

SCRIPTURE READING: Ephesians 4:29.

INTRODUCTION: Last week, I heard words that hurt and healed me. I hurt others. Did I heal?

ANALYSIS OF THE TEXT:

1. Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth.

A. A word can be unwholesome or corrupt in at least one of three different ways.

1) If it is inherently wrong, i.e. always evil.

- a. **Lying.** Ephesians 4:25.
- b. **Slander.** Ephesians 4:31.
- c. **Flattery.** Psalm 12:2.
- d. **Vulgarity and/or Obscenity.** Ephesians 5:4.
- e. **Profanity.** Exodus 20:7; Matthew 6:9.
- f. **Cursing.** James 3:9-10.
- g. **Complaining.** Philippians 2:14.
- h. **Etc.**



2) If it hurts our influence for good.

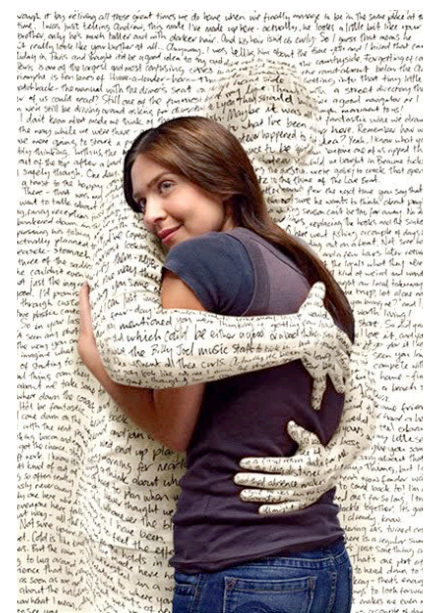
- a. **Tone.** Ephesians 4:31. Bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor. Also disdain, mocking, etc.
- b. **“Debatable” words.**

3) If there is something more important that we ought to be saying or doing. Matthew 12:35-37. Sadly, our words are often akin to giving placebos to heart patients in need of nitroglycerin. I include “doing” because, instead of speaking, it’s sometimes it’s more important to say nothing and do something else.

B. No such words are to proceed from our mouths.

2. But only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.

- A. **Edification.** Our words should build people up, not tear them down.
- B. **According to the need of the moment.** Adaptive. 1 Corinthians 9:19-22. Timely. Colossians 4:5.
- C. **That it will give grace.** Colossians 4:6. Palatable, preservative.



APPLICATIONS OF THE TEXT:

1. **Where is our mind right now?**
2. **Our words are vitally important.** James 3:6. “Sticks and stones ...” is wrong! “Hit me with a stick and I’ll bruise, but heal. Throw a stone, I’ll bleed but that’ll scab over. Hurl hateful words at me and I’ll hear them again and again and again. I’m sure I could go through this auditorium and one by one we could each recall words heaved on our heads like boulders twenty, thirty, forty years ago that still ring in our ears. Were you assigned a nickname as a child that emphasized a demeaning attribute? Memories may not be that old. Perhaps the hurtful words you recall are but a few weeks or days old. They may have even been spoken this morning” (unknown and adapted). Matthew 12:37.
3. **We must think very, very carefully about our words.** James 1:19-20; Nehemiah 5:6-7A NKJV, “And I became very angry when I heard their outcry and these words. After serious thought, I rebuked the nobles and rulers.”
4. **It’s not about us.**
5. **If we don’t let unwholesome words in our minds, they will be far less likely to come out of our mouths.** Psalm 101.
6. **People hear enough words that tear them down. They need to hear words that build up them up.** Job 4:3-4.
7. **Words that edify aren’t always easy to say.** Proverbs 26:28; 28:23.