

CORRUPTING TALK

EPHESIANS 4:29



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All emphasis added are mine

Ephesians 4:17-29 *Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. 18 They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. 19 They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. 20 But that is not the way you learned Christ!— 21 assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, 22 to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, 23 and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, 24 and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. 25 Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. 26 Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and give no opportunity to the devil. 28 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. 29 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.*

Who We Were Apart From Christ

Ephesians 4:17 *Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds 18 They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. 19 They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.*

Who are the Gentiles? The Gentiles are us, me and each one of you, apart from Christ.

1 John 3:10 *By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.*

Everyone in this room, everyone in the world, is either a child of God or a child of Satan.

1 Corinthians 2:14 *The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.*

Apart from God's saving grace, not only can we not do what is pleasing to God, we are not even able to accept or understand the things of God.

Who We Were Apart From Christ

v19 ...given themselves up to sensuality... –the word sensuality conveys the idea of an unbridled lust, a voluntary and continual giving oneself over to the desires of the flesh.

The continual giving oneself over to the desires of the flesh results in our consciences becoming calloused.

v19...greedy to practice every kind of impurity. - We could not get enough, we always wanted more.

Outside of Christ we are dead in trespasses and sins (2:1), followers of the devil (2:2), children of wrath (2:3), having no hope apart from Christ (2:12).

Who We Are In Christ...If We Are In Him

20 But that is not the way you learned Christ!— 21 assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus,

HEARD, WERE TAUGHT AND LEARNED - Paul focusing in on our thinking

How did we learn Christ?

Ephesians 2:4-5 *But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—*

It is important that we remember as we saw in v17-19 who we were outside of Christ, but we also must remember who we are now in Christ because of God's love and mercy, Giving glory to Him.

Who we are now in Christ – indicative

Commands - imperatives

A right understanding of the indicatives and imperatives help us see the **power and motivation** of the Christian life.

Indicatives and Imperatives

We must not focus on the imperatives, while skipping or glossing over the indicatives.

“Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch” – our tendency is to create an extra-biblical checklist that we can follow to demonstrate how religious we are, but a right understanding of the indicatives and imperatives can help us to guard against that.

What happens when we start with the commands, rather than the gospel and the fruit of conversion?

We end up feeling that we need to “do” in order to be right with God.

A right understanding of the indicatives and imperatives help us to guard against works righteousness and legalism, help us to understand the difference between our justification and sanctification, and help us to see how we are to live lives “worthy of the gospel”.

Indicatives and Imperatives

Matthew 7:21-23 *"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' 23 And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'*

These are people that believed themselves to be saved, but will spend eternity in the everlasting torment of hell.

A faith that does not result in a change of life is a dead rather than a true faith. The change in life does not save us, it just demonstrates that we truly are saved.

Indicatives and Imperatives

Indicatives	Imperatives
Example - “This is a Bible.”	Example - “Open the Bible and read it.”
Source, power and motivation for carrying out commands	Commands
Cause of our salvation	Evidence of our salvation
Positional righteousness	Actual righteous, as we continue in sanctification
Faith	Practice
Calling	Conduct

Putting Off the Old Self and Putting on the New

22 to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, 23 and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, 24 and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

Ephesians – **Chapters 1-3:** primarily indicatives; **Chapters 4-6:** primarily imperatives

Transition/turning point - **Ephesians 4:1** *I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,*

Reasoning continues - *v17...you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds*

v22 - what we are to do instead – we are to put off our old self, have our minds renewed and put on our new self.

Paul is saying here...“ God has redeemed you and made you a new creation, you are not only free from the punishment of sin, but also the power of sin, now by the power of the Spirit act like the new creation that you are!”

Putting Off the Old Self and Putting on the New

Paul then continues this line of thinking and gives examples of this principle of putting off and putting on:

- Putting off falsehood and putting on speaking the truth (v25)
- Putting off sinning when you are angry and putting on not letting the sun go down on your anger and thus giving an opportunity to the enemy (v27)
- Putting off stealing and putting on working (working diligently enough to be able to share with those in need) (v28)
- Putting off corrupting talk and putting on speaking words that build up and give grace (v29).

What would the unbeliever who was sitting among the congregation have heard before this command, regarding corrupting talk in chapter 4 verse 29:

- You have redemption (forgiveness of sins) only through the blood of Christ (1:7).
- You are saved when you hear the gospel and believe (1:13).
- You are saved by grace, not works, because of God's great love and mercy (2:4-9).
- You are reconciled to God through the cross of Christ (2:16).

Renewing Our Minds

23 and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds,

Romans 12:2 *Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*

The key to putting off the old man and putting on the new, begins with HOW WE THINK and WHAT WE THINK. Putting off the old man and putting on the new is something that begins in our minds,

When we are converted:

2 Corinthians 3:12-16 *Since we have such a hope, we are very bold, 13 not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face so that the Israelites might not gaze at the outcome of what was being brought to an end. 14 But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away. 15 Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts. 16 But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed.*

Renewing Our Minds

Titus 3:5 *he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, - it is only through the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit that our minds are transformed or renewed to be able to accept and understand the things of the Spirit of God, and it is only by the power of the Spirit that this renewing can continue.*

Romans 12:2 – Testing against God’s Word.

John 17:17 *Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth*

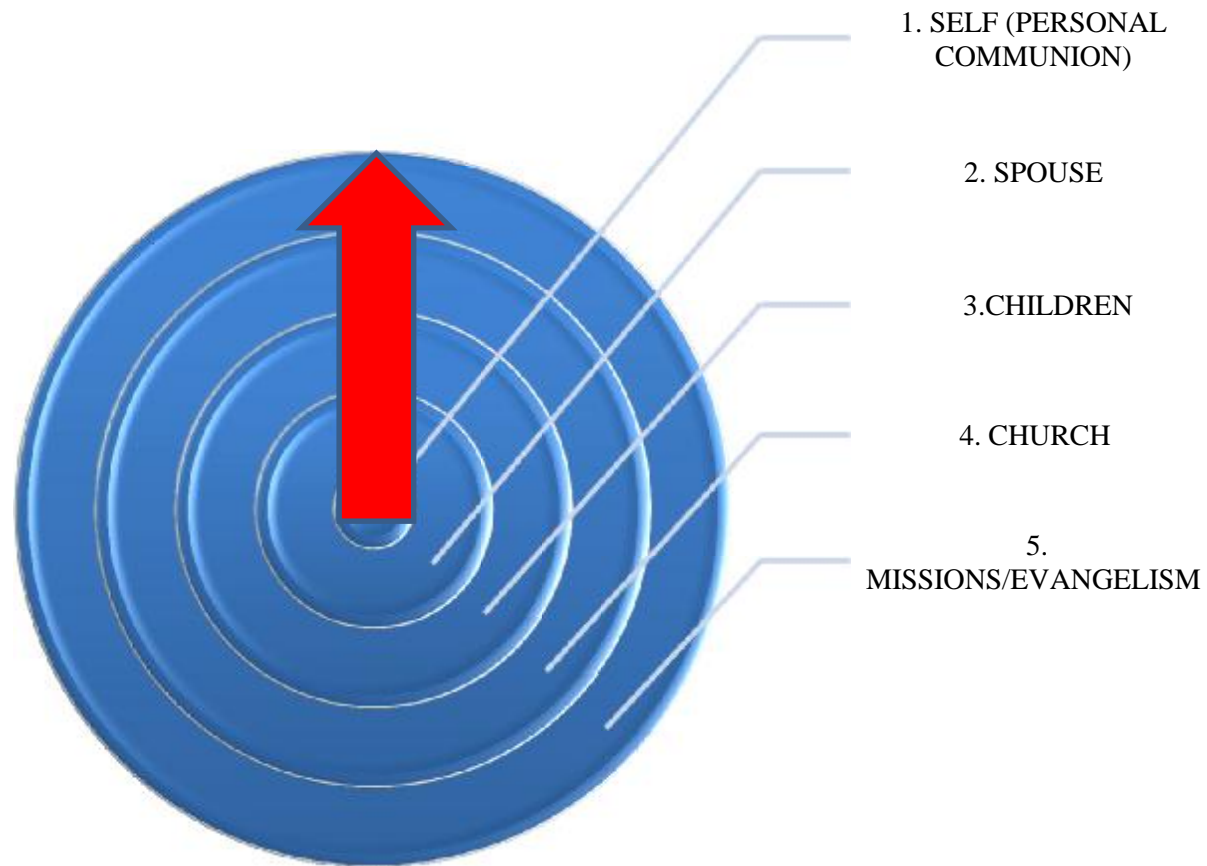
Joshua 1:8 *This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.*

Be careful to do what God has written - in other words, put on the new man by meditating upon God’s Word.

Other ways our minds are renewed:

- Prayer. **Psalms 141:3-4** *Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips! 4 Do not let my heart incline to any evil, to busy myself with wicked deeds in company with men who work iniquity, and let me not eat of their delicacies!*

Concentric Circles Of The Christian Life



Renewing Our Minds

- Teaching of others. **Matthew 28:19-20** *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

Disciples, NOT decisions.

- Teaching each other (Colossians 3:16)
- Part of a church where sound doctrine is taught and false teaching refuted (Titus 1:9)
- Part of a church where the Word of God is rightly handled (2 Timothy 2:15)
- Other “one anothers”:
 - Admonish, encourage and help each other (1 Thessalonians 5:14)
 - Exhort one another every day (Hebrews 3:13)
 - Gently restore those who are caught up in sin (Galatians 6:1)

These things will happen primarily outside of Sunday mornings.

A change in the way we think results in a change in how we act, but remember none of this is possible without the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit and His ongoing work in our lives. God changes our desires and then gives us the ability to live following after those new desires

Corrupting Talk

Ephesians 4:29 *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.*

Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths...

Let NO corrupting talk come out of your mouths. Paul gives NO exceptions.

What is corrupting talk?

- *Sapros* - also means rotten, putrefied, bad, decayed, and is applied to spoiled putrid vegetable or animal substances.

Examples in Scripture of this corrupting talk that we are to put off:

- Crooked, devious, perverse (Proverbs 4:24)
- Filthiness, foolish talk, crude joking (Ephesians 5:4)
- Boasting in ourselves (James 4:16)
- Grumbling (Philippians 2:14)
- Gossip and slander (2 Corinthians 12:20) (next week)

Our questions: Is this foolish talk? Is this grumbling? Is this gossip?

Paul's questions: Is this talk that builds up, both those that are a part of the conversation and those listening? Does my talk demonstrate the grace that Christ has shown me?

Corrupting talk - Anything that does not build up and give grace.

Any words that don't build up and give grace, God sees as rotten and putrid.

Corrupting Talk

We will struggle most with corrupting talk, as we live out our lives in our families and with other believers.

Each of us, especially husbands and fathers as the leaders in our homes, have to be constantly on the watch for things we have let slip into our homes – ex. DVD's, TV shows, music, or books, bad habits and attitudes that have slipped in.

Where does this corrupting talk come from?

Matthew 12:34-35 *You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. 35 The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil.*

Corrupting talk comes out of the corruption and rottenness in our hearts. We cannot address the talk without addressing the heart. To address the heart, we must be renewing our minds.

Our speech is where our minds come out into the open.

Our prayer should be like David's in Psalm 19:14:

Psalms 19:14 *Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.*

Talk that Builds Up

v29...*but only such as is good for building up*

1 Thessalonians 5:14 – *encourage the fainthearted*

Your job is to encourage and build up, your job it NOT to apply the words you speak to the hearts of other believers, that is the job of the Holy Spirit.

Proverbs 29:5 *A man who flatters his neighbor spreads a net for his feet.*

We have to be involved in other's lives enough to be able to offer true encouragement and not flattery.

Paul provides us with examples of encouragement:

- He says Phoebe has been helper of many, including Paul himself (Romans 16:1-2)
- He says Persis has worked hard in the Lord (Romans 16:12)
- He says the household of Stephanas have devoted themselves to the service of the saints (1 Corinthians 16:15)
- He calls Onesimus a faithful brother (Colossians 4:9)

Talk that Fits the Occasion

v29...*as fits the occasion ...*

The NASB renders this “*according to the need of the moment*”.

Paul gives us an example of what those occasions or moments might be in

1 Thessalonians 5:14 *And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all.*

- There are times where there is sin, like idleness, where our words need to be words of admonishment or exhortation.
- There are times when a brother is fainthearted, maybe struggling with depression or fear, where our words need to be words that encourage.
- There are times that when a brother is weak, or sick and without strength, maybe physically or spiritually, where our words need to be words that help or provide comfort.

The particular cases will be a mixture of these three.

Our words may be doctrinally true, but if they do not fit the occasion, then they will not build up or edify.

Words that Give Grace to Those Who Hear

v29...*that it may give grace to those who hear.*

– *Charis* - that which affords joy, pleasure, delight, sweetness, charm, loveliness

Philippians 4:8 *Finally, brothers*

whatever is true,

whatever is honorable,

whatever is just,

whatever is pure,

whatever is lovely,

whatever is commendable,

if there is any excellence,

if there is anything worthy of praise,

think about these things.

Words that Give Grace to Those Who Hear

Our talk should be rooted and flow out of indicatives:

- We have redemption (forgiveness of sins) only through the blood of Christ (1:7).
- We were saved when we heard the gospel and believed (1:13).
- We were saved by grace, not works, because of God's great love and mercy (2:4-9).
- We were reconciled to God through the cross of Christ (2:16).

We should at any time be able to stop in the middle of a conversation and transition right into the gospel. If we can't do that, it is likely our words are NOT words that are giving grace.

Summary

For the unbeliever:

- the calling is to repent and believe the gospel.

For the Christian:

- Changes in our lives must be gospel centered
- We must renew our minds through the means God has given
- By the power of the Holy Spirit, we are to act like the new creations that we are.