

Venom: Emotion: The Mandate to Perform Gracious Acts Towards Each Other, Ephesians 4:32a**Ephesians 4:32**

The mandate in Ephesians 4:31 cannot be accomplished by means of human energy. What follows is a command for lovingkindness and forgiveness in the management of interpersonal relationships among your fellow believers. The example is one that in the mind of a humble believer will elicit not only gratitude but also a renewed attitude toward your fellow Christians. The verse begins with the conjunctive particle: *de* - This indicates the upcoming statement which will be in contrast to what we have just learned. “*but*.”

We have just seen a command to put a stop to a pretty rowdy lifestyle that is characterized by the presence of several chronic sins in the soul. What comes next is a problem-solving device that is not possible to execute from the flesh. This will be a spiritual process in one’s dealing with others.

There will be a rationale that is available only to the thinking of the grace-oriented believer. The mandate is introduced by the present active imperative of the verb: *ginomai* - “*But become ...*”

present: Customary; this is action which may be reasonably expected to occur when the believer recovers from reversionism. This refers not only to rebound recovery but also to one’s advance to sophisticated problem solving.

active: Believer who recovers from reversionism produces the action by becoming a grace-oriented person.

imperative: Positive; a command to perform the requested *modus operandi*.

The expressions of grace which are commanded are introduced next beginning with the noun: *chrestos* - An adjective meaning “*kind, loving, gracious, benevolent*.”

The mandate is for action that must begin with a mental attitude. Nevertheless, the customary present of the verb *ginomai* refers to action that may be reasonably expected to occur.

The customary present is also the tense of repeated action or habitual action. So, what we are ordered to do is to change our lifestyle, our behavior patterns, and our character traits by means of a wheel-track of righteousness. This is therefore a mandate for enrollment in the nine-step program for reversion recovery.

Conversion from wheel-tracks of wickedness to wheel-tracks of righteousness is not an overnight process but requires continuous inculcation of doctrine. What we have here is an order to advance to spiritual adulthood to the point of utilizing all ten of the problem-solving devices.

As God has been the source of repeated gracious acts towards us, we are to use that as a motivation for the execution of repeated acts of grace towards others. Therefore, we are to “*Become kind, performing gracious acts ...*” The targets of our gracious acts are stated next in the propositional phrase: *eis + allelon* - “*towards each other*.”

There is not a person in this church who has not been the beneficiary of continuous acts of grace from God. If you have experienced some spiritual growth, it is solely because of God’s grace to you through the power of the Holy Spirit. We have nothing to contribute to our spiritual growth except positive volition and a willingness to learn.

It is typical that in any local church there will be the accumulation of many different personalities, at different levels of spiritual growth, with different spiritual gifts, and who are under many forms of pressure. We are to cut each other some slack. You don't want to go through what I'm going through. It might be more than you could bear. I don't want to go through what you're going through. It might be more than I could bear. We are all in this together but we are commissioned to fight our battles on an individual basis by means of the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit and the application of resident doctrine.

Every person in this church is the beneficiary of grace. They fight the battle at a different level of spiritual growth, they function under their spiritual gift, and they do so while managing their own allotment of pressures. Pray for your fellow believers, don't ridicule them; be kind toward your fellow believers, don't slander them.

If there is anyone in this congregation who believes he is more spiritually mature than others, that his various talents and abilities make him more desirable to the Lord, that his social training is more sophisticated, that he went to a finer school, dresses nicer, speaks more fluently and without hint of the great vowel shift, or is just plain better than the rest, then I have a few verses for you to consider.