

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

841 Old Hickory Blvd.

Jackson, TN 38305

oldhickorycofc.com

May 14, 2017

Volume 37, # 20

The Danger of Filthy Speech

“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers” (Eph. 4:29). This command from the apostle Paul is one of several that he gives concerning the activity of a Christian who is “renewed in the spirit of your mind, and . . . created according to God, in righteousness and true holiness” (vv. 23-24). Since God is holy and righteous, the Christian is to be holy in all conduct (1 Pet. 1:15-16), and to practice righteousness (1 John 3:7). Holy conduct results from a heart that is clean and pure. Unholy conduct portrays a heart that is full of filth. One of the quickest ways that a person can demonstrate the condition of his heart is to open his mouth and talk.

Filthy speech is condemned as one of the “members which are on the earth . . . But now you must put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth . . .” (Col. 3:5, 8). This shameful speech “denotes any kind of base utterance, the utterance of an uncontrolled tongue” (Vine). It is obscene and impure, and should not be “named among you, as is fitting for saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks” (Eph. 5:3-4).

The Pervasiveness of Filthy Speech

The problem of filthy speech is made all the worse due to its pervasiveness. It is a common rite of passage for young men to start talking filthy like their older male relatives and friends. Various forms of modern media are filled with it. Most of what is offered on our televisions and in theaters is overflowing with suggestive and filthy language. It is used so freely because it easily elicits attention, shock, and laughter. People who are normally shy about using gutter language will gladly pay to hear someone spew verbal garbage. The Christian in the workplace is often subjected to trashy talk and foul language in personal conversations and meetings. Innocent sporting events are ruined by fans who express themselves with obscene gestures and chants. Popular books and magazines

deliver to the mind's eye the crass cursing and swearing of the world. Nearly everywhere one goes, the eyes and ears are bombarded with crude language that appeals to the sensual and the base things of this earth, not to mention the constant blasphemy of taking God's name in vain. What is the Christian to do?

How to Deal With This Serious Danger

The danger involved is not insignificant. Filthy language comes from filthy sources, and we can easily become acclimated to such filth. The Christian must not allow his inner person to find any comfort, excitement, or humor in such communication. We would be sickened at the thought of eating rotten food, yet Jesus identified true defilement as that which comes out of the mouth: "But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man" (Matt. 15:18). Our mind must filter what comes into our eyes and ears daily. This necessitates that we first clean out the filth that may already be in us. "Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7:1). The blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin and unrighteousness, both for the penitent believer who is baptized into Christ, and for the Christian who confesses his sins (Acts 22:16; 1 John 1:7-9). A person that is filled with Christ and his word has the best defense against the contamination of filthy speech. An immediate and repulsive reaction will result against anything that would threaten the Christian's spiritual life and hope. We must not make excuses while we absorb such filth; we must do whatever we can to get away from it or stop it. Uncomfortable situations may result, but this is nothing compared to how nauseating it should be to hear and use corrupt language.

We as Christians must take action. We may have to walk away from a conversation, or ask someone to stop swearing while we are present. Though this usually makes people angry with us, it will bring to their attention the vain talk they mindlessly utter out of habit. Don't be embarrassed to be an influence for decency. Those who use the filthy language should feel the embarrassment. Television shows need to be turned off, and movies avoided or walked out of. Someone always retorts, "Well, that's the real world; get used to it!" Yes, and that's the real problem. We are getting too used to it. I learned recently that there is a device available for the TV that will filter out bad language. Check it out — it would be an excellent investment, both financially and morally.

Children need to be taught early about the bad language that they will hear from their friends and schoolmates who mimic the filthy words of their parents. We need to be prepared not only to insist that they not use such language, but to tell them why! Explain to them why we do not use God's precious name in vain, or speak filthy and vulgar words. Explain why we should be angry and offended at such talk every time we hear it. It would

do us well to teach our children early to avoid popular euphemisms (gee, golly, darn, etc.) that are just watered-down versions of vain and offensive language. Training the tongue is vital (Jas. 3:1-10).

Graceful Speech

When warning about the danger of filthy speech, we must also emphasize, as Paul did, the need for edifying and grace-imparting speech (Eph. 4:29; Col. 4:6). Parents must realize that their children will repeat the type of speech they hear in the home. Let them hear godly talk and language that is decent and understandable. Let us be careful to speak properly to people of the world who will judge our religious claims by our words. May they see an example of someone who walks and talks as a Christian. May we be careful to speak properly to one another as brethren, whether in edification of truth, or in the rebuke of false teaching. There is no excuse for ugly and filthy talk among brethren. Such is of the world, which is passing away. Let us say what we mean, and mean what we say, all the while using words that are pure, proper, decent, and godly.

- Marc W. Gibson, via Truth Magazine, 02/03/2000

“Crazy Charlie, the Indian Collector”

There was this Indian who just would not be reconstructed to the new ways. His friends drove new pickups over the Interstate, but he rode his pony up the dry wash. They lived in new government housing, but he stayed with his Hogan — taking beams and rocks from abandoned Hogans to enlarge the shelter for his stuff.

And how the neighbors laughed at the collection. He cared not at all for the “in thing,” but traded new Levis, obtained from the post, for old worn-out buck-skins — storing these as carefully as others did new suits, and seemed just as proud of them. He would work for a week to make a new katchina doll, then trade it to some child for her old broken one, made by her grandfather — and stack it with his other treasures. No wonder they called him “Crazy.”

His cache was an unknown cave, somewhere back in the hills. No one bothered to look for it for everyone knew it held nothing but shells, bits of petrified wood or beads which the Indians once used for coin. While others tended cattle or worked the arid land, Crazy Charlie hunted for arrowheads, soapstone pipes, scrapers, or anything out of the past.

Other Indians laughed and wagged their heads when Charlie talked about retiring on his treasures. His coin was not current, they said. But Charlie had learned that today’s gold

is not necessarily the gold of tomorrow. What a shame, what a shame, that Charlie's perception was not applied to something other than material wealth. The white man who thoughtlessly robbed his ancestors grave could have taught him that tomorrow's gold remains behind, and does not accompany the spirit to eternity.

So, Crazy Charlie opened a chain of stores handling Indian Artifacts. He made a pile of bread selling old jewelry, ancient ollas, corn grinders, etc. Worn-out buck-skins brought a fortune on the New York market; and the katchinas, made by early Medicine men, were priceless. I would like to report that Charlie died a happy man: but this tall tale will sound more real if he spent his last days wishing he could again ride the dry wash and live in his mud-plastered Hogan.

For life's greatest treasures are in the getting, not in the having. And if we have not provided for eternity, even great getting is an empty, meaningless trip. (Matt. 6: 19-34)

- Robert F. Turner, from "Stuff About Things" in Plain Talk, July, 1972

Put Him Down Right There!

A pioneer preacher was called to administer the last rites over the remains of a man who had always refused to enter a church building. As the pallbearers neared the door of the little church building, the old preacher stood in the doorway and beckoned to them saying, "Gentlemen, I have never taken an undue advantage of any living person, and I am not going to begin by imposing on the dead. If this man were living he would not enter this building. Put him down right there and let's respect him enough to finish his earthly pilgrimage as he lived it."

The service was conducted from the door while the remains rested upon the church lawn.

Perhaps the preacher was a bit "hard," but certainly he had a point. Better think on dying and eternity while we live.

- Unknown

> "Egotism is the glue with which you get stuck on yourself!"

> "Maybe the service was "cold" because you sat in the "Z-row"!"

- > "A man would do nothing if he waited until he could do it so well that no one could find fault with what he was doing!"
 - > "If you need an excuse, see the preacher; he's heard lots of them!"
 - > "Christianity has not been tried and found wanting; it has been found difficult and not tried!" - G.K. Chesterton
-

THIS WEEK'S LESSONS: Sunday morning: "*Words Matter!*" (Text: Matt. 12:33-37);
Sunday evening: "*You Must Be Born Again!*" #2 (John 3:1-15).