

TEN EXHORTATIONS, PT. 2; EPH. 4:29-30 (Ed O'Leary)

INTRODUCTION.

THIS MORNING, ~ WE CONTINUE WITH THE NEXT SECTION OF THE SECOND overarching theme of Ephesians, ~ 4:25 — 5:2.

▶▶ As noted, ~ in this next paragraph, ~ 4:25—5:2, ~ we find ten exhortations to believers.

▷▷ Ten exhortations that help spell out in detail the type of life that brings honor and glory to God, ~ the type of life that should result from the truth of chapters 1-3.

▷▷ In the more immediate context, ~ these ten exhortations serve the purpose of describing some of what it means to put off our old self and to put on our new self, ~ which Paul talked about in the previous paragraph, ~ 4:17-24.

↪↪ So we can look at these ten exhortation as ten examples of what it means to take off the old life and put on the new life.

TODAY, ~ WE'LL ZERO IN ON VERSES 29-30, ~ WHICH FOCUS ON THE FOURTH AND fifth exhortation.

▶▶ Now, ~ it's important to understand that, ~ while these 10 exhortations apply universally, ~ i.e., ~ to our relationships to everyone, ~~~// in the context Paul is specifically talking about our relationships with other believers in our local fellowship.

▷▷ And that is what I will be focusing on.

↪↪ However, ~ as we go through this, ~ I encourage everyone to also mentally apply it to how we are to interact with everyone, ~ believer and non-believer alike.

IN VERSE 29a, ~ WE FIND THE FOURTH EXHORTATION THAT HELPS SPELL OUT IN detail the type of life that should result from the truth of chapters 1-3. ~ ¶¶

AND THAT SERVES AS AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT IT MEANS TO PUT OFF OUR OLD SELF and to put on our new self. ▶▶ "Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths."

▶▶ Again, ~ note the word "let." ~~~ And again we're actually looking at a command.

▷▷ As I understand it, ~ it could be read as "Corrupting talk must not come out of your mouths."

▷▷ Or as, "Do not let any corrupting talk come out of your mouths." ¶¶ 1/8

BACK IN 4:25, ~ PAUL SAID THAT BELIEVERS ARE TO NOT LIE AND TO ALWAYS BE truthful.

▶▶ Here in [verse 29a](#), ~ He calls on believers to not let any "corrupting talk" come out of our mouths.

▶▶ While believers are to not use "corrupting talk" with believers and unbelievers alike, ~ again, ~ **the context is specifically speaking about our interactions with other believers.**

▷▷ So here Paul is specifically prohibiting using any "corrupting talk" in our interactions with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

THE WORD FOR "CORRUPTING" BASICALLY MEANS "ROTTEN" OR "PUTRID."

▶▶ It was used to refer to rotted wood, ~ diseased lungs, ~ rancid fish, ~ withered flowers, ~ and rotten fruit.

▶▶ In the gospels it is used to refer to the kind of fruit a bad tree bears ([Matt 7:17-18](#)) and the kind of fish that need to be thrown away ([Matt 13:48](#)).

▶▶ Paul uses it figuratively here in [Eph. 4:29a](#) to describe destructive speech.

SINCE IN THE VERY NEXT STATEMENT, ~ VERSE 29b, ~ PAUL TALKS ABOUT BELIEVERS instead using speech that is edifying, ~ ¶¶

▶▶ he broadens the scope of destructive speech to include any speech that does not build our fellow believers up, ~ or that causes dissension in the church.

▷▷ "corrupting talk," ~ then, ~ most likely refers to any talk that tears other believers down, ~ talk that is not beneficial to them, ~ ¶¶

↳ ↳ talk that weakens and destroys their reputations and character, ~ and talk that does not strengthen and build them up.

▷▷ IOW, ~ any talk that results in negative consequences for a brother or sister in Christ or the church is rotten or putrid in Paul's eyes ~ and must never come out of our mouths.

▶▶ Now, ~ this does not mean that we are not to rebuke a brother or sister who is in sin. ~ Doing so is actually geared toward positive consequences for the believer and the church.

▷▷ [Prov. 27:5](#) says, ~ "Better is open rebuke than hidden love." ~ I.e., ~ "It is better to correct someone openly than to hide your love for them." ¶¶ 2/8

↪↪ Jesus demonstrated this with the church at Laodicea. ~ Rev. 3:19, ~ NIV ~ "Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent."

↪↪ And He also demonstrated it with the apostles

▷▷ Prov. 27:6a says, ~ "Faithful are the wounds of a friend."

↪↪ Sometimes true friends "wound" each other in order to bring repentance or spiritual healing.

↪↪ Just as a doctor must sometimes cut us in surgery in order to remove what is killing us, ~ true friends sometimes say things that aren't easy but are necessary to hear.

▷▷ Paul openly rebuked Peter for his hypocrisy regarding eating with Gentile believers.

↪↪ Gal. 2:14, ~ "But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, 'If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?'"

▷▷ And in Matt. 18:15, ~ Jesus said, ~ "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother."

▷▷ So Paul's exhortation to not use destructive speech does not mean that we are not to rebuke a sinning brother or sister.

↪↪ However, ~ it does mean that we must never use destructive speech in our rebuke of him or her.

→→ In confronting the sinning believer, ~ we must not use speech that tears them down, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ that weakens and destroys their reputations and character, ~ or that does not strengthen and build them up.

DESTRUCTIVE TALK, ~ ROTTEN OR PUTRID TALK, ~ BELONGS TO THE PERSON WE USED to be when we were unsaved, ~ and to "the domain of darkness," ~ from which we've been forever rescued.

▶▶ My . . . ~ destructive talk has no place in the kingdom into which we have been forever transferred, ~ i.e., ~ the kingdom of God's beloved Son. ~ ~ . . . does not belong

IN VERSE 29b, ~ PAUL COUNTERS WITH WHAT SHOULD COME OUT OF OUR mouths.

"BUT ONLY SUCH AS IS GOOD FOR BUILDING UP, AS FITS THE OCCASION, THAT IT may give grace to those who hear."

▶▶ Rather than engage in speech that is destructive, ~ we are to engage in speech that is constructive. ~~ Speech that builds up our fellow believers.

▶▶ Speech that is "good" refers to the kind of talk that is helpful, ~ constructive, ~ beneficial.

BELIEVERS' WORDS SHOULD BE WELL CHOSEN SO THAT WE MAY EDIFY OTHERS AND have a beneficial effect on them and the church as a whole.

▶▶ The conversation of the follower's of Christ should be wholesome and beneficial so that it edifies others, ~ that builds them up rather than tear them down.

▶▶ My . . . ~ we should be characterized by words that help others.

▷▷ When we speak to our fellow believers, ~ we should always strive to use words that build their confidence, ~ that encourage them in their tasks, ~ that promote their spiritual growth, ~ and that foster goodwill in our local fellowship.

▶▶ The right words can make an enormous difference in people's lives.

▷▷ Prov. 16:24, ~ "Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body."

↪↪ Kind and pleasant words are like honey, ~ sweet to the taste, ~ i.e., ~ enjoyable and easy to accept. ~~ And they are good for our health, ~ both spiritually and, ~ we see, ~ even physically.

→→ Elsewhere, ~ Proverbs speaks of the benefits of wisdom that are felt even in the physical body. ~~ E.g., ~ Prov. 3:8.

↪↪ "It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones."

▷▷ Also speaking of the right words making an enormous difference in people's lives, ~ in Job 4:4, ~ Eliphaz the Temanite paid Job a great compliment.

↪↪ "Your words have upheld him who was stumbling, and you have made firm the feeble knees."

↪↪ Job supported and strengthened others emotionally and spiritually by his words of counsel. ↵↵ 4/8

▶▶ We should never underestimate the power of words to encourage our brothers and sisters in their spiritual growth and in the battles of life.

NOTICE IN VERSE 29b, ~ THE PHRASE, ~ "AS FITS THE OCCASION."

I.E., ~ PARAPHRASING ALL OF VERSE 29, ~ "LET NO DESTRUCTIVE SPEECH COME OUT of your mouths, ~ 77

▶▶ but only such as is good for building up, ~ saying the right thing at the right time, ~ that it may give grace to those who hear."

▶▶ The book of Proverbs shows us the tremendous value of speech that fits the occasion, ~ of saying the right thing at the right time.

▷▷ Prov. 12:25 says, ~ "Anxiety in a man's heart weighs him down, but a good word makes him glad."

↳↳ "Anxiety" is normally fear or worry about something in the future. ~ It "weighs him down" in the sense of causing the person to become depressed or dejected.

↳↳ The remedy is "a good word" from a supportive friend.

→→ The word is "good" in that it is timely, ~ measured according to the need of the moment and is "reassuring," ~ "encouraging," ~ or "helpful."

↳↳ The idea here seems to be, ~ "Worrying about what will happen leads to depression, but a well-timed encouraging word brings the person joy."

▷▷ Prov. 15:23, ~ "To make an apt answer is a joy to a man, and a word in season, how good it is!"

↳↳ This speaks of the right answer at the right time.

→→ A wrong answer given when a correct answer is sought is misleading.

→→ A right answer given at the wrong time may be well-intentioned and technically correct, ~ but could be damaging.

→→ The right answer at the right time brings joy and is beneficial.

↳↳ Priceless 11 5/8

▷▷ And Prov. 25:11, ~ "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver." ~~

↳↳ Most likely, ~ the point here is that an appropriate and properly timed word is attractive and immensely valuable, ~ like a valuable and beautiful piece of art.

▶▶ The right words, ~ spoken at the right time, ~ and with the right motive, ~ can make an enormous difference in people's lives.

▶▶ Going back to the mention of giving the right answer at the wrong time, ~ Prov. 27:14 points out the trouble we can get ourselves into by saying the right thing at the wrong time.

▷▷ NIV, ~ "If anyone loudly blesses their neighbor early in the morning, it will be taken as a curse."

▷▷ Surely there can be nothing wrong with blessing or praising a neighbor.

↳↳ But loudly disturbing our friend's sleep early in the morning will feel more like a curse than a blessing.

IN VERSE 30a, ~ WE FIND THE FIFTH EXHORTATION THAT HELPS SPELL OUT IN detail the type of life that should result from the truth of chapters 1-3, ~ ¶¶

AND THAT SERVES AS AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT IT MEANS TO PUT OFF OUR OLD SELF and to put on our new self. →→ "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God."

▶▶ I.e., ~ "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God by the way you live."

▶▶ "grieve" here refers to a person experiencing deep sorrow.

▶▶ All forms of sin, ~ destructive speech included, ~ deeply saddens the Holy Spirit, ~ whom God has given to His people to indwell them and empower them to live a holy life.

PAUL ECHOES THE LANGUAGE OF ISAIAH WHEN HE WARNS BELIEVERS TO NOT grieve the Holy Spirit.

▶▶ In that passage, ~ Isaiah recalls the exodus event and how God redeemed His people with love and mercy.

▷▷ Is. 63:9, ~ "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

↳↳ "But", ~ as verse 10a says, ~ "they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit. ¶¶ 6/8

▶▶ In Ps. 78:40, ~ the psalmist likewise laments, ~ "How often they rebelled against him in the wilderness and grieved him in the desert!"

▶▶ Paul recognizes that the church of God, ~ every believer, ~ faces a similar danger, ~ and calls upon us in Eph. 4:30a to "not grieve the Holy Spirit of God."

▶▶ We too have been redeemed by God in an act of His love and mercy and run the risk of rebelling against and grieving Him in our thoughts, ~ attitudes, ~ words, ~ and actions.

▷▷ Prone to wander, ~ Lord, ~ I feel it, ~ prone to leave the God I love; ~ here's my heart, ~ O take and seal it, ~ seal it for thy courts above.

▶▶ So Paul tells us, ~ "do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God." ~ Do not deeply sadden the Holy Spirit by our thoughts, ~ attitudes, ~ words, ~ and actions.

VERSE 30b FURNISHES A REASON FOR PAUL'S EXHORTATION.

"BY WHOM YOU WERE SEALED FOR THE DAY OF REDEMPTION."

▶▶ "the day of redemption" refers to the time when Jesus returns and we, ~ believers, ~ experience the final stage of salvation, ~ and i.e., ~ our resurrection and glorification.

▶▶ Discussed in Eph. 1:13.

AS WE SAID THEIR, ~ THE WORD FOR "SEALED" MEANS TWO THINGS.

▶▶ 1st, ~ it means ownership.

▷▷ In 1 Pet. 2:9, ~ Peter says that believers are God's "chosen race," ~ "royal priesthood," ~ "holy nation, ~ a people for his own possession."

▷▷ And in 1 Cor. 6:19-20, ~ Paul writes to believers, ~ "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, ~ whom you have from God? ~ You are not your own, ~ for you were bought with a price. ~ So glorify God in your body."

↪↪ "bought" means "to purchase as one's own." ~ God purchased us to be His own, ~ that we would become His people exclusively, ~ solely His and no one else's.

▷▷ So, ~ being sealed by the Holy Spirit ~ marks us as God's own, ~ ¶¶

↪↪ His "chosen race, ~ [His] royal priesthood, ~ [His] holy nation, ~ a people for his own possession." ¶¶ 7/8

▶▶ 2nd, ~ "sealed" means protection.

▷▷ In 1 Pet. 1:5 (LEB), ~ Peter says that believers "are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ~ [final stage] ~ ready to be revealed in the last time."

↳↳ Peter is saying here ~ that God, ~ specifically as Paul points out in Eph. 1:13, ~ God the Holy Spirit, ~ is continually protecting us by his power.

↳↳ Now, ~ the fact that Peter says we are continually "being protected by the power of God" does not suggest that God protects us from pain, ~ difficulty, ~ or suffering.

→→ "being protected by the power of God" means that God the Holy Spirit is protecting our souls, ~ ensuring ~ that we will reach the final stage of our salvation.

OK, ~ BEING SEALED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT MEANS THAT HE HAS MARKED BELIEVERS as belonging to God and that we are being protected by the Holy Spirit's power, ~ ¶¶

▶▶ ensuring that we will reach the final stage of our salvation.

▷▷ God the Holy Spirit has done and is doing an awesome thing for us. ~ How ungrateful we would be if we think or behave in a manner which causes Him to be deeply saddened.

CONCLUSION

MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST, ~ ¶¶

▶▶ As a result of all that God has done for and given us, ~ i.e., ~ our great salvation and its accompanying spiritual blessings spelled out in the first three chapters of Ephesians, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ Paul exhorts us to let no destructive talk come out of our mouths.

↳↳ He urges us to speak only what is beneficial to our brothers and sisters in Christ and to the church as a whole.

▷▷ And he exhorts us to not deeply sadden the Holy Spirit of God by the way we live.

↳↳ Rather, ~ we are to live in a way that continuously brings joy to the Holy Spirit.

→→ Indeed, ~ let us continually show our gratitude for what God the Holy Spirit has done and is doing for us ~ by unceasingly bringing joy to Him through our thoughts, ~ attitudes, ~ words, ~ and actions.

LET'S PRAY 8/8