

Ephesians

More than a Makeover

Godly Communication, Part 2

Ephesians 4:25-32

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / April 6, 2025

I. Start With Your Own Heart

Matthew 12:34-36 "...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. ³⁶ I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak..."

Ask God to help you see what you're not seeing about your own heart, because an unexamined heart will keep producing unhelpful words.

II. Choose To Control Your Mouth

A. Rule #1 - Be Honest (v. 25)

B. Rule #2 - Stay Current (vv. 26-27)

C. Rule #3 - Attack The Problem Not The Person (v. 29)

When you launch into a verbal tirade that attacks the other person, you add trouble to the original problem and you grieve the Holy Spirit.

One way to stay focused on the problem and keep it from turning into a verbal attack on another person is by keeping the word "grace" right in the middle and mix of how you're saying what you're saying!

The same grace that saved you was designed to change you in the way you speak to other people.

1. Your Words Should Be Said With Grace

Colossians 4:6 "Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person."

Grace should always ride shotgun with whatever comes out of your mouth. Words should never travel alone! Let your speech always be with grace.

You want to grace it before you say it!

2. Your Words Should Actually Give Grace

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."

What we say should always arrive with grace and leave them with grace.

Giving grace to that other person doesn't mean pretending everything's okay when it's not. Giving grace doesn't mean being passive or dishonest about what's really going on and about what needs to be said.

Instead, it has more to do with what you're filled with and what you're wanting as you say it.

God cares about what you say, how you say it, and why you said it, which has to do with motive.

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"Only such as is good for building up" is what it looks like to give grace. What you are saying is motivated by love and concern for them, rather than a desire to ruin them.

Do you want to help them or do you want to hurt them? Because words have incredible power to do both.

Proverbs 18:21 "Death and life are in the power of the tongue..."

You've got to get rid of "grenade" words which are ugly, sharp, sarcastic, attacking, vengeful, exaggerated, and hurtful. Those words are almost always motivated by pride, anger, and revenge, rather than love.

3. Grenade Words Bypass The Real Issue

They don't focus on solving the problem, but just venting, expressing, and exploding, which only makes the problem worse.

4. Grenade Words Judge Motives

God does not allow us to judge motives because we cannot see their heart. We see the fruit and the behavior, but we can only guess at motives.

1 Corinthians 4:5 NLT "So don't make judgments about anyone ahead of time—before the Lord returns. For He will bring our darkest secrets to light and will reveal our private motives..."

5. Grenade Words Tear Down Or Rip Apart

Proverbs 12:18 "There is one who speaks rashly like the thrusts of a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing."

Galatians 5:14-15 "For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' ¹⁵ But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another."

D. Rule #4 - Act - Don't React (vv. 31-32)

Ephesians 4:31-32 "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. ³² Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you."

1. V. 31 Is A List Of Reactions That Require No Effort: bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, slander, and malice.

This list is what it looks like to go with the flow and do what you would naturally do without the power of Jesus and the Gospel in your life.

- Bitterness – the inability to treat someone as if they never hurt you

- Wrath – flaring outbursts of rage
- Anger – a settled indignation or hostility – the “slow burn”
- Clamor – strife and public quarreling, brawling
- Slander – abusive speech
- Malice – the desire to harm someone or see them suffer

2. V. 32 Is A List Of Actions You Must Choose: kindness, tenderhearted, and forgiving.

These are all supernatural responses that you can choose to do by God’s grace and Spirit in you.

3. Listen Carefully To Understand Before Rushing To Be Understood

“Understanding takes effort, patience, endurance, and a refusal to quit—whether it happens in the boardroom, bedroom, courtroom, playroom, chatroom, or newsroom. We do not come to understand our spouse or child or fellow pastor or church member... or political opponent by hearing and defining their words with Merriam-Webster in hand. It’s harder than that. We have to hear them. In the rules for a debate in ancient Greece, before a person could answer his opponent’s opinion, he had to repeat it in his own words—in a way that his opponent would approve. Only then could he respond. It’s interesting that, even in a culture that had little to no knowledge of Christ, people would give each other such respect. Theologians call this ‘common grace’—a moral awareness that all people share. In this case, the ancient Greeks had an awareness of their need to respect one another’s meaning. Such careful listening in order to understand will happen only if we share that same respect. And we who know the love of Christ should share and show it more than anyone else does.”

~ Timothy M. Shorey, *Respect the Image*

Proverbs 18:2 “A fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only in expressing his opinion.”

James 1:19 “...let every man be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger...”

4. Go Asking Questions Not Making Accusations

Assume the best and ask for more explanation or clarification on what they meant, but don’t go making accusations.

Proverbs 20:5 “The purposes of a man’s heart are deep waters, but a man of understanding draws them out.”

5. Slow Down And Think Before You Speak

Proverbs 15:28 “The heart of the righteous studies (NASB ponders) how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil.”

NLT “The heart of the godly thinks carefully before speaking....”