

Growth Group Questions
November 1, 2026
"Watch Your Words"

CONTEXT
In our text Paul continues to describe what it looks like to live as people who have been made new in Christ. In Ephesians 4:22-24 Paul had told the Ephesians to put off the old self and put on the new. Now he begins to show them what this looks like in everyday life. Following Jesus is not simply about what we believe but also about how we live, especially in our relationships.

Paul begins by talking about the words we use when we speak to one another. Our words have the power to build people up or tear them down, to encourage or to discourage. Paul reminds the Ephesians that they need to pay attention to not only what they say but also to realize how their words can affect others.

Paul warns the Ephesians to not grieve the Holy Spirit. When we allow bitterness, anger, slander, and resentment to take hold, we work against what the Spirit is doing in us and in the church. We break the unity and peace that the Holy Spirit is seeking to build and thus the Holy Spirit is grieved. We can see from Paul's language that he views the Holy Spirit in "personal" terms.

Paul then calls the church to be kind, compassionate, and forgiving toward one another. Paul reminds his listeners that they are to forgive because God already forgiven them in Christ. God's love and forgiveness is not earned by good behavior. Rather as we experience God's grace, we are called to extend that grace to others.
As chapter 5 picks up there is a call to follow God's example as dearly loved children. We are to walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us. Jesus becomes both the example to follow and the source of the new life we have been given. As we learn to love, forgive, and speak with kindness, we become more like Jesus for the sake of the world.

SCRIPTURE
Ephesians 4:29-5:2
29 Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. **30** And do not

grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. **31** Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. **32** Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. **5** **1** Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children **2** and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Philippians 2:14-16

14 Do everything without grumbling or arguing, **15** so that you may become blameless and pure, "children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation."[a] Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky **16** as you hold firmly to the word of life. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in vain.

CS Lewis – *The Great Divorce*

Hell…begins with a grumbling mood, and yourself still distinct from it: perhaps criticizing it. And yourself, in a dark hour, may will that mood, embrace it. Ye can repent and come out of it again. But there may come a day when you can do that no longer. Then there will be no you left to criticize the mood, nor even to enjoy it, but just the grumble itself going on forever like a machine.

Leviticus 19:1-2

[1]The Lord said to Moses, **2** "Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: 'Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy.

2 Timothy 1:3-5

3 I thank God, whom I serve, as my ancestors did, with a clear conscience, as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers. **4** Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy. **5** I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also.

QUESTIONS

1. In Ephesians 4:19, the Apostle Paul tells us to "not let any unwholesome talk" come out of our mouths. What do you think he means by "unwholesome talk"?

2. Pastor Paul said that unwholesome talk "grieves the Holy Spirit." What does it mean to "grieve the Holy Spirit" and why would our use of unwholesome talk have this impact?

3. How does unwholesome talk impact our own lives? How do you think the language we use impact our attitudes and behaviors?

4. Unwholesome talk also impacts those around us. What can each of us do to ensure that our words are "helpful for building others up"? (Ephesians 4:29)

5. Why is it important to "get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice" in our lives? (Ephesians 4:31)

6. Pastor Paul said that while the Holy Spirit has been sent to transform our lives to be more like Jesus, we each have a role to play in changing our own behavior. How would you describe the role that we play in this effort?

7. In Ephesians 5:2, the Apostle Paul says that we are to follow God's example and to "walk in the way of love." What does that mean to you?

8. The title of this week's sermon is "Watch Your Words." In addition to those we studied this week, what Bible verses help you to understand the importance of choosing our words wisely?

9. What does the metaphor of "shining like stars" in Philippians 2:15 imply about the darkness of this world and the role of a Christian?

PASTOR PAUL'S SERMON QUESTIONS

1. Is there a pattern of grumbling, negativity, criticism, or bitterness that God may be asking you to change? What step can you take this week to begin "changing" that pattern?

2. Prayer Practice – Reflection. Who helped move you closer to Jesus and who are you helping to move closer to Jesus?