

# Walk Worthy

of the calling with which you were called.  
Ephesians 4:1-5:21

PART TWO – WALK IN TRUTH – EPH. 4:17-32

LESSON 29 – SPEAKING EDIFICATION AND GRACE – EPH. 4:29-30

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# Ephesians 4:25-32

- ▶ 25 Therefore, putting away lying, “Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,” for we are members of one another. 26 “Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, 27 nor give place to the devil. 28 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. **29 Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.** 31 Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. 32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

# A New Creation

- ▶ If we know Jesus Christ, if we have repented of our sin and believed in Him, we are a new creation. We have been born again and evidence of this new life is found as we examine the way that we walk, think, live, talk, and act. We have seen that those who have put on this new man in Christ will speak the truth, will be able to be angry for the right reasons and at the right time without sin, and will follow the call to forsake a former life of sin.
- ▶ Specifically, last week we learned that we are no longer to steal but instead to work at what is good so that we might provide for our family and give to those in the church who have needs.
- ▶ Today we find ourselves back in the arena of speech. More than avoiding deceit, now we see that as we speak the truth in love we should purposefully seek to edify with our words.

# Corrupt Communication

- ▶ We start by hearing the Word of God as it instructs us to “Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth.” The term corrupt means that which is rotten and putrid. The term can be expanded to include that which is no longer fit for use, worn out, of poor quality, bad, or worthless.
- ▶ The trouble is not found in defining these terms. The trouble is that the words we speak come from our heart.
- ▶ Sadly, there are those who are preaching and teaching today that we should use shocking and worldly terms when we converse with people, especially the lost, but this misses the whole point of what Jesus taught about our words. If it comes out the mouth it first proceeds from the heart.

# Corrupt Communication

- ▶ James warns us that the tongue is not tamable. It is a fire that easily burns out of control.
- ▶ But we know that as we have been given new hearts and new minds, we can rely on the power of the Holy Spirit to keep our mouth, and our hearts in line with the Word of God.
- ▶ If we do hear corrupting, unfit words coming out of our mouths we need to check our heart, because obviously there is a problem that needs to be confronted and confessed.

# Ephesians 5:3-7

- ▶ 3 But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; 4 **neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting**, but rather giving of thanks. 5 For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. 7 Therefore do not be partakers with them.
- ▶ The word “fitting” refers to that which is proper. It is right. Think of it in terms of clothing. When you try on a shirt it either fits or it doesn’t. It is either proper attire, or it isn’t. Even so, certain behavior is fitting for believers and other behavior just does not fit. It is improper.

# Bad Words

- ▶ Paul says that there are three things not fitting for saints. They serve to illustrate what a life of immorality, uncleanness, and greed looks and sounds like.
- ▶ Filthiness - We learn that filthiness is not fitting for saints. This is a general term for obscenity, or **disgraceful** speech. This is saying things that are profane, vulgar, unnecessarily shocking, or inappropriate.
- ▶ A clear violation of Eph. 4:29 and an offense that reveals that the sins of the heart flow out of the mouth in what we say and how we say it. Dirty talk is not proper for Christians. We should not talk like the world.

# Bad Words

- ▶ Foolish Talking - Next we see that foolish talking is not proper or fitting for believers. This is silly talk, moronic speech, stupidity, or low (as in the gutter) speech. This does not refer to humor, it refers to folly or foolishness. And there is a difference. One can have a great sense of humor and tell funny jokes and stories without resorting to foolish talking.
- ▶ What motivates a fool? Remember that the fool has said in his heart that there is no God. This is talking about things as if there were no God and no consequence to the choice of words we use. We will give an account for every word to God. So let us be careful not to speak foolishly.



# Bad Words

- ▶ Foolish Talking –
- ▶ Words, some say, are a-moral. That is words are neither right nor wrong, it just depends on how you use them. I would say that this is not correct. There are words that can be good. There are words that can be bad. There are words that can be good or bad depending on usage and context. But to be sure, there are words that are never appropriate.
- ▶ So not only are we to avoid filthiness and foolish talking, but these are not ever proper for “holy ones.” Let us not forget that we should live like what we are – followers of Jesus Christ!

# Bad Words

- ▶ Coarse Jestings – Lastly, there is coarse jesting. This refers to innuendo, turning something said or done into the obscene where even the innocent is perverted and misused. This is laughing at sin.
- ▶ People who engage in coarse jesting can take any story or any event and make it dirty, perverse, evil, or sexual in nature. They twist words and use innuendo to try and get a laugh.
- ▶ Don't laugh when you hear these things. I was going to say don't laugh even if it is funny, but then we must never forget that sin is never truly funny!
- ▶ Some of what we think of as humor is just pure sin and depravity. We need to guard our minds. And if we laugh at sin, we need to repent and realize what an affront to our Heavenly Father sin truly is.

# Edification and Grace

- ▶ Paul continues in verse 29 and he moves from telling us what not to say to giving specific instruction about how we talk. We are to speak “what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.”
- ▶ Remember the word good denotes that which promotes health. So we are to speak those things which promote health, specifically things that edify.
- ▶ Edification means to build up or encourage. This reminds us of our study about church growth – where we see that we each play a part in “building up” the church as the Word of God is taught, applied, and lived in the life of the congregation.
- ▶ Our words can build up or tear down. Too often we use words to destroy and uproot instead of thinking before we speak so that what we say might minister edification to those who hear us.

# Edification and Grace

- ▶ Even beyond edification here though we see a tremendous and often overlooked truth. When we speak words that are good for edification the result is that it ministers grace to the hearers! Did you catch that?
- ▶ Now think with me here. How are the lost saved? By grace. What can we impart to people with the words we speak? Grace. We, by virtue of the way we talk, are grace dispensers!
- ▶ So often we simply “run at the mouth” or “shoot our mouth off” and say the first thing that pops in our heads. We speak rashly and quickly with little thought. And at that moment those words are not grace filled. No, they are corrupt. For what can be more corrupt, more useless, more putrid than words that are absent all grace?

# Edification and Grace

- ▶ We must be aware of the condition of our hearts and we must think about what we say before we say it.
- ▶ Our words are able to carry grace, so this is a heavy burden that we should carefully consider.
- ▶ We can destroy or build up. We can edify or tear down. We can be used of the Spirit to impart grace to the hearers or serve ourselves and even harm others with our speech.

# Do Not Grieve the Holy Spirit

- ▶ Paul concludes these verses today with this statement, “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”
- ▶ The Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Trinity, truly and completely God, is described to us as the Comforter. We also know that He is the One who calls us to life from the dead when we are born again. He is the seal of our salvation. He convicts us of sin, convinces us of truth, and empowers us to live the Christian life as He indwells us.

# Do Not Grieve the Holy Spirit

- ▶ What would grieve the Holy Spirit? Let us think about His role. He indeed indwells us and fills us. We are told to “walk in the Spirit” so that we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. He is our Guide. He lives through us.
- ▶ And look at this verse in context. If we neglect verse 25 then we will lie and live in dishonesty. This grieves the Spirit as He has been given to lead us into all truth.
- ▶ If we neglect verses 26-27, we will be sinfully angry and allow the devil an opportunity to use us for his purposes, taking advantage of us. And this grieves the Spirit because the Spirit convicts us of sin. To remain in anger or to become bitter is to neglect that conviction.

# Do Not Grieve the Holy Spirit

- ▶ If we neglect verse 28, we will steal, furthering our sin by being dishonest and grieving the Spirit who has promised to provide for us all that we need. We would fail to walk by faith, and this grieves the Spirit.
- ▶ Now we see that if we reject the truth and allow words that are barren and corrupt and graceless to proceed out of our mouths then we do indeed grieve the Spirit.
- ▶ To sum this up, to fail or to refuse to walk in this new life, like the new man that we are, is to grieve the Spirit. He has been given to seal us and keep us and sanctify us as we grow in grace. We grieve Him when we reject His Word and Way. The Spirit after all empowers us to obey the Word of God, so we are without excuse.



# Saved, yet Sinners

- ▶ Why would we do such a thing? Because although we are saved we are still sinners. We are still in need of grace. And where can we get more grace? When we edify one another and speak the truth in love we impart grace!
- ▶ Let us not forget the role that we play in this daily life of following Christ – we are able by the words we speak, by our motives, by our actions, and by the way that we think, to be used to minister grace to those around us.
- ▶ Let us not ever think that grace is only for the lost. We each need His grace daily, and we have been given the opportunity and ability to pour out His grace upon one another.
- ▶ No wonder the devil would have us be bitter and harsh with our words! Today – think before you speak. And examine your heart, mind, and mouth for thoughts and words that minister grace to those who hear you.

# Next Lesson

- ▶ 30. Forgiving One Another - Ephesians 4:31-32
- ▶ 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.