

Title: Speak, Think, and Act as a Christian - part 2

Passage: Ephesians 4:25-32

Context:

Ephesians chapters 1-3: outline of the Gospel.

Ephesians chapters 4-6: shift to practical outworkings assuming have placed faith in Christ.

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

Ephesians 4:22-24

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

Passage: Ephesians 4:25-32

Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil. 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. 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. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Introduction:

Holiness

- Holiness = set apart
 - We are to be “set apart” compared to the world (ie different than the worldly culture)
- If we have believed in Jesus Christ, we will reflect evidence of that belief
- What makes you right with God is only faith in Jesus Christ.
- But if you say you believe in Jesus Christ, then your faith will show through works.
 - Your new heart will be seen through your words and actions.

James 2:17

So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

1 John 2:6

whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

Overview: Five Areas of Holiness

I. Put off lying, speak truthfully (v.25)

II. Put off unrighteous anger, put on righteous anger (v.26-27)

III. Put off stealing, put on generous, giving heart (v.28)

IV. Put off corrupting talk, put on building up talk (v.29-30)

V. Put off natural vices, put on godly habits (v.31-32)

I. PUT OFF LYING, SPEAK TRUTHFULLY

Ephesians 4:25

Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.

- Don't embellish the truth so we look better or put others down or get out of situations out of selfish motives.

II. PUT OFF SINFUL ANGER, PUT ON RIGHTEOUS ANGER.

Ephesians 4:26-27

Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil.

- Righteous anger (ex: Jesus driving commercial vendors out of temple area)
- How to discern righteous vs. unrighteous anger:
 - Am I angry because God doesn't get what He deserves or am I angry because I don't get what I get/want.
- Source of unrighteous anger: improper motives from the heart (see James 4:2-3)

III. PUT OFF STEALING, PUT ON GENEROUS, GIVING HEART

Ephesians 4:28

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.

Let the thief no longer steal

Exodus 20:15 (among Ten Commandments)

You shall not steal.

- Worldly culture = stealing
- "Culture of stealing" still exists today.
- Stealing
 - Taking what doesn't belong to you.
 - Deception at the expense of others (giving inferior product)
 - Benefiting from others without paying for it or giving proper credit (ex: pirating, plagiarism)
- We dishonor the Lord with stealing.

but rather let him labor doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.

- Why work? The church is to spearhead charity and helping others in need.
- Motivation in Giving = to glorify God and to display what Christ is like
- Giving from our Gain = painting a vivid picture of what Christ does and who He is.

Matthew 6:19-21

Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

IV. PUT OFF CORRUPTING TALK, PUT ON BUILDING-UP TALK

Ephesians 4:29-30

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. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths,

- Corrupting = rotten

2 Timothy 2:16-17

But avoid irreverent babble, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness, and *their talk will spread like gangrene.*

- Journey of Bad language = produces and continues decay
 - not only the speaker but also to those who hear.
- Rotten speech rots the speaker as well

Matthew 15:11

it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but what comes out of the mouth; this defiles a person.”

but only such as is good for building up,

1 Corinthians 1:4

I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus,

Ecclesiastes 10:12

The words of a wise man's mouth win him favor, but the lips of a fool consume him.

as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

- Ask: Is it fitting, appropriate, timely, gracious?
- think about what we say and about the effect on others.
- even if something is true, do not need to say it.
- No need to say everything that comes to mind,

Proverbs 25:11

A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver.

Proverbs 15:28

The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things.

Proverbs 17:28

Even a fool who keeps silent is considered wise; when he closes his lips, he is deemed intelligent.

Luke 4:22 (example of Jesus' gracious words, even in confronting sin)

And all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth. And they said, "Is not this Joseph's son?"

Isaiah 50:4

The LORD God has given me the tongue of those who are taught, that I may know how to sustain with a word him who is weary.

- People were opposed to Jesus not on how he said truth but the truth itself.
- Do people oppose what we say because how it was said or the truth itself?

Colossians 4:6

- Words can build up or can destroy. Be aware of how you use your tongue.

How to change?

- tongue control cannot occur until there is heart and mind control
 - Yield thought life to God
- When thinking to speak, ask:

Is it appropriate? Will it produce the fruit God wants to produce in me?

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

- Motivation for giving proper speech
- There is a Person living in us that wants to exalt Christ (Holy Spirit).
- When we use words in rotten ways, we show we don't live our lives with the bigger picture (no God who will judge all things).
- The Holy Spirit convicts us of sin, seals us for the coming redemption, and is the great Comforter. How can we, in turn, grieve the Holy Spirit?!

V. PUT OFF NATURAL VICES, PUT ON GODLY HABITS

Ephesians 4:31-32

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

- Vices: listed in downward spiral
 - bitterness
 - wrath
 - anger
 - clamor
 - slander
 - malice
- Contrast - put on:
 - kindness
 - forgiveness
- Distinction: Pardon (removing consequences) vs. forgiveness

Summary: Speak, think, and act for Christ's sake - by the power of the Holy Spirit

Romans 12:1

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

Philippians 2:12-13

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, *for it is God who works in you*, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Romans 15:13

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

Related Passages

2 Peter 1:3-4

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become *partakers of the divine nature*, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

John 14:15-21

If you love me, you will keep my commandments. *And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever*, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. Whoever has my

commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and *I will love him and manifest myself to him.*