



The church then had peace throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, and it became stronger as the believers lived in the fear of the Lord. And with the encouragement of the Holy Spirit, it also grew in numbers. Acts 9:31, NLT

Becoming a Church of Encouragement Ephesians 4:29-30

Most of us can still remember words that were spoken to us years ago. Maybe it was a teacher. A parent. A coach. A spouse. A pastor. A friend.

It may have been words that strengthened you. Or wounded you. Or gave you courage. There's something powerful about words—words leave something behind, and nobody walks away from the power of words unaffected.

Words can leave us lighter—or further burdened. Words can give us clarity—or leave us confused.

The power of words is not stripped at the doors of the church. The early church walked in “the encouragement of the Holy Spirit.” It's why Paul says in Ephesians 4 that our speech should be the kind that builds up, fits in, and gives grace to those who hear.

Here, Paul gives the Ephesian church—and us—three characteristics of conversation filled with the encouragement of the Holy Spirit.

First, he says that our words must build up.

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.

The word “corrupting” was used of spoiled fish and rotten vegetables.

This is what our talk shouldn't be. It should be good for building up.

The church (God's house) is built up or torn down by our words!

Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits. Proverbs 18:21

You know that feeling of being built up in a way that is lifegiving?

Let that be what comes out of your mouth to others!

Notice this is words that build up, not words that butter up!

The counterfeit of this kind of speech is flattery.

Jesus Connection: Luke 13:10-17 and the Woman Bent Over.

Our words must also fit in.

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.

A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver. Proverbs 25:11

The counterfeit of this kind of speech is people-pleasing.

Spirit-filled words are always sensitive but never spineless.

Jesus Connection: John 4 and the Woman at the Well.

Finally, our words must be grace-giving.

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.**

Grace-giving words strengthen others in truth. These are words that comfort without compromising.

Better is open rebuke than hidden love. Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy. Proverbs 27:5-6

Jesus Connection: John 8:1-11 and the Woman Caught in Adultery.

This week, your words will do something in the soul of another. May the Holy Spirit make our words the kind that build up, fit in, and give grace to those who hear.

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