

THE EXCHANGED LIFE Part 4
Ephesians 4: 25-32
(From Stealing to Sharing)

INTRODUCTION

Story : Ninoy Aquino's speech in Wilshire Ebell Theater in L.A. on February 15, 1981 sponsored by Movement for a Free Philippines during the time of Martial Law

Background : Japanese people have a hard time pronouncing "L" and exchange it with "R" Japanese for male employee is "sarariman" (translated salary man)

"My dear Piripino pipor, you are very raki, and I consider he said the Filipino people the most raki in Asia. And the people were of course surprised and they wanted to know why they are very lucky. He said you know why you are raki? You have a president who robs you, and you have a first lady who robs you more!"

Ephesians 4: ²⁵Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. ²⁶"In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry,²⁷and do not give the devil a foothold. ²⁸He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

²⁹Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. ⁹And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. ³²Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Pray

***Review of our study of the exchanged life**

- I. WE EXCHANGE LIES WITH THE TRUTH
- II. WE EXCHANGE UNRIGHTEOUS ANGER WITH RIGHTEOUS ANGER
- III. WE EXCHANGE STEALING WITH SHARING
- IV. WE EXCHANGE CORRUPTIVE WORDS WITH CONSTRUCTIVE WORDS
- V. WE EXCHANGE BITTERNESS WITH KINDNESS

Note : The next 3 outlines are easy to understand and wouldn't need much interpretation. It's as plain as it can be. To help you, here's how Paul arranges the outline

***Notice the outline** of Paul in the verse 25 to 32

What should we stop doing
What should we start doing
Why should we be doing it

Note : It's an articulation of putting off the old self and putting on the new self.

Ephesians 4: ²⁰You, however, did not come to know Christ that way. ²¹Surely you heard of him and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. ²²You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, **to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; ²³to be made new in the attitude of your minds; ²⁴**and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.***

Note : Yesterday in the Philippines (May 1) is Labor Day. What we're going to talk about in God's words today is going to be easy because it's self explanatory.

²⁸He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

1. WHAT WE SHOULD STOP DOING

²⁸He who has been stealing must steal no longer...

Etymology : steal "klepto" to take away something in stealth

Note : Christians should be the best worker in a company

Story : I've heard this story that one Christian businessman in the Philippines doesn't want to hire Christians anymore. The reason, since the Christian employees know that their boss is a Christian, they would abuse him. He says, that they are the ones with the most absences and when asked for the reason, they would always say that they had a church activity and etc etc. which is of course a bad testimony to the non- Christians in the workplace.

Here's the thing : Church is where you get fed. But your mission field is not in the church. Your mission field is where you are. This is the place where God planted you to share Christ with them and if we don't behave properly in the workplace, then we become a bad testimony

Different kinds of stealing :

***a.) Taking something that isn't yours.**

Note : This is the basic definition and self explanatory. If it's not yours, don't take it without asking permission.

Exodus 20:15 "Do not steal."

***b.) Not returning something that isn't yours**

***For example :** debt

*Psalm 37:21 ²¹ The wicked borrow and do not repay,
but the righteous give generously;*

Why? Because technically that money isn't yours and you had an agreement to pay it a certain time

But if you're not going to be able to pay it, then talk with your debtor and negotiate on something. But be honest. If you say, you will pay at this time since you already talked with him, **then** make sure you pay according to what you agreed upon.

**Matthew 5: ³⁷Simply let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.*

James 5: ¹²Above all, my brothers, do not swear—not by heaven or by earth or by anything else. Let your "Yes" be yes, and your "No," no, or you will be condemned.

***Quote :** Christians are supposed to followers of His Word and his word.

Illustration : There used to be a loan in the bank called “character loan”. The bank will just lend money to this person because he has proven his character that he will pay. No collaterals or anything.

***c.) Not giving something that isn't yours**

***Example 1:** Not paying the right salary or not paying salary

James 5: ⁴Look! The wages you failed to pay the workmen who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty.

***Another example :** Our tithes and offerings

Malachi 3: ⁸ "Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me.

"But you ask, 'How do we rob you?'

"In tithes and offerings

Somebody asked : Where should I tithe from my gross income or from my net income?

My answer : Love never asks that question.

The question really is : Do you love God? Or do you rob God?

Personally : It's from the gross income which we practice and we do it first and foremost

***2. WHAT WE SHOULD START DOING**

A Word on Work :

- God designed man for work

Note : There are those who believe that work is a curse because of what is written in

**Genesis 3: ¹⁷ To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,'*

*"Cursed is the ground because of you;
through painful toil you will eat of it
all the days of your life.*

*¹⁸ It will produce thorns and thistles for you,
and you will eat the plants of the field.*

*¹⁹ By the sweat of your brow
you will eat your food
until you return to the ground,
since from it you were taken;
for dust you are
and to dust you will return."*

But what sin does it to take away the joy in working. God designed man for work right from the very beginning :

Genesis 2: ¹⁵ The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

Etymology : work (abad) – labour; to work for another; to serve as subjects
Take care (shamar), to preserve it, to protect it to watch for it

Note : In this instance, who required man to work...it is God who ordained work.

Application : Since God is the one who ordained work, then our attitude in our work should be gratitude and thankfulness that we have work. Plus, we have to realize that in the long run we are working for God and not for man. He is the ultimate rewarder.

Ephesians 6: ⁵Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. ⁶Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. ⁷Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, ⁸because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free.

How must we work?

***a.) We must work hard excellently.**

²⁸He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

Etymology : work “kopiao” working to the point of exhaustion

In short, we must work giving our all...our best effort.

Quote from our elderly : Gagawin mo naman lang, pag-igihan mo na.

Example : “Whether you’re washing dishes... wash them well. If you’re mopping the floor, mop it well. If you’re counting money... count it carefully. If you become the President of the Philippines, do your absolute best. If you’re studying, give it your all.”

To the students : Your work is your school...do it excellently

Example : Paul was called by God to preach His word.

**Colossians 1: ²⁸We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. ²⁹To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me.*

Application : You were called to be mechanic, be the best mechanic in your workplace. You were called to be an accountant, be the best accountant. You were called to be a homemaker be the best homemaker.

***Quote :** Bloom where you are planted.

b.) We must work hard productively.

²⁸He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

Etymology : doing something useful “ergazomai” to earn by working

In short, when we work, there must be results.

Tagalog : May kahihinatnan....

**2 Thessalonians 3*

¹⁰For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat." ¹¹We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies. ¹²Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat.

***c.) We must work hard personally.**

²⁸He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

In short, walang tatamad-tamad.

2 Thessalonians 3: ⁶In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us. ⁷For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, ⁸nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. ⁹We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow.

Application : If you're already 30 years old, still don't have a job, and are always just relying on the help of others... you really have to follow these instructions.

***Quote :** My grandfather once told me that there are two kinds of people: those who do the work and those who take the credit. He told me to try to be in the first group; there was less competition there. – Indira Ghandi

***3. Why are we doing it?**

²⁸He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

IMPORTANT : This is where the Christian becomes different from the world which makes us live life to the full – in short, meaningful lives.

What's the reason the world is working

1.) To have money to buy the things they want.

But if this is your attitude, you will never be satisfied.

Illustration : All I wanted was to have a job...then I wanted a raise and said that I would be satisfied but after a few months, I wanted another raise because I can not buy the things anymore...

***Rule of Economics :** Expanded means is equal to expanded desires

Why does a Christian work?

that he may have something to share with those in need.

Note : If this is your attitude when working then it makes it different from the world.

From a personal point : I want to show my gratitude because at that time of our need, this church is overflowing in their sharing to us.

Honestly, sometimes nahihiya ako sa inyo but my wife would rebuke me and says, “Give the people chance to bless you so that they can be blessed.”

Very important : Gusto ninyong magkautang sa inyo ang Dios?

**Proverbs 19: ¹⁷ He who is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will reward him for what he has done.*

S.G.D.