



Scriptures for further study

2 Corinthians 1:21-22 | Romans 16:17-20 | 2 Timothy 2:15-19 | Titus 1:10-16 | James 4:1-12

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. According to Ephesians 4:29-30, we are to make every conversation count. Drawing from Paul's challenge we find three laws of conversation emerge for God's people as they do life together. The first law of conversation is that every conversation has a heart choice behind it (verse 29a). Paul says, "let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths..." (verse 29a). What does Paul mean by corrupting talk? What kinds of conversation does Paul include in this corrupt, putrid talk?
2. There is something about our words and conversations that Jesus warns against. What we say now, not only matters here—but will matter later. In one of His most bracing teachings, Jesus warns that on the day of judgment, people will give account for every careless word they speak—Matthew 12:36. Why is God serious about this and what does it mean for those of us who are followers of Jesus? Why does every word we say matter to God? Why do corrupting words cause damage and bring grief to people?
3. In Matthew 15, Jesus tells His disciples, "what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart..." The choice of what we say and how we say it begins with the heart. In Luke 6, Jesus adds to this principle and says, "the good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks." How do we keep our hearts pure to allow for encouraging conversation? How do we fill our hearts with good?
4. The second law of conversation is that any conversation can have lasting consequences coming from it (verse 29b). An edifying conversation is grace-giving. Paul sums this up saying, "speak...that it may give grace to those who hear" (verse 29c). The ultimate purpose of a believer's conversation is to "grace" others. Dr. Cortis mentioned gospel-driven conversations. What is a gospel-driven conversation? How do we grace others with our conversations?
5. The third and final law of conversation that Paul directs us to is that every conversation has a divine companion in its midst (verse 30). Paul addresses the spiritual and eternal impact conversations can have in relation to God. He says in verse 30, "and do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption". Why does the Holy Spirit take our words personally? What does it mean to grieve the Holy Spirit?
6. The Holy Spirit's presence and work in individual believers is part of His larger work of building up the people of God together in the church. As He builds the body, He works to keep unity in the body of Christ. Are you a unifying member of the body of Christ? Are you a habitual grief-giver or a grace-giver? Do people around you find themselves drawn to Christ or are they distracted from seeing Him in your life? What is it like to be on the other end of a conversation with you?