

# Put On The New Man – Part 4

Ephesians 4:29-32

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, just as God in Christ forgave you. (Ephesians 4:29-32)

Today, we again consider how, as “new creatures in Christ” we are to “put off” all that we once were in our days of unbelief, and then, how we are to replace that “old man” with the “new man” that we have become, having been “born-again” in the “true righteousness and holiness” of Christ. And as we do that, we will give especial close attention to God’s admonitions in verse 29 about the words that flow out from our mouths.

But before we begin, may I again caution us with the warnings that we have repeated so often as we have studied through this passage . . . that even though in those first moments of our salvation the shed blood of Christ truly did wash away all of our sins . . . residues of the “old man”, the “old self” that had before dominated and controlled our fleshly desires and behaviors is somehow still able to reach back and regain access and influence over our souls.

Our old flesh, though it is now dead within us, still desires many of its old former habits and beliefs and philosophies that once were so destructive to us. Like an old pair of shoes, they are still in some ways “comfortable” to us. And left unattended those old fleshly desires will surely reassert themselves back into our “new life”. And the corruption they bring will be ever so much worse than it was before.

And so, here God is urging, yea even pleading with us to immediately begin putting off those old ways and to replace them with the nature of the “new man” of righteousness and holiness that the Spirit of Christ has bought into our souls.

So, may I plead with us to do exactly that, to go on and get about, and keep getting about, “putting on this new nature” that God speaks about here; else we will surely become more corrupt than we ever were before and we will surely grieve God’s Holy Spirit who now abides within us. Verse 30,

30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. (Ephesians 4:30)

And may I also take another moment and remind us again that God really does live right inside each of us who have Christ as our Savior! He is not “out there” somewhere, far removed from us and from our behaviors. He now abides within us and is fully aware of every thought we think and everything we do. And because He is dwelling within us, we actually give Him no choice but to become a part of and to participate in all the things that we do, every thought we think, every word that we say and every activity that we involve ourselves in.

And as we get caught back up in our old nature and begin to do these things spoken about here, lying, stealing, corrupt conversation, anger, bitterness, we are fully requiring our Pure and Holy Savior to be with us as we do them. And surely that “grieves” Him beyond measure.

Folks, please do think about this! We are God’s dearly loved children. And just as it would break our hearts to have our own children not only do vile and sinful things, but to also require us to be with them when they do them; we would be grieved beyond measure! And we must not do that to our loving Savior!

And so, with that awareness firmly fixed within our minds, may we continue on with our study of these words in this passage, and here to especially note God’s admonishment regarding the corrupt words that can come out from our mouths. Listen!

24 . . . put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. 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, just as God in Christ forgave you. (Ephesians 4:24-32)

As we have been studying these past few weeks, here, God begins by telling us that it has been a normal part of our old nature to tell “lies”, and to be “angry”, and to “steal” from one another. But now that Christ has given us a new nature, we are to put all of those things aside and instead; begin to speak truth into each other’s lives. And we are to show patience and kindness and love to each other. And we are to work with our hands and earn money and give that money to those in need. And now here in verse

29, God goes on to exhort us to be very careful about the words that flow out from our mouths.

Please, think through this with me! We are at present living in a very unique time in the history of men, a time when communication is at the forefront of all that is taking place. We have only to turn on our television to the five-hundred channels that are available and to watch all the many news reports and panel discussions to see that conversation is the well-established instrument of not only informing us on matters, but also of influencing us towards one belief or another.

And recall also that as the internet began to develop just a few years ago, it was dubbed the “Information Super Highway”. And it is! And each day it is getting more and more prolific in the information it has to offer. Thankfully, much of what the internet has to offer is good. But at the same time, regrettably much is also evil. We can find videos and information on just about everything, as for me, on how to build a patio or a workshop or a back porch. But regrettably, we can also find videos and information on the worst of pornography.

And it doesn’t stop there! We can also find all that we could want to know about radical religions, and how to build bombs, and how to manufacture drugs.

The “media”, has become the dominant source of “making all things known” to man, both good and evil. And I know that it must “grieve” the heart of God as He watches His beloved creation corrupt and pervert all the good and perfect gifts He provides to us. And so here, He tells us . . .

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. (Ephesians 4:29)

May we pause here and ask ourselves, “What does God desire and expect you and me to do with these words of warning?” I believe that the answer to that question is far simpler than we often make it out to be.

Yes, the internet and our 500 channels on the television and all the other forms of communication are massive and prolific in nature. And their programming is fully focused upon influencing and changing the hearts and minds of millions each day. But as for us, personally and individually, God is telling us that where goodness and righteousness and holiness must begin is at the level of each individual heart, each believer, each “one person”. And then from each of us, our communication is to spread this righteousness and holiness on out to every other person that we encounter.

Simply put, it is within you and me that these changes must begin, one person at a time. Yes, our world is truly a “mess” and is running head-long in the wrong direction, and we can do little about all of that. But we can do something about ourselves. And that is where we are to start, with the works of our own heart and mind, and with the words that flow out from our own mouths.

And we must, because it is us alone, we who have Christ, who have the answers and are called to give forth those answers that the world so desperately needs, the pure and holy “word of God.”

But here, we are quickly being warned that as we press forward with the new calling that has been put into our hearts, our tongues are not to be trusted, that our tongues have a power and influence that is beyond our understanding, that like that of a small “rudder” which is able to guide, or misguide a great ship, so also, our tongue can guide and misguide our own souls and the souls of others with influence beyond our imagination. With our tongue we are able to bless other people but with it we are also able to curse them. And when our tongue chooses to curse, it can bring about all measures and kinds of trouble, both to ourselves and to those who listen to us.

Those words in James 3 . . .

6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell. 7 For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, 8 but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. 9 With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. 10 From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so. (James 3:6-10 (ESV))

And in Matthew 15 Jesus warned

18 . . . those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. 19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. 20 These are the things which defile a man." (Matthew 15:18-20)

Note these words folks . . . our tongue is like a fire that comes out from the very pit of hell itself and it sets ablaze the entire course of life. It is a “restless evil”, able to both bless and to curse. Who can know the power of their own tongue!

And here, in verse 29 of our text we are being solemnly warned to . . .

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. (Ephesians 4:29)

May we take a moment and get really personal with these words! As you and I go about our day, do we, do you, do I, take part in corrupt conversation? As we interact with our family, and especially within the listening ears of our children, are our words . . . good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. (Ephesians 4:29)

Or do we, with the same mouth “bless some, while we curse others”? Do we grumble and complain about our friends, our co-workers, our bosses. Do we spend much of our time “railing against” those in authority over us, and their perceived systems of inequity? Just over these past few days I have been constrained by my circumstances to listen to seemingly unending streams of “railing” against all sorts of perceived mistreatments, defiling words that should never have flowed out from a person’s mouth.

But think for a moment. Do we not also do much the same with our own conversation? Do we not also, at a moment’s notice, argue and dispute and “rail” against others? Do we curse those who think differently from us, either under our breath or out loud?

And do we not know that our corrupt words are intimately connected to all the other sinful conduct that is prevailing in our life at the moment, like those spoken about in verse 31. . .

31 Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. (Ephesians 4:31)

It is most often as we give ourselves over to such things as these . . . bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, that the evil speaking begins to freely flow out from our mouths, corrupting us and corrupting everyone who listens.

And do we deceive ourselves that our making of such empty excuses as, “I didn’t mean to say something wrong” really excuses us?

Or, as these words of scripture exhort, are we willing to humble ourselves and accept that much of what comes out from our mouths need not to be said?

Folks, how much must our corrupt and defiling words “grieve” the tender heart of God! Listen . . . whether our words be uttered in haste or after a great deal of thought, and whether our words be good or evil, right or wrong, they all count and must be guarded carefully!

You and I must accept and embrace who we really are. We are God's very own beloved children. Jesus shed His precious blood and gave His life to save us and to cleanse us from all of these sins. And we ought not to allow ourselves to fall back into them. Our careless words "trample under foot" the precious blood of Christ. And that ought never to be.

Before we close for today, may I simply repeat some of the exhortations that we have been given in these scriptures? The first is that though we often are blinded to our own foolish behavior, we really are without excuse. God really has given us everything that we need for "life and godliness" and it is to our great loss that we do not move on forward into our salvation.

And as we have studied here today, we must be ever so careful with the words that come out from our mouths. Our words lie, they hurt, they corrupt, they defile, they dishonor, they deceive, they disgrace, they slander, they pervert, and they often leave permanent scars that will never be removed.

But worst of all, our words can lead others down a pathway away from Christ and into a lifestyle that leads to destruction.

Here, God offers us a far better alternative, that of surrendering our lives to Christ and surrendering the words of our mouths over to the power and the presence of the Holy Spirit. And when we do that, our words will be as we are admonished here . . . verse 29,

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. (Ephesians 4:29)