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HOW TO AVOID THE SINS OF THE TONGUE

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS
EPHESIANS 4:29
NUMBER 47

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EPHESIANS 4:29 "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."

We are now in a study of the results which come from having an edification complex in the soul. The first result we studied was in verse 25 where we saw that the divine viewpoint must replace the human viewpoint in the soul. In verse 26 we saw where discernment minus mental attitude sins is another result of the edification complex in the soul. The next result is "No room for Satan" and this was in verse 27. The fourth result is the production of divine good in our business relationships. A special Sunday sermon has been prepared from this verse and will be delivered next Sunday on this subject. The fifth result, and the one we will study today is in verse 29 and is on the subject of how to avoid the sins of the tongue.

EPHESIANS 4:29 "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." Next to mental attitude sins the sins of the tongue are the worst sins of all. The sins of the tongue are very bad for many reasons. Ever since your conversion you have been a member of the body of Christ, a Kingdom of Priests. As a member of the body of Christ, it is vitally necessary that you have maximum privacy and maximum freedom in all things as you develop in the Christian life. You have your right to live your own life as unto the Lord. The sins of the tongue can force you into a way of life that you need not follow. The worst sins of all in a church are the sins of the tongue. Now you may regard yourself as an expert and you may start telling people how to live their lives. Some are just naturally born fussy and feisty and always want to have their own way. If these people do not get their own way, they quickly go into action and start pushing people around. Some even throw tantrums and it applies to both male and female. Possibly even this week you may have been guilty of maligning or gossiping about some other believer. Now, you may feel justified in what you are doing. You feel for sure you have uncovered their sins and you have a perfect right to do what you have done. But remember this--their sins are between them and the Lord. A perfect illustration of this is when David committed adultery with Bathsheba and then murdered her husband and continued for many months in intensified sinning. When he came around to confession and rebound, he said, "Against thee, thee only have I sinned, O God." In other words, David recognized a fundamental principle of Bible doctrine. Even if you see the sins of other believers it is none of your business. God knew millions of years ago that they were going to do that sin and he has a perfect way of disciplining his own children. The only thing we can do is to get in God's way and muddy the water by trying to get in on the act.

Compound Discipline From God

Now how do people get compound discipline from God? Well, it happens this way. Suppose you judge another believer. Before you judge that person you have to have a mental attitude sin. You have to be jealous or proud or bitter or have some kind of guilt reaction. This attitude

has produced misery in your own soul. Mental attitude sins always produce misery. Keep in mind that Jesus said, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." Now what is judging? It is assigning to another person, believer or unbeliever, a sin they have committed or you believe they have committed. Whether they have committed the sin or not is not the issue here. (To evaluate people and give an efficiency rating is not judging. Our complicated way of living today demands that we do this kind of mental evaluation all the time. To be a member of a nominating committee and evaluate people for various jobs is not judging. To evaluate the work of someone under you is not judging. You have to do this all the time and you are to do this as unto the Lord.) Judging is assigning a sin to someone. If they have not committed this sin, assigning this sin to them we call gossip. If they committed the sin, then we call it maligning. In both instances we sin, for it is none of our business.

Now where does the compound discipline come in for those who do these things? Well, look at this reasoning. Whenever someone judges or gossips or maligns another, they mention the sin or error of the one they are talking about. These sins or errors all have discipline from God that accompany such sins or errors. So the discipline, instead of just going to the offender, goes to the one doing the criticizing. When you start naming the sins of others, the discipline from those sins comes back on you. This is found in the Greek of Matthew 7:2. "For with what measure you measure it out to them, God measures it right back to you." This means that none of us can afford to judge, to malign, to gossip. The misery attached to such activity is just too great.

A relaxed congregation

How I long for us to live at peace with each other! How I long for us to have a relaxed congregation where each member will live his own life as unto the Lord! Remember, the church is a place where your privacy is recognized. You live as unto the Lord and you are judged by a fair and impartial God.

In this 29th verse the words "corrupt communication" mean "all putrid words." The word is "sapos" and refers to a real rotten something. It is a present, active, imperative. The present tense means that this rule applies to your life every moment of your life. The active voice means that you are involved yourself personally. The imperative means that this is a command from God to you. The words "proceed out of your mouth" is from "ek poreuomai." The idea behind this word is that you speak out from your mouth the things you have in your mind and soul.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE SINS OF THE TONGUE

1. The sins of the tongue all originate from the old sin nature.
PSALM 34:13 "Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile."
2. The sins of the tongue originate from mental attitude sins.
PSALM 5:9 "For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part is very wickedness; their throat is an open sepulchre they flatter with their tongue."

3. Out of the seven sins that God hates, as outlined in Proverbs 6:16-19, three of these seven are sins of the tongue. Three others are mental attitude sins and only one is an overt act, namely murder.
4. The sins of the tongue produce triple compound discipline.
MATTHEW 7:1-2 "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."
- PSALM 64:3 "So they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves; all that see them shall flee away."
5. The sins of the tongue can result in the sin unto death.
PSALM 12:3 "The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things:"
6. God protects the believer from the sins of the tongue.
JOB 5:19-21 "He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee. In famine he shall redeem thee from death: and in war from the power of the sword. Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue: neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh."
7. By avoiding the sins of the tongue the believer can add years to his life, and thereby, possess great inner happiness.
PSALM 34:12-13 "What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile."
8. Trouble makers are guilty of sins of the tongue.
PSALM 52:2 "Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs: like a sharp razor, working deceitfully."
 Believers are warned to avoid trouble makers.
ROMANS 16:17-18 "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."
 Separate yourself from believers who are guilty of sins of the tongue and the sooner you do this the better off you will be. Life is too short to let cheap gossip ruin you. (Illustration-- These people are always talking to you about other people. But the minute they are absent from you, and you can bet your bottom dollar on this, they then begin talking about you. So avoid them!)
9. To control the sins of the tongue is a sign of maturity.
JAMES 2:12 "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty."
10. It is possible for the sins of the tongue to destroy a whole congregation, therefore, it is the responsibility of the pastor-teacher to warn his congregation about this occupational hazard.
2 TIMOTHY 1:13 "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."

In this verse he goes on to say, "but whatever is good." Now this raises a problem. What is good and what is not good? The answer is in the meaning of this Greek word "agathos." Agathos means the production of divine good. He is simply saying this--You believers stay in fellowship, stay in that bottom circle, be filled with the Holy Spirit, and then all you produce will be "agathos" it will be divine good. Then he says this leads to "the purpose of edifying." So we are right back face to face with the edification complex again.

So a correct translation of this verse goes something like this--
"Let not putrid words go out of your mouth but whatever is good will come forth from the edification complex in your soul."

Explanation of the Edification Complex.

The edification complex comes from some Greek words that means the building of a house or structure in your soul. The word for "edification" comes from words that have great meaning. "Demo" is a verb and it means "to build." "Oikos" means a house or a structure. Therefore, you and I, out of Bible doctrine, Bible truth, are commanded to build a house in our souls. The word is "oikodome" and it means the act of building a structure in the soul. Then the word "oikodomia" is the result of that structure. The word "oikodomos" is the one who does the building, and this is none other than God using Bible doctrine.

The soul has lungs and you breathe in truth and then store it up in the human spirit. It is out of this residual doctrine stored up in your human spirit from which you erect an edification complex.

The Teacher Of The Edification Complex

In Ephesians 4:12 we were told that God would give us pastor-teacher to teach doctrine so people can erect this doctrine in their souls. Then in Ephesians 4:16 we discovered that the purpose for taking in all this Bible doctrine is so the believer will have the material out of which to erect this structure in the soul.

Then here in this 29th verse we have come face to face with the erection of this house in the soul in the spirit of love and happiness. A relaxed happy church is a church where the members have an edification complex in their souls.

ACTS 9:31 "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied."

A church that is happy and relaxed is a church with people filled with the edification complex structure.

In 1 Cor. 8:1 we have the statement that human knowledge puffs up, but that doctrine taken into the soul through the filling of the Holy Spirit produces an edification complex. There is a type of knowledge that produces arrogance (human viewpoint) and a type of knowledge that produces an edification complex (divine truth).

Prerequisites To the Edification Complex In the Soul

The first prerequisite for having an edification complex is the filling of the Holy Spirit. The filling of the Holy Spirit is absolutely necessary for the inhale of Bible doctrine.

JOHN 14:26 "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

We can't be filled with the Holy Spirit apart from rebound.

1 JOHN 1:9 "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

There must be an inhale of Bible doctrine daily in order for a person to grow. In verse 23 it was called "the breathing of your mind." Therefore, build everything in your life on the Word of God, live by grace, then you will have inner happiness. This will lead you into a relaxed mental attitude and then you will have a capacity to love. Then the very top, the penthouse of your Christian life, will be a mastery of the details of life. Now that's the edification complex and please don't you ever forget it. And in my writing and speaking when I say, "edification complex" you will immediately picture this structure, this building, this ladder in your soul.

The next prerequisite for the edification complex is the constant learning of Bible doctrine. Now you have a right to take it in or a right to reject it. You are a private person and whether you take it in or not depends entirely on you.

THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF A CHURCH IS THIS--
TAKE BIBLE DOCTRINE AND ERECT EDIFICATION COMPLEX STRUCTURES IN THE SOULS OF THE BELIEVERS.

The Final Result

"That it may minister grace unto the hearers."

"That" introduces a purpose clause. "It may minister" and the word is "didomi" and it means "to give." So it should read, "That it may give grace to the hearers." The word translated "hearers" is a present, active, participle of "akouo."

Present tense means that you are to hear all the time, constantly, every day. Active voice means that you must do this for yourself and no one can do it for you.

The participle means that this is a law of God and it always works this way.

So the result is this--

"That it might give grace to the ones who keep on hearing."