't read this passage, I can't see the put off, put on, put away language of the Bible without seeing those nails on that first house Celisa and I owned, and seeing that walk-in closet we have now. It's perfectly divided in the middle. I've got my side and she has her side. We have these rods at the top of the closet, we have these hangers, and certain clothes like my coat, my shirts, my slacks, my jeans go on those rods, on those hangers. We have my closet divided into two sections. There are Ricky's work clothes; those are the clothes I put on when I'm going to the farm and I'm going to get dirty. Dirt looks ok on those jeans; when Celisa washes them she never expects everything that's on to completely come out. We know in a couple of years we're just going to have to throw those away because they are going to get so dirty, because dirt and grease looks good on Ricky the farmer. But then we've got that other section of my closet. I mean, every Sunday morning I say to Celisa, "What am I wearing today?" and she goes to that other side of my closet. We call them my church clothes, my clean clothes that I can put on at any time and do what I do as pastor of this church, as I represent you, not only here but in this community. Then we've got these drawers. I've got my side of the drawers, and she's got her side of the drawers. You know, that's where you just take your socks, your underwear, and your t-shirts and just throw them all in there together. Hers is neat; mine is not.

When I look at this passage, I see verses 25-30 where Paul is going to talk about specific behaviors, specific things that hang on the hanger of our closet. He's going to take a whole verse and talk about them, so they just hang neatly. They've been pressed. He's going to describe them. But then, when he gets to the end of the passage, it's like he switches from talking about the behaviors that hang in our closet to those things that we've just thrown in a drawer. He talks about bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, slander, and malice. He says to make sure you put all these away too, as you put away. So this morning, we've got a brand new wardrobe. But here is what I'm afraid has happened; some of us while we are trying to put on the new, we've still left some of the old hanging in the closet. Therefore, sometimes without even thinking about it, we get in the flesh and go back to that behavior. And when we go back to that behavior, it does not really

reflect who we are in Christ. So what we want to do this time through Ephesians is make sure we clean out the closets. Now listen to me, we're not having a yard sale, we're not having a garage sale, we're not trying to see if somebody else can get some use out of this, we're going to the dump with it, amen? We not only want these behaviors in our life, we don't want them in our children's life, and we don't want them in anybody's life that we have an influence in. So we are going to take out the hangers and put away the drawers, and we are going to hang the things that God wants us to have in our closet so that we don't live naturally, we live supernaturally by the empowerment of God's Holy Spirit.

Are you guys ready? We start out with "therefore." You guys know what we do at Hardin when we see a "therefore," right? We stop and see what it's there for. Here is what it's there for; it's to tell us that what Bro Ricky is getting ready to say this morning is based on what Bro Kory said last week. Here me say this again; if you put your faith in Christ, the moment you did that, you made the conscience choice to put off the old man and put on the new man you are in Christ. The old you is dead, crucified with Christ. Do you believe Christ really died? Then the old person you were died with Him. But when He got back up, guess who got up with Him? The new person we are in Christ. Therefore, Paul makes this statement, "Therefore, having put away..." You see, here is what Paul believes. Paul believes there are certain things that we've just put away, but he's reminding the church of what they've put away. So I'm just kind of curious if he really believes everybody's put this away. So he's reminding them of what they should have cleaned out their closet when they became this new person in Christ. They not only have a new walk, they have a new wardrobe. And hanging on the hanger, he says, "...get rid of falsehood." Then he talks about anger. Then he talks about stealing. Then he talks about foul language. Now these are just representatives of behaviors that should not be in the life of a believer. Why? Because he tells us right off the bat, "...put away falsehood and speak the truth with your neighbor, for we are members one of another." Now you have to be careful in Scripture when you see the word, neighbor, because you have to let the context define who neighbor is. In the gospels, it is clear that sometimes our neighbor is anybody who is in need, amen. But in this passage, neighbor isn't talking about anyone

who's in need. When it says put away falsehood, he reminds us that the new piece of clothing that we put on that takes the place of falsehood is truth, and we are always to speak the truth with our neighbor. Then he reminds us that we are members of one another. So what he's painting the picture of is this, when you got saved and I got saved, we moved out of the old subdivision of sin into a new subdivision of salvation, amen. And now, guess who your new neighbors are; it's the body of Christ.

Therefore, this is important. Remember this whole section is dealing with that I'm supposed to realize I've been called with a calling, and my life is supposed to weigh as much as that calling. And that calling that we've been called to in Ephesians 4:1 is we've been called to be a member of the body of Christ, and I'm supposed to have enough spiritual lead in my britches that my life as a member of the church balances the scales of what a member of the church ought to be like.

Put Away Falsehood

And here is the first thing Paul says is I need to put away falsehood. If you're going to live in this new subdivision with us, we've got to know this; you are who you say you are, and you're doing what you say you're doing, and you're not doing what you say you're not doing. Got it? Because let me tell you what's vitally important in a neighborhood. I've got to trust my neighbor, and you've got to be able to trust me. And we can't really have trust if we don't have the truth. If you want to shock the neighborhood, just let us find out you're not who you say you are. If you want something to spread through this community about this subdivision, you just do something you're not supposed to be doing, or you let us find out you're still doing something you told us you quit doing when you got saved. We're members of one another. In this subdivision, we are just as connected as a body is connected. Have you ever noticed how in this community there are certain neighborhoods that when you go into that neighborhood the houses kind of look the same? So when you drive in the neighborhood they are a little different, but there's something they all have in common. When you drive out on some of these country roads and start seeing some of those farmhouses, you start seeing some similarities. Yes, there is some diversity, but there is a whole lot of similarity. We are the body of Christ,

therefore there are certain behaviors that you've got to do away with. It's not optional, and falsehood is not an option.

Be Angry and Sin Not

He tells us to be angry and do not sin. I have read a lot of commentaries that believe Paul's distinction between a righteous anger and an unrighteous anger, and I do believe there is a righteous anger. Jesus, when He went into the temple...truly, what He did in driving out the moneychangers was appropriate. Do you remember when He was healing? The Bible says He got angry with the Pharisees because they were more concerned about a day than they were the fact that somebody needed to be healed. But man, I don't see anything good in this verse about anger. As a matter of fact, when we get to the drawers, verse 31, he is going to name bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, slander, and malice all together and say to put them away. So I can't see him it's ok to be angry up here and not ok to be angry down here. He's telling you that you need to be careful, and I need to be careful about anger. Do you know what happens when you get angry? You are susceptible to sinning, missing the mark. Here, we are in a relationship one with another, and when we get angry, Paul says do not sin, do not let the sun go down on your anger. What he's saying is when you do get angry, there is an expiration limit on it. Do you know how long you can be angry if you're going to be a part of the body of Christ? You can just be angry until the sun goes down. So that means if something is really, really bad happened to you that it's going to take you a lot of time to deal with, you better hope it happens early in the morning, because in the wintertime, if it happens at 5:00 in the afternoon, you've just got about fifteen minutes to deal with it. Now what in the world is Paul trying to say? Here is what Paul is trying to say; there are times when your reaction to someone's action causes more damage than the action did. Most of us don't believe that.

So here is the picture; if something happens and you get angry and you don't deal with it, it festers. It's like putting a pot of water on the stove, all of a sudden, you can put your finger in it, but the next thing you know it's boiling. And the water doesn't stay in the pot. It's everywhere. As a matter of fact, we have a phrase out in the country where sometimes we'll know

something that happens to somebody and you'll come and see them a little bit later and you can just tell; you are still stewing over that, aren't you? Yep. That was five days ago, a month ago. Come on be honest. How many of you are still stewing over something that happened months ago, and years ago? Are you kidding me? Scripture doesn't say you get more days if it's really, really, really, really bad. Scripture says you've got a day. Now, there is no way I can deal with someone else and what they've done in a day on their end, but I can sure deal with it on my end, because this isn't something I think about. I never let what has happened to me get me to a point that I'm resentful, or I'm bitter, or I'm wanting vengeance. That belongs to God. So can I just say, take that hanger out of your closet. Let's not put it in the trashcan; let's go to the dump right now with it. Have you ever been to the dump where the person beside you thinks he wants what you're dumping? I mean, I've been to the dump and had people to ask me, "Are you throwing that away?" "Yep." "Can I have it?" It's junk, not to him it's not. Let's not even let this lay at the dump. Let's make sure it gets buried because it's dangerous.

Do you know why it's dangerous? Because when you get angry, there is a real potential you have of missing the target, of not doing what God wants you to do in this particular situation. If you don't deal with that quickly, you give opportunity to the slanderer. I think it's kind of neat how Paul switches from talking about God's enemy as Satan and the devil. When Paul uses the word, Satan, it's referring to our adversary. But when Paul uses the word, devil, it's referring to the slanderers, and there are some commentaries who do not believe this is referring to the devil. It's just referring to the fact that if you do let you anger boil and fester, you give opportunity to be slandered by the slanderers. But we know who the king of slander is, and that's the devil. The devil would love to let something happen to you that's really bad, but then in your reaction to that, your reaction cause more damage. When your reputation gets damaged, our reputation gets damaged. When your reputation gets damaged, Christ's reputation gets damaged because we are the body of Christ.

Let the Thief No Longer Steal

Now evidently, the church was really evangelistic and they reached a lot of thieves. That's really cool. I love the fact that some of you used to be hardcore sinners in this church. I brag on you. I don't brag on those of you who were raised like me, raised in church, heard the gospel when I was young. That's awesome; I stayed away from a lot of stuff you got into, but I love it. I won't call you out of what you used to do, but me and you know, right? I mean listen; here were guys in the church who were thieves; they were takers! They let somebody else do all of the work and they just showed up and took from them, takers. Listen to what Paul says, they've got a new work ethic now. Here is the new work ethic, you don't steal any more, now you take your hands and do honest work, and you work so you can share with someone else who has a need. Wow! Is that cool, or is that cool? Did you hear this? Would this not be cool? If the next time overtime was offered at work and we volunteered for overtime, we weren't volunteering because we are deep in debt, or wanted a new boat, a new car, a new camper, or a new motorcycle, but we volunteered for overtime because there was somebody in the community in need and we wanted to work overtime so that we could give to them. Whoa! Yes, some of us work really hard as Christians, but our work ethic is to accumulate wealth for us, rather than do what we do to meet our needs, and then once our need is met we still work because we want to be a sharer, not a taker. Could you understand how revolutionary this would be in our community if this were the work ethic of Hardin Baptist Church? Wow!

No Corrupting Talk

Then he tells us not to let any rotten, corrupt communication come out of your mouth. Boy, this is a vivid picture. This word is actually used to talk about when Jesus talked about trees giving good fruit and bad fruit. He is actually talking about rotten fruit. Have any of you ever bit into a fruit that you thought was good, but it was rotten? I mean, you had the same reaction I had, right? You bite into it and the moment that rottenness hits your taste buds, you don't even think about it, right? You just spit it out! Then you apologize to whoever you spit on, or whoever is around you. You don't even have time to turn and run to get rid of it. Why? Because your

body has been wired by God not to let something that's rotten pass your taste buds and get into your esophagus, and down into your belly because it could be bad. That's the picture.

Yes, you used to have a foul mouth. I'm not talking about taking God's name in vain. I'm not talking about saying those four letter words. I'm talking about how you talked about people, how your words destroyed people, and how your words tore people down. Oh, you did it as a prayer request because you were concerned. No, Paul says to clean that behavior out of your closet. The kind of speech that should come out of our mouth should build up. It's the Greek word, *oikodomeó*, meaning 'to build a house, to build it up, to start from scratch, start at the bottom with a foundation, and erect it until it's completed.' That's the kind of speech I ought to have. My words ought to fit the occasion, Paul says. Paul says I'm not only to build you up, but anybody who hears what I'm saying, it ought to be graceful to them. It ought to give them grace. You know what our definition of grace is; God's enabling power. Have you thought about this? The way you talk to people, even those people who hear you talking that you're not talking to. Your words, if they fit the occasion will give grace to them; will give enabling power to them!

Do Not Grieve the Holy Spirit

Paul says, "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption." Does everybody see this? You see, when you sin and you miss the target, you miss the mark, when you're living at home with your wife or your children, or you're living at work, living at the ballpark, living at school, doing life and you miss the target, you give opportunity to the slanderer to just whisper to everybody around you that you're not really who you say you are. But he's also reminding us of this; Jesus told us that the mouth ultimately betrays the heart, because what's on the inside of you toward somebody is eventually going to come out. Because what's inside your heart is going to travel up your esophagus and come out your mouth, so that ultimately you don't have a mouth problem, you have a heart problem. Here is what Paul says; that grieves the Holy Spirit of God. Have any of you ever been around somebody and just the way they were talking, it grieved you; it hurt you? This isn't talking about

what's being done to you. It's talking about what you do to God. You see, if you've got this picture of this God who is immune from hurt and pain, and He is so far and beyond us that what we do doesn't affect Him, you haven't read your Bible. God's not a million miles away in a faraway galaxy. The third Person of the triune God lives inside you. When those words come out of your mouth, it hurts Him; it grieves Him. Paul reminds us that the reason we have Him in us is because He is our seal, and we've been sealed with Him until the day of redemption. He's the guarantee of our destination! He's the guarantee of the context. He's the one that gives evidence that we are who we say we are! Jesus clearly taught His disciples it would be to their advantage if He went away, died a death on a cross, was buried, three days later rose again because He would go back to His Father's right hand side, and when He got back to His Father's right hand side, He would send the Holy Spirit who wouldn't be with us, but who would be in us, who the world couldn't take away from us! And that He would be our helper, our teacher, our witness, our convicter, and He would be our guide. When Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, he talked about not quenching the Spirit. You quench the Spirit when the Holy Spirit leads you to do something, and you don't do it. We've all quenched the Spirit, right? But there is a difference in quenching Him and grieving Him, causing Him to hurt, causing Him pain, causing Him to suffer. That's when you do when He's leading you not to do. He is telling you not to say it, and you say it anyway! He's telling you not to do it, and you do it anyway! No, I've got to take that out of my closet and I've got to deal with it, because that does not represent who I am living in this new subdivision of salvation in Christ, and being a part of the body of Christ.

Put It Away

Then he gets to the drawers, and he just says hey, bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, slander, malice; put it away! He doesn't even give you a description, because we know how horrible bitterness is, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and slander, and malice. That shouldn't even be hanging in our closet, but if it is, you've got to put it away. We're not going to think about it. We're just going to put it away.

Be Kind and Tenderhearted

Then he says to be kind to one another. We just throw all this stuff out of the drawer, and in our drawer now, we have kindness to one another. Tenderhearted, ah, this convicts me...I've lived in this subdivision so long that I've just got to be honest with you, sometimes when we see the same people, deal with the same thing all the time, you kind of get to that point to where you just get hardhearted toward them. You just finally say I don't understand it. I don't understand how you can continue to do that year after year after year. The next thing you know, your heart just gets hard. I'm not the only one, right? Am I the only one who needs to confess? You see, I can't be kind if I'm not tenderhearted, if my heart's not open. Yeah, I'm going to get hurt. As I live in this community and you live in this community, we're going to get hurt. But you know what we're going to do in the midst of our hurt? We are going to understand that I haven't walked where you've walked, so I'm going to try to understand. I'm going to be tender to you because you're my neighbor.

Forgiving One Another as God Forgives

Do you know, really, where being kind, and ultimately, where tenderhearted comes from? It comes from Paul telling me that we've got to forgive one another. You see, we've got a different ethic in this community than anybody else has, and that's this; we've got to forgive. Do you know why we forgive? Because God, in Christ, forgave us. I've said this before, but I want to say it afresh, and I want you to hear it afresh. Listen to me. In this new wardrobe we have, I've got to recognize this truth; I have been forgiven of all my sin. I just want you to know that about me. I have been forgiven. How many of you have been forgiven of all your sin? Go ahead; let's see a show of hands. Do you really believe that? You know why we're forgiven, right? God, in Christ, forgave us. Meaning what? God dealt with my sin in Christ on a cross. Amen. So listen to this; I must deal with your sin against me at the same place God dealt with my sin against Him, and that was at the cross. Your sin toward me is not outside the cross, because God didn't just forgive me of what I did, He forgave you of what you did if you are a part of this body at the cross too. So it didn't surprise God when you did what you did toward me, even though it surprised me that you did

what you did toward me. It didn't surprise Him, so therefore, ultimately, I forgive you on the same basis that He forgave me, and that's at the cross. Amen, amen!