

Ephesians 4:29-30 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

Ephesians 4:29 **Let no * unwholesome word proceed** from your **mouth**, 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**. ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: [pas logos sapos ek tou stomatos humon me ekporeuestho, \(3SPMM\) alla ei tis agathon pros oikodomen tes chreias. hina do \(3SAAS\) charin tois akouousin. \(PAPMPD\)](#)

Amplified: Let no foul or polluting language, nor evil word nor unwholesome or worthless talk [ever] come out of your mouth, but only such [speech] as is good and beneficial to the spiritual progress of others, as is fitting to the need and the occasion, that it may be a blessing and give grace (God's favor) to those who hear it. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

NLT: Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: Let there be no more foul language, but good words instead - words suitable for the occasion, which God can use to help other people. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: Every word that is rotten and unfit for use, out of your mouth let it not be proceeding, but whatever is good, suitable for edification with respect to the need, in order that it may impart grace to the hearers.. ([Erdmans](#))

Young's Literal: Let no unwholesome words ever pass your lips, but let all your words be good for benefiting others according to the need of the moment, so that they may be a means of blessing to the hearers.

LET NO UNWHOLESOME WORD PROCEED FROM YOUR MOUTH: [pas logos sapos ek tou stomatos humon me ekporeuestho, \(3SPMM\)](#): (Ep 5:3,4; Psalms 5:9; 52:2; 73:7, 8, 9; Matthew 12:34, 35, 36, 37; Ro 3:13,14; 1Co 15:32,33; Col 3:8,9; 4:6; Jas 3:2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8; 2Pe 2:18; Jude 1:13, 14, 15, 16; Re 13:5,6)

The Greek order is,

every word corrupt, out of your mouth **let it not proceed**.

Steven Cole introduces his message on this passage with the following words worth pondering...

Try as we may, we all have erred with our tongues! Jas 3:2 says, "If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well." While we may never achieve perfect control over our tongues, I'm convinced that if husbands and wives would consistently apply Ephesians 4:29, we would rarely see divorce. If parents practiced this verse toward their children, we would see few children from Christian homes rebel against their parents. If we applied it towards one another in the church, we would see few churches split over personality conflicts or minor doctrinal issues. In short, Ephesians 4:29 is a verse that would bring radical change in all of our relationships if we would apply it conscientiously. ([Transformed Talk](#))

John Eadie notes that

This strong negation contained in the use of **pas** (every) with **me** (not), is a species of Hebraism.

These are strong words but good advice echoed in the OT wisdom literature...

When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable, But he who restrains his lips is wise. (Pr 10:19)

Do you see a man who is hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him. (Pr 29:20)

Born again believers need to reflect their new nature and reclaim the original virtue God intended for speech between men and God and men (especially husbands and wives! fathers and children!)

Above all live in God's Word and you will always have a word from God. Your "spiritual blood" will be "Bibline" as Spurgeon said of Bunyan and his writings...remember what comes out is related to what goes in -- G.I.G.O. ~ garbage in, garbage out OR "God's word IN, God's word OUT".

Let no unwholesome words ever pass your lips (Literal rendering) -

Unwholesome (4550) (**sapros** from **sepo** = cause to decay, to putrefy, to rot away, be corrupted) describes that which is rotten, putrefying, corrupt, disgusting, perishing, rank, foul, putrid, worthless (e.g., in Mt 7:17,18 = fruit, in Mt 13:48 = fish). In secular writings **sapros** was used to describe spoiled fish, **rotten** grapes on the ground, **crumbling** stones. The basic meaning relates to the process of decay. Sapros is used of things unusable, unfit, bad. It describes that which is harmful due to the fact that it is corrupt and corrupting or defiling.

Paul presents a picture of the repugnant (and non-edifying) nature of our old self's "old garment" of rotten speech, which like rotten fruit or fish (now that's a smell you really want to avoid), will not nourish anyone. Instead the rotten fare contaminates, sickens, smells foul and creates an unpleasant atmosphere for all who come near. Using this vivid metaphor Paul commands believers to put off speech like one would toss out rotten fruit or fish!

Charles Hodge says **sapros**...

literally means "putrid," and then figuratively "offensive and injurious." ([Ephesians 4:17-32, 5:1-2 Commentary Online](#))

Sapros - 8x in 6v - Matt 7:17, 18; 12:33; 13:48; Luke 6:43; Eph 4:29

Matthew 7:17 -note "So every good tree bears good fruit, but the **bad** (sapros) tree bears bad (poneros) fruit. 18 (note) "A good tree cannot produce **bad** (poneros) fruit, nor can a **bad** (sapros) tree produce good fruit.

Matthew 12:33 "Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree **bad** and its fruit **bad**; for the tree is known by its fruit.

Matthew 13:48 and when it was filled, they drew it up on the beach; and they sat down and gathered the good fish into containers, but the **bad** they threw away.

Luke 6:43 "For there is no good tree which produces **bad** fruit, nor, on the other hand, a **bad** tree which produces good fruit.

Ephesians 4:29 Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, 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.

Graham in the **Exegetical Summary of Ephesians**...

Paul is condemning any use of the faculty of speech that is morally unhealthy [Candlish, Lloyd-Jones], that suggests impure thoughts [Calvin, Candlish, Lloyd-Jones], light views of sin, irreverence towards God, or trifles with serious things [Candlish]. Profanity and obscenity, as well as careless or light speech, profane religious and sacred concepts which results in a nullification of sacred ideas conveyed by language, which is man's most powerful weapon for influencing the thoughts and lives of his fellows [WBC]. (Graham, G.. An Exegetical Summary of Ephesians. Dallas, TX: SIL International)

John Piper comments that...

The image in Paul's mind is probably one of rottenness and decay, something that is spoiled. This kind of rotten language must be taken off like the old garment. It is part of the old self of Ep 4:22 that needs to be stripped away when a person becomes a Christian. The garment of a rotten mouth must be taken off and thrown into the fire, just like the Ephesians had burned their old books on magic in Acts 19:19. ([Make Your Mouth a Means of Grace](#))

The KJV Bible Commentary...

Corrupt speech comes from a corrupt heart, and pure speech comes from a pure heart.

John Eadie...

The general meaning of sapros is foul, rotten, useless, though sometimes, from the idea of decay—old, obsolete, ugly, or worthless. In Mt. 7:17, 18, 12:33, and in Lk 6:43, the epithet characterizes trees and their fruit, and in the Vulgate is rendered simply *malus*. In Matt. 13:48, it is applied to fishes. In all these places the contrasted adjective is **agathos**. Locke in his paraphrase has, "no misbecoming word."...It signifies what is noxious, offensive, or useless, and refers to language which, so far from yielding "grace" or benefit, has a tendency to corrupt the hearer. 1Co 15:33; Col 4:6-note...May there not be reference to sins already condemned? All falsehoods and equivocations; all spiteful epithets and vituperation; all envious and vengeful detraction; all phrases which form a cover for fraud and chicanery—are filthy speech, and with such language a Christian's mouth ought never to be defiled. ([Ephesians 4 Commentary Online](#))

The **TDNT** adds that

Relating to the process of decay, **sepo** means "to cause to decay," or, in the passive, "to decay," "to rot," and figuratively "to perish." **Sapros** means "rotting," either literally or figuratively, and the sense of "unpleasant" (even to the ears) is also possible. A person is **sapros** when old, and the same applies to food and drink, which may be better when **sapros** (e.g., ripe cheese). In general, what is **sapros** is "unserviceable" rather than "offensive," but the word may also mean "harmful" or "notorious" (someone's name). ([Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Eerdmans](#))

From the context a "**sapros**" word is any word that is not good for edifying where that effect is needed. Hence in that sense a "sapros word" is an unprofitable word (as for example "idle gossip"). Our words do not have to be "**dirty**" to be **worthless**! For one thing, rotten or corrupt speech can contaminate the thoughts of others.

Word (3056) (logos [word study]) means something said and in context refers to a saying, speech, or utterance.

Someone once said (but I'm not sure how scientific it is) that 90% of the friction of daily life is caused by the wrong tone of voice.

Someone has written

Of all deeds, words are the most revealing, the most instantly available, the most freighted with personal significance.

The Preacher's Commentary...

There may be such a thing as "small talk," but even small talk is powerful in the result it may have in some lives. Persons who are hurting, crying out for hope, famishing for some word of affirmation and encouragement, may go from us still crying in their pain and starving in their hunger because we have given them "small talk" when we could have imparted grace by our words. Talk is not cheap; words are powerful. (The Preacher's Commentary series (212). Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Inc)

KJV Bible Commentary...

Our speech should impart a blessing, not a blight. If a rotten word is found in the mind, shut it off at the mouth (cp Ps 141:3-[note](#))

Mouth (4750) (stoma) mouth or opening, chiefly as an instrument of speech. It has been well said that nothing is so opened more by mistake than the mouth!

In a parallel passage **Paul** writes...

Conduct (present imperative = command to do this continually) yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, **making the most of** (redeeming = exagorazo) the opportunity (kairos = a defined period of time which when it is past is gone forever). Let your speech always be with **grace** (winsomeness, a quality that adds delight or pleasure, graciousness, attractiveness, charm, kindness, helpfulness), as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person. (Col 4:5,6-note)

John Piper reminds us...

the end the battle for purity in the mouth is fought in the heart, because "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks." (Mt 12:34) If you don't like what comes out of your mouth, listen carefully this morning, because the apostle Paul is at pains in this text to clean up your mouth from the inside out. ([Make Your Mouth a Means of Grace](#))

MacDonald writes that Paul is commanding us to...

abandon profitless speech and substitute constructive conversation. The Christian's speech should be: Edifying. It should result in building up the hearers. Appropriate. It should be suitable to the occasion. Gracious. It should impart grace to the hearers. ([MacDonald, W & Farstad, A. Believer's Bible Commentary: Thomas Nelson](#) or [Logos](#))

Proceed (1607) (ekporeuomai) from **ek** = out + **poreuomai** = go) means to depart, be discharged, proceed out of, project, come forth, come out of, go forth. This is a very picturesque verb, giving the sense that once the word (with the thought) has taken wing from our tongues, we cannot capture it. It's too late. We need to shut the cage door before the word flies out like a deadly projectile!

The fastest horse cannot catch a word spoken in anger. - Chinese Proverb

Paul uses the **present imperative** with a negative saying in essence "Stop letting these rotten words project, fly out of your mouth" Note the associated admonition in the next verse - Clearly grieving the Spirit is related to rotten language ejecting from our mouths and ultimately reflecting what is in our hearts (see Lu 6:45, Mt 12:34,35) because the mouth and heart are connected.

Wiersbe writes that...

We expect a change in speech when a person becomes a Christian. It is interesting to trace the word mouth through Romans and see how Christ makes a difference in a man's speech. The sinner's mouth is "full of cursing and bitterness" (see **note** Romans 3:14); but when he trusts Christ, he gladly confesses with his mouth "Jesus Christ is Lord" (see **notes** Romans 10:9; 10:10). As a condemned sinner, his mouth is stopped before the throne of God (see **note** Romans 3:19); but as a believer, his mouth is opened to praise God (see **note** Romans 15:6). Change the heart and you change the speech. Paul certainly knew the difference, for when he was an unsaved rabbi, he was "breathing threats and murder" (Acts 9:1). But when he trusted Christ, a change took place: "Behold, he is praying" (Acts 9:11). From "preying" to "praying" in one step of faith! ([Wiersbe, W: Bible Exposition Commentary. 1989. Victor](#))

BUT ONLY SUCH A WORD AS IS GOOD FOR EDIFICATION ACCORDING TO THE NEED OF THE MOMENT: alla ei tis agathon pros oikodomen tes chreias: (Dt 6:6, 7, 8, 9; Ps 37:30,31; 45:2; 71:17,18,24; 78:4,5; Pr 10:31,32; 12:13; 15:2, 3, 4,7,23; 16:21; 25:11,12; Is 50:4; Mal 3:16, 17, 18; Lk 4:22; 1Co 14:19; Col 3:16,17; 4:6; 1Th 5:11) (Ep 4:12,16)

But (235) (alla) highlights a dramatic contrasting thought. The words that should proceed from my mouth should edify, build up, encourage, not tear down, not discourage! To even make this point even more emphatically see how our Lord Himself defines "CARELESS" WORDS

"And I say to you, that every **careless (argos** from a = negative + ergon = work means literally "not working words") word that men shall speak, they shall render account for it in the day of judgment. (Mt12:36) (2Co 5:10 We each will be repaid for our "non-working" words. Lord, so teach us to number our days that we learn more and more how to speak Your words. Set a guard O Lord over our mouth. Keep watch over the door of our lips. (cf Ps 141:3-[note](#))

The section continues Paul's practical application of laying aside the old garment of the old self (unwholesome speech) and (by contrast) putting on the new garment of the new self (gracious, edifying speech that is sensitive to the needs of others, not focused solely on self - cp Php 2:3, 4-note). This is simply another way of saying that now we as believers are to let Jesus live His supernatural life through us (think "rivers of living water" Jn 7:38, or "Christ, your life", Col 3:4-note, cp Jn 20:31, 2Co 4:10, 11, 1Jn 4:9, 5:11, 12, 2Ti 1:1-note - Our new life is not only "with" Christ, it "is" Christ!). Remember that we cannot imitate Jesus (by simply relying on our natural strength), but we can daily (Ro 12:1-note) and moment by moment present ourselves to Him, surrendering our whole being to Him as living sacrifices and allowing Him live His life in and through us (Gal 5:16-note). This is simply another description of the our new life of progressive sanctification, of learning to walk in holiness, of daily becoming more like Jesus. As we practice (which we will need to do the remainder of our short stay on earth) these things (Php 4:9-note), we will be taking off the old garment of self and putting on the new garment of Christ and as we do the God of peace will be with us.

J. Sidlow Baxter wrote that...

One of the first things that happens when a man is really filled with the Spirit is not that he speaks with tongues, but that he learns to hold the one tongue he already has. (**Ed:** A good word!)

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Careless Word- In 1980, Lee Atwater, a political campaign manager, inflicted terrible pain with his words. His staff learned that an opposing congressional candidate from South Carolina had once experienced severe depression and undergone electric shock therapy. When Atwater released the information to the press, it humiliated the candidate and cast doubt on his ability. In anguish, the man questioned Atwater's campaign ethics. Atwater responded by saying that he had no intention of responding to a man "hooked up to a jumper cable." Ten years later, Atwater was afflicted with an incurable brain tumor. He was confined to bed, attached to machines and tubes and wires. Before he died, he wrote the candidate a letter and asked to be forgiven (Ep 4:32-note; **Ed: It strikes me that so many [too many] people wait until they are about to die to seek forgiveness for wrongs they have carried around their entire life and which have "gnawed" away at their conscience and their very soul. Dear reader I must ask you - Is their someone from whom you need to seek forgiveness? Or is there someone to whom you need to grant forgiveness, "canceling their debt" against you and thereby releasing yourself from the unyielding prison of resentment and bitterness, feelings that you have willfully chosen to keep "bottled" up inside your heart and mind for days, months or perhaps even years? If the Spirit prompts you, I pray you do not delay, for your sake and the sake of His Name. Amen**). He saw how cruel and heartless his words had been.

Our words can be just as devastating. And it seems that it's our children or family or fellow believers whom we hurt the most. As believers in Christ, we have an obligation before God to evaluate the impact of our words. Idle, angry, hateful words can inflict great harm, for which we will be held accountable (Mt 12:36, 37).

Ask God for help. Before hurtful words come pouring out of your mouth, think first—then leave them unsaid. —D C Egner [Our Daily Bread](#). Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Use words of kindness, filled with love,
That heal and nourish life
Instead of hurling angry words
That wound and stir up strife. —Sper

**Think before you act.
Think twice before you speak.**

Good (18) (agathos [word study]) means suitable, rather serviceable, profitable, benefiting others, whereas the related word **kalos** means constitutionally good, but not necessarily benefiting others. Agathos words would include those adapted to instruct, counsel, and comfort. These words are based on one's assessment of the hearer's need and are spoken accordingly so as to meet that need, building them up rather than tearing them down.

How do we cultivate a heart yields the fruit of beneficial, gracious, edifying speech? It is interesting that the first "fruit" (or effect) Paul mentions in his command to be filled the Spirit has to do with the **words that proceed from our mouth!**

And **do not get drunk** (present imperative - With the negative = a command calling for them to cease this activity) with wine, for that is dissipation, but **be filled** (present imperative = Command to allow [passive voice = effect exerted from extrinsic Source, but we must still choose to yield to Him] one's self to be filled not with a "liquid" but with the "life" of the Spirit of Christ, and to do so as one's continual practice [and it does take "practice" surrendering - He will give us manifold opportunities to practice!]) with the Spirit, (**And what is the first "fruit" of His supernatural life flowing through us?**) **speaking to one another (!)** (Ep 5:18-note, Ep 5:19a-note)

We see a similar pattern in the parallel passage in Colossians (which helps us understand what being filled with the Spirit entails - fill yourself with His Word, respond to the revelation, and His Spirit will revive your spirit, cp Ps 119:25-[note](#))...

Let the word of Christ richly **dwell** (present imperative = let the Word continually "take up residence" within the "temple of God" [you, your body, 1Co 6:19-note], making itself at home in your mind and heart, and being manifested in an obedient walk) within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another (Col 3:16-note) (Teaching implies that we are speaking as does admonishing).

Spurgeon...

What sweet talking there would be if we all spoke in this way, to "minister grace unto the hearers"! Ah! then, my dear friends, it would not matter how much we talked, if every word was salted with salt.

I have heard unthinking people say, "Well, if it is in your heart, you may as well speak it; it is better out than in." I do not agree with them! If you had a barrel of whiskey in your house, that would certainly be a bad thing to be in your possession; but it would not do any hurt so long as you kept it unopened, so that nobody could get at it, for the mischief arises when people begin to drink it. Undoubtedly, it is an evil thing for you to have anything that is corrupt in your heart, but it will not be mischievous to other people until it begins to come out; so, "let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth".

Solomon records that...

Death and life are in the power of the tongue (but he does not stop there adding that) and those who love it will eat its fruit (either "rotten" or "good"! Take your choice. Your "harvest" will depend on which seed you sow with your speech! Choose wisely. Redeem every moment, every word, every conversation.). (Proverbs 18:21)

Or its as someone has written in the form of a **prayer**...

Lord, make my words gracious and tender, for tomorrow I may have to eat them!

Winston Churchill once said that...

During a long life I have had to eat my own words many times and I have found it a very nourishing diet.

As noted in the next verse one of the ways that we may grieve the Holy Spirit is by frivolous, worthless conversation. Life is too short and valuable to be wasted. It needs to be spent in giving forth edifying words and works. (Eph 5:16- note, Col 4:5, 6-note).

John Eadie agrees adding that...

The precious hour should never be polluted with corrupt speech, nor should it be wasted in idle and frivolous dialogue. We are not indeed to "give that which is holy to dogs"—a due and delicate appreciation of time and circumstance must govern the tongue. Conversation should always exercise a salutary influence, regulated by the special need. Words so spoken may fall like winged seeds upon a neglected soil, and there may be future germination and fruit. ([Ephesians 4 Commentary Online](#))

Edification ([3619](#)) (**oikodome** [word study] from **oikos** = dwelling, house + **doma** = building or **demo** = to build) is **literally** the building of a house and came to refer to any building process. **Oikodome** can refer to the actual process of building or construction. Another literal meaning is as a reference to a building or edifice which is the result of a construction process (Mt 24:1, Mk 13:1, 2 are the only literal uses of **oikodome** in the NT). (See sermon by [Alexander Maclaren entitled "Edification"](#))

Most of the NT uses of **oikodome** are **metaphorical or figurative**, obviously an architectural metaphor. As used here in Eph 2:21, **oikodome** refers to the **church** as the building for God's indwelling (cp 1Co 3:9). Figuratively the idea is the process of edification or building up spiritually or spiritual strengthening.

Figuratively, as used in this verse, **oikodome** refers to the process in which one speaks words that build up, instruct or improve spiritually.

Note that **Webster** says that "**edify**" is from Latin word meaning to erect a house. Believers are to speak good to others to instruct, improve, inform, enlighten and uplift them, especially in the moral and ethical sphere. Sapro's words have the opposite effect.

Other figurative meanings include our physical bodies (2Co 5:1), as a reference to the process of spiritual growth, edification or building up (some contexts speak primarily to the individual, some to the corporate body of Christ) (Ro 14:19, 15:2, 1Co 3:9, 14:3, 5, 12, 26, 2Co 10:8),

Vine summarizes **the word group of oikodome (noun) and oikodomeo (verb)** noting that these is used...

both in a **literal sense**, Mt 7:24; Lk 4:29, and in a figurative, Ac 20:32; Ga 2:18. The corresponding noun, **oikodome**, building, edification, is used in a similar way, literally, Matthew 24:1 (noun - oikodome), **figuratively**, Ro 14:19 (noun - oikodome).

The word expresses the **strengthening effect of teaching**, 1Co 14:3 (noun - oikodome), and example, 1Co 10:23, upon oneself and upon others, 1Co 14:4, whether for good, 2Co 10:8, or for evil, 1Co 8:10, "emboldened." From the familiar spectacle of building operations **it transfers to the spiritual realm** the idea of assured progress as the result of patient labor. The word is used of national life, Mt 21:42, and of church life, Ac 9:31, as well as of the individual, Ro 15:2 (noun - oikodome). It is **used of the "Church which is His Body"** in Mt 16:18; Ep 4:12 (noun - oikodome), cp. 1Pe 2:5, and of the local church in 1Co 3:9; 14:5, 12; Ep 2:21 (noun - oikodome). Once it describes the resurrection body, 2Co 5:1. **God is said to be the Builder**, in 1Co 3:9 (noun - oikodome); Christ in Mt 16:18; Paul in Ro 15:20, cp. 1Co 3:10; 2Co 10:8; 13:10 (both use the noun - oikodome); the "gifts" of the ascended Lord are the builders in Ep 4:12 (noun - oikodome), cp. 1Co 14:12; individual believers, here; and in Ep 4:16 (noun - oikodome) the church is said to build itself up in love. Building up is effected by: (1) love, 1Co 8:1, cp. Ep 4:16 (noun - oikodome); (2) prophesying, 1Co 14:3, 4 (noun in 14:3 oikodome) (3) exhortation, 1Th 5:11, cp. He 10:25. ([Vine, W. Collected writings of W. E. Vine. Nashville: Thomas Nelson or Logos](#))

Need of the moment ([5532](#)) (**chreia** [word study] from **chréos** = debt) refers to that which is needed or is a necessity.

A T Robertson...

"For the build-up of the need," "for supplying help when there is need." Let no other words come out.

Richard Hooker...

There will come a time when three words, uttered with charity and meekness, shall receive a far more blessed reward than three thousand volumes written with disdainful sharpness of wit.

Charles Hodge...

the edification which necessity calls for or which is suited to the occasion. [Ephesians 4:17-32, 5:1-2](#)

Martyn Lloyd-Jones...

'As fits the occasion' means that I must consider the people to whom I am speaking; I must make an assessment of them, and my speech and conversation must be appropriate for them. But many Christian people do not do this; what they do is to deliver a sermon; they address an individual as if he or she were a public meeting; they sermonise; they give a little address or sermonette; they make very good statements about the gospel and the way of salvation, but sometimes it is not at all appropriate and does not fit the occasion. They act in this way because they are thinking about themselves only, and are not estimating the other. They say to themselves, Now that I am a Christian and must engage in good and godly conversation, I must always be giving my testimony or preaching the gospel or getting in a little word somewhere or other. No, says the Apostle, that is a wrong approach. If you approach it in that way, you are more concerned about yourself and about doing your duty than you are about manifesting the true Christian attitude in this matter. The Christian's word of edification should always fit the occasion! So we are not to repeat phrases in parrot fashion and feel that we have done well and performed our duty. Not at all! Instead, we are to discover, first of all, what is the exact position of other people. My business is to speak to them in such a way as to help them exactly where they are; 'cast not your pearls before swine', says our Lord. Do not hurl chunks, as it were, of good red meat at a babe who can only take milk! These are the Scriptural terms, are they not? 'I could not speak unto you', says Paul to the Corinthians, 'as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes.' 'I have fed you with milk and not with meat.' The fact was that they 'were not yet able to bear it!' (Lloyd-Jones, D. M. Christian Unity Grand Rapids: Baker Book House)

Steven Cole illustrates the word which is not needed!

A catering manager was discussing a baby-christening party with a young couple. She told the mother of the baby, "You look like you've lost most of your pregnancy weight." "Thanks," came the clenched-teeth reply. "We adopted" (Reader's Digest [June, 2005], p. 67). File that away in your memory as what never to say!...

This implies that you are sensitive enough to understand what the person's real needs are. If you don't understand the person's needs, even well intentioned words can often hurt more than they heal. So, how do you find out the person's needs? (1) Learn the person's needs by listening. We've all had the frustrating experience of trying to talk to someone who wasn't really listening. Perhaps the person offered a pat solution to your problem, but it was useless advice because you felt that he didn't really hear what your need was. You've got to listen to discern what the other person's needs are. This is especially true when the other person is upset with you or criticizes you unfairly. You'll be tempted to reciprocate by tearing into him. But, whether the other person's comments are accurate or not, that person has a need and your words can either be like sword thrusts or like a scalpel that brings healing (Pr 12:18). Coupled with listening well is... (2) Learn the person's needs by asking questions. Pr 18:13 states, "He who gives an answer before he hears, it is folly and shame to him." To listen well, you've got to ask clarifying questions so that you really understand the other person. You can ask, "Are you saying, ..." and repeat back what you hear the person saying to find out if you're hearing correctly. (3) Learn the person's needs by picking up non-verbal clues. This is part of listening well, because much of communication is non-verbal. You can say, "I can see that you're really upset. I'd like to understand what is wrong and help if I can." But you won't build up the other person unless you are sensitive to his needs. ([Transformed Talk](#))

SO THAT IT WILL GIVE GRACE TO THOSE WHO HEAR: hina do (3SAAS) charin tois akouousin. (PAPMPD): (Matthew 5:16; 1Peter 2:12; 3:1)

So that ([2443](#)) (**hina**) expresses purpose of one's non-rotting, beneficial (good), edifying words.

Give ([1325](#))(**didomi**) means to give something (usually implying what is given has value).

The New Man's speech should be edifying (building up not tearing down), appropriate (suited to the occasion) and gracious (imparting grace to the hearer's ear and heart).

R Kent Hughes...

We are to converse in such a way that our words become a vehicle and demonstration of the grace of God. We are to be like Alexander Whyte, of whom it was said, "All of his geese became swans." We should speak constructive talk, talk that builds others up. As Eliphaz said of Job, "Your words have supported those who stumbled; you have strengthened faltering knees" (Job 4:4).

[\(Ephesians The Mystery of the Body Preview\)](#)

Augustine in recognition of the principle that speech must give grace, hung this motto on his dining room wall

He who speaks evil of an absent man or woman is not welcome at this table.

Grace ([5485](#)) (**charis [word study]**) in context is quality that adds delight or pleasure or a winning quality or attractiveness that invites a favorable reaction (graciousness, attractiveness, charm, winsomeness). In short, our **gracious** words spoken to others can be used by God's Spirit to transform trial into triumph and sorrow into joy. God of course is the ultimate source of all grace (God of all grace 1Pe 5:10-note) but Paul is implying that we as His ambassadors, can function as channels of His grace even in our everyday conversation. To repeat an aphorism may God give us grace givers the desire and power to think before we act and to think twice before we speak!

The dying words of one ancient saint were,

Grace is the only thing that can make us like God. I might be dragged through heaven, earth, and hell and I would still be the same sinful, polluted wretch unless God Himself should cleanse me by His **grace**.

And I would add the only way we can speak gracious words is by continually basking in the glow of and continual reliance upon God's transforming grace.

Steven Cole notes that

If you are at odds with anyone, perhaps because he or she has wronged you, you'll be inclined to think, "But this person doesn't deserve words that build him up! He deserves to be put down!" But, grace is undeserved favor! Grace extends to others what God has extended to you. It also extends to others what you need in return from others, because you often fall short or fail them. So, although it may be true that the other person does not deserve kind words that build him up, give him such words anyway! ([Transformed Talk](#))

Hear ([191](#)) (**akouo**) means to hear with attention, with the ear of the mind or effectually so as to respond appropriately to what has been spoken or taught.

Wayne Barber explains our **Brand New Way of Life** in the context of "**Rotten Speech**" writing...

Ephesians 4:29, we become a person who builds up rather than tears down. This is so explicit I don't even have to say a lot about it. Let me just read it.

"Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth."

That is interesting. He has talked about what we say twice. Once not lying, but now this is any general speech that comes out of our mouth. It changes gear a little bit. The word "unwholesome" there is the word *sapros*. It means rotten, something that is rotten, something that decays.

A principle comes to my mind. If you take a barrel of good apples and put one bad apple in that barrel, do you think the good apples are going to crowd out the bad apple and therefore all the apples are going to become good? No, it works exactly the opposite. One rotten, putrid apple will begin to contaminate every single good apple that is in that barrel. That is the way our speech is. The word "rotten" is that which decays, that which putrefies. The way you talk to people is incredibly different when you have the new garment on compared to when you have the old garment on.

Paul goes on to explain

"but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear."

In other words, this is so relative that you can't really apply it in an adequate way. It fits whatever situation you are in. The Holy Spirit will give you words that can build up. That doesn't mean that you are never to confront. That doesn't mean you don't address problems, but it does mean that whatever you do, you do it with an attitude of building up and not tearing down.

SEVERAL THINGS YOU CAN DO TO TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

When he says, "Do not grieve," the word "grieve," *lupeo*, is a love word. In other words, there are several things you can do with the Holy Spirit. I want you to know that the Holy Spirit is not an "it." He is not the force

as Star Wars tells us. He is a person who lives within us. He is the person, the Spirit of Christ who lives within us, the third person of the trinity.

1) He can be resisted.

Acts 7:51 talks about the religious Jew where it says

You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always **resisting** (present tense = their habitual practice; Greek = antipipto = literally to fall against, to rush upon in a hostile manner, to resist by force) the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did.

He can be resisted by the lost (unbelievers, unregenerate)

2) He can be quenched by the church.

In 1Thes 5:19 (note) he Paul instructs us...

"Do not quench the Spirit." (present imperative + negative = stop doing this!)

Quench is plural indicating Paul is addressing the entire church. You can put the fire out. You can quench the Holy Spirit.

3) He can be grieved.

Here in Ep 4:30 (note) the individual believer can grieve the Holy Spirit and so Paul says, "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God."

Well, what does it mean? Well, in context, it means don't become a taker or you have just grieved the Spirit of God who is a giver. Don't let any unwholesome word proceed out of your mouth, or you have just grieved the Spirit of God who is the builder of the church. Don't grieve the Spirit of God.

Do you ever grieve somebody you love? There have been times that I have said things that have pierced my wife's heart, not really knowing how much damage it could actually do. This was true especially years ago when I was just learning how to walk and live the Christian life. It's not as much often now, thank God, as it was then. But when you grieve somebody you love and you can't take back what you have said and you know now how they feel, that is exactly what happens to the Holy Spirit every time we refuse to put on the new garment of Jesus Christ. It grieves Him. It distresses Him. The word means to distress someone.

Paul says,

"do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."

That refers to the day Jesus comes for the church. He is there in your life for a reason and He wants to control your life.

I think Ep 4:27 (note) and Ep 4:30 parallel each other. In other words, I think he brings both spirits into play, the Holy Spirit and the unholy spirit who is just an angel, certainly not equal to God. He brings them both into play. Which one are you going to please?

If I grieve the Holy Spirit, I have just given the unholy spirit an opportunity. If I bless and please the Holy Spirit, then I have just frustrated the unholy spirit.

I've got a choice to make. The devil is not somebody we reckon with, folks. He can only be in one place at a time. He is not omnipresent. His system is in this world. He is wherever God is working in such a way that he had to get his attention to stop it. I pray that some day we will be the kind of church that would attract that kind of attention. Folks, let me tell you something. His spirit is in this world. The mark he left on humanity is our flesh. When he gets us to put on the old garment, he doesn't have to get in us. That old garment does the damage. We have given him an opportunity, and he takes it from there in the downward spiral of self.

Well, maybe you feel convicted. I am. Do you know what you do when you realize you've sinned? Let me tell you what to do. There is such grace in this. Come right back to where you departed. You confess, which means you agree with God,

"God, I have missed the mark. I am doing more damage to the body of Christ than I am building it up and God, I want to stop it."

Secondly, you repent. Now the forgiveness will be there when you confess. You can appropriate that at that point. Now you must repent.

If you've done wrong, if you have been wearing the wrong garment this past week, if you've offended other people and you know by what you have said that you have hurt them, first of all confess it and make sure you make it right with them and then repent of it.

A young fellow was in the house with his dad and his family. It was warm inside. Outside it was below zero, the wind blowing, snow stacking up. It was awful outside. Inside it was a warm house, insulated, fire in the fireplace. You can just get the picture. A ball game on television. Carpet on the floor. You could smell the bread cooking in the kitchen. Supper was about ready. It was just where you want to be. The boy was sitting there enjoying it, and the father looked over at him and said,

"Hey listen, son, put another log on the fire."

The son jumped up and said,

"I am 18 years old and I'm sick and tired of being told what to do when I am in this house. I am leaving, and you can have it. You do it yourself. If you want a log on the fire, put it on yourself."

He went upstairs, got a duffle bag, put his clothes in it and walked out of that house. He walked about a block. The wind was picking up. The chill factor now below zero. The wind was burning his face it was blowing so hard. He was cold and thinking to himself,

"You know, I was just inside that house and it was warm. I was about ready to eat, and it was wonderful fellowship. This is sort of stupid."

He finally decides to go back. So he walks back to the house kind of sheepishly and knocked on the door. The father opened the door and said,

"Hey, son. Good to see you. Been gone 30 minutes. I thought you were leaving for a while. Good to see you. Come on in. Take your stuff upstairs, unpack and come on down and watch the ball game with me."

He went downstairs and sat in the chair. Boy, he was glad to be home! This is where he belongs. While he was sitting there, the father looked over at him and said,

"Oh, by the way, put another log on the fire."

Folks, you can confess until you fall over in the floor and you will never have that new garment on until you put another log on the fire and go back and repent of what you didn't do before. If you are not going to obey, forget what you've heard. You are going to wear that old garment and you are going to be miserable. We will have to put a tag on you because Paul says mark those who cause division. The people who cause division are people who won't wear the new garment. People who wear the new garment preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace. (Ephesians 4:22-27: A Brand New Way of Life - 3)

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A young lady once said to John Wesley "I think I know what my talent is. It's to speak my mind."

Wesley quipped "I don't think God would mind if you bury that talent."

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An unknown poet wrote...

A careless word may kindle strife.
A cruel word may wreck a life.
A bitter word may hate instill;
A brutal word may smite and kill.
A gracious word may smooth the way;
A joyous word may light the day.
A timely word may lessen stress;
A loving word may heal and bless.

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Weighty Words - Experts tell us that people often hide what they are trying to say behind a wall of words. This is a kind of double talk in which their words do not coincide with their feelings. Gerald Nierenberg, a New York lawyer, wrote a book about this problem called *Meta-Talk: Guide to Hidden Meanings in Conversation*. In it he gives 350 examples of verbal distortion. Another communications consultant says many people are afraid that honesty in speech will cost them friendships, love, or respect. So they either keep their lips zippered or say something other than what they mean. Additional factors that may impede straight talk are shyness, lack of self-worth, fear of displaying ignorance, fear of criticism, and fear of hurting someone's feelings.

Christians are not immune to this problem. Trying to be both loving and truthful is often extremely difficult. The Bible, however, provides a balanced and optimistic approach to this dilemma. Being honest with people may hurt, but if we speak kindly and with compassion we give them the support they need to face reality. —M. R. De Haan II ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

**GENTLE WORDS FALL LIGHTLY,
BUT THEY HAVE GREAT WEIGHT.**

Well Chosen Words - Marion F. Ash and an elderly gentleman were painting a farmhouse on a hot summer day. They had just refreshed themselves with a cold drink of water and were returning to their ladders when a small boy with only one arm came riding toward them on his bike. He stopped and said, "I live down the road a ways. Ma sent me to see if you needed some drinking water. If you do, I can go back and fetch it in a glass canning jar." Mr. Ash was about to decline the offer, but his older companion said, "You sure came in the nick of time, Sonny. A good drink of water would do wonders for both of us." The youngster grinned and called out, "I'll be right back. I bet you think you're lucky that I came along!" The elderly man replied, "You can say that again! Now our worries are over. We've got another man on the job." Commenting on this incident, Mr. Ash wrote, "With a few well-chosen words my friend had transformed a young, handicapped lad into a confident human being."

The world needs people who affirm the worth of others by acts of kindness and words of encouragement. This poor old world needs the wealth of positive attitudes and hopeful persuasion. —H. V. Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

**KIND WORDS
ARE MUSIC TO A HURTING HEART**

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Small Thing, Big Impact - Are most people truth-tellers? Can what they say be taken at face value? Or are they like the ancient Cretans, whose reputation was that they were "always liars"? (Titus 1:12-note).

Lies, of course, are communicated by the tongue. That small part of the human body can make a powerful impact. It can ruin a reputation. It can destroy a friendship. It can cause lasting heartache.

On the other hand, the tongue can give comfort and hope in time of bereavement. It can shine the light of saving truth into the mind of someone wandering in spiritual darkness. It can praise and glorify God.

We shouldn't be surprised, then, that Scripture repeatedly urges us to exercise great wisdom and care in how we use this small part of the body. Pr 18:21 is not exaggerating when it warns us that "death and life are in the power of the tongue." David was not indulging in pointless poetry when he denounced "men . . . whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword" (Psalm 57:4). And the apostle James said that the tongue can be as destructive as a fire (Jas 3:1-12).

By the Holy Spirit's power, may we use our tongues to bless our hearers, build up one another, and glorify our Creator in prayer and praise. — Vernon C. Grounds ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord, set a watch upon my lips,
My tongue control today;
Help me evaluate each thought
And guard each word I say. —Hess

The tongue is a small organ that creates either discord or harmony.

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One of the greatest honors ever offered to me came during one of life's saddest times.

I was heartbroken last year when my good friend and co-worker Kurt De Haan died suddenly while out on his regular lunchtime run. Kurt was managing editor of Our Daily Bread from 1989 until the time of his death. Losing him was a huge blow to each of us at RBC Ministries, but his wife Mary and their four children were suffering the worst pain.

A couple of days before the funeral, I got a call from Mary, who asked if I would share a eulogy of Kurt. I was overwhelmed with this bittersweet privilege.

As I reflected on Kurt's life, one trait continued to surface. It was a remarkable characteristic, and it was something that I focused on in my eulogy. In the 22 years I had known him, worked with him, and talked with him, I never once heard Kurt say a negative word about any other person.

What a remarkable legacy of a true Christian heart! Kurt lived up to the standard of Ephesians 4:29, 30, 31, 32. He sought to build up others, showing kindness and tenderheartedness instead of bitterness and malice.

Will others be able to say the same about us?—Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Instead of hurling angry words
That wound and stir up strife,
Use words of kindness, filled with love,
That heal and nourish life. —Sper

A kind word is the oil that takes the friction out of life.

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The Power of Words - One major area of breakdown in marriages and families today is communication. The apostle Paul used the word corrupt to describe speech that has the power to tear people down, adults and children alike (Eph. 4:29). He also stated that good communication is "necessary edification," for it has the power to build people up.

Here are examples of corrupt communication we often aim at our children: "Can't you do anything right?" "What's wrong with you?" "You'll never learn." "You're always breaking something." "Oh, let me do it." The list is endless. But so are examples of edifying communication. A list called "99 Ways To Say 'Very Good'" offers these encouraging words: "That's it!" "You're really working hard today." "I'm very proud of you." "Now you've figured it out." "You are very good at that." "That's the way!" "Now that's what I call a fine job." "Good thinking."

Paul said that when we edify others through our speech, we impart grace, or spiritual benefit, to their lives (v.29). Let's examine our speech habits for careless words, and then resolve to build up every person we meet, especially children. Remember, people need encouragers more than they need critics. Which one are you? — Joanie Yoder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Button up your lip securely
'Gainst the words that bring a tear,
But be swift with words of comfort,
Words of praise, and words of cheer. --Loucks

**A word of encouragement
can make the difference between giving up and going on.**

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Clean Up the Environment - What a frustrating problem pollution is! Everybody suffers from it, yet everybody contributes to it.

Pollution takes many forms, but one type is often overlooked. Charles Swindoll calls it "verbal pollution," passed around by grumblers, complainers, and criticizers. "The poison of pessimism," Swindoll writes, "creates an atmosphere of wholesale negativism where nothing but the bad side of everything is emphasized."

A group of Christian friends became concerned about this form of pollution and their personal part in it. So they made a pact to avoid critical words for a whole week. They were surprised to find how little they spoke! As they continued the experiment, they actually had to relearn conversation skills.

In Ephesians 4, Paul called believers to that sort of decisive action. He said we are to "put off" the old self and its conduct that grieves the Holy Spirit (vv.22,30) and "put on" the new self that builds up others (v.24). As we rely on the help of the Spirit (Gal. 5:16), we can make those changes in our conduct, our thinking, and our speaking.

If we want to be rid of verbal pollution, we must choose to change and ask for God's help. It's a great way to start cleaning up our spiritual environment. — Joanie Yoder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

What! Never speak one evil word,
Or rash, or idle, or unkind!
O how shall I, most gracious Lord,
This mark of true perfection find? --Wesley

Help stamp out pollution--clean up your speech!

Ephesians 4:30 Do not **grieve the **Holy Spirit** of **God**, by **whom** you were **sealed** for the **day** of **redemption**.** ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: [kai me lupeite \(2PPAM\) to pneuma to hagion tou theou en o esphragisethete \(2PAPI\) eis hemeran apolutroseos.](#)

Amplified: And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God [do not offend or vex or sadden Him], by Whom you were sealed (marked, branded as God's own, secured) for the day of redemption (of final deliverance through Christ from evil and the consequences of sin). ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

NLT: And do not bring sorrow to God's Holy Spirit by the way you live. Remember, he is the one who has identified you as his own, guaranteeing that you will be saved on the day of redemption. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: Never hurt the Holy Spirit. He is, remember, the personal pledge of your eventual full redemption. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: And stop grieving the Spirit, the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed with a view to the day of redemption. ([Erdmans](#))

Young's Literal: And beware of grieving the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you have been sealed in preparation for the day of Redemption.

DO NOT GRIEVE THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD: kai me lupeite (2PPAM) to pneuma to hagion tou theou: (Genesis 6:3,6; Judges 10:16; Psalms 78:40; 95:10; Isaiah 7:13; 43:24; 63:10; Ezekiel 16:43; Mark 3:5; Acts 7:51; 1Th 5:19 - **note**; He 3:10,17)

Note that the first word in the Greek is "**kai**" (**and**) which unfortunately is not translated by the usually relatively literal NASB. "**And**" in this context is important because it clearly links the grieving of the Holy Spirit with the previous passage regarding unwholesome speech. The implication is that "rotten" speech will grieve the Holy Spirit. Of course this verse may also be linked to Ep 4:25, 26, 27, 28 to indicate that lying, unrighteous anger, and stealing also hurt Him. In a more general sense is an exhortation to abstain from anything and everything that grieves the Holy Spirit.

Grieve ([3076](#)) (**lupeo** [**word study**] from **lupe** = sadness, grief) means to feel deep emotional or physical pain, distress. As used here **lupeo** means to afflict one with sorrow.

Paul uses the **present imperative** with a **negative** particle (in Greek "me") saying in essence "Stop grieving the Spirit" (or "Don't start grieving the Spirit"), which conveys the implication that some may have been grieving Him. **A T Robertson** "Cease grieving" or "do not have the habit of grieving."

The Holy Spirit is grieved or pained by sin, in context, especially the sins of the tongue! The Spirit Who makes men attest to the truth is put to shame when the saints lie to one another and utter rotten words to each other.

Sorrow = distress of mind especially implying a sense of loss - deep distress, sadness, or regret especially for the loss of someone or something loved; resultant unhappy or unpleasant state. One dictionary says sorrow is derived from the German *sorge* = care, concern, uneasiness which is in turn from the same root as sore, heavy. Interesting word picture of this word! The **1828 Webster's Dictionary** has this entry for **sorrow** - The uneasiness or pain of mind which is produced by the loss of any good, real or supposed, or by disappointment in the expectation of good; grief; regret. The loss of a friend we love occasions sorrow; the loss of property, of health or any source of happiness, causes sorrow. We feel sorrow for ourselves in misfortunes; we feel sorrow for the calamities of our friends and our country.

Grief = deep and poignant distress caused by or as if by bereavement. 1828 Webster = The pain of mind produced by loss,

misfortune, injury or evils of any kind; sorrow; regret. We experience grief when we lose a friend, when we incur loss, when we consider ourselves injured, and by sympathy, we feel grief at the misfortunes of others. The pain of mind occasioned by our own misconduct; sorrow or regret that we have done wrong; pain accompanying repentance. We feel grief when we have offended or injured a friend, and the consciousness of having offended the Supreme Being, fills the penitent heart with the most poignant grief.

Anguish (Interesting etymology - from Latin *angustiae*, plural, straits, distress, from *angustus* narrow) = Extreme pain, either of body or mind. As bodily pain, it may differ from agony, which is such distress of the whole body as to cause contortion, whereas anguish may be a local pain as of an ulcer, or gout. But anguish and agony are nearly synonymous. As pain of the mind, it signifies any keen distress from sorrow, remorse, despair and the kindred passions. ANGUISH suggests torturing grief or dread, such as the anguish felt by the parents of the kidnapped child (Lindbergh's child in 1932 - the "crime of the century")

C H Spurgeon on grieving the Holy Spirit...

I think I now see the Spirit of God grieving, when you are sitting down to read a novel and there is your Bible unread. Perhaps you take down some book of travels, and you forget that you have got a more precious book of travels in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the story of your blessed Lord and Master. You have no time for prayer, but the Spirit sees you very active about worldly things, and having many hours to spare for relaxation and amusement. And then he is grieved because he sees that you love worldly things better than you love him.

Although the word 'grieve' is a painful one, yet there is honey in the rock; for it is an inexpressibly delightful thought, that he who rules heaven and earth, and is the creator of all things, and the infinite and ever blessed God, condescends to enter into such infinite relationships with his people that his divine mind may be affected by their actions. What a marvel that Deity should be said to grieve over the faults of beings so utterly insignificant as we are!

Sin everywhere must be displeasing to the Spirit of holiness, but sin in his own people is grievous to him in the highest degree. He will not hate his people, but he does hate their sins, and hates them all the more because they nestle in his children's bosoms. The Spirit would not be the Spirit of truth if he could approve of that which is false in us: he would not be pure if that which is impure in us did not grieve him.

The Holy Spirit's grief is not of a petty, oversensitive nature. "He is grieved with us mainly for our own sakes, for he knows what misery sin will cost us; he reads our sorrows in our sins . . . He grieves over us because he sees how much chastisement we incur, and how much communion we lose.

Guzik - There are many ways to grieve the Holy Spirit. We can neglect holiness and grieve the Holy Spirit. We can think in purely materialistic terms and grieve the Holy Spirit. The Spirit exalts Jesus (John 15:26); when we fail to do the same, we grieve the Spirit.

MacDonald observes as do many commentators that...

The fact that He can be grieved shows that the Holy Spirit is a Person, not a mere influence. It also means He loves us, because only a person who loves can be grieved. The favorite ministry of God's Spirit is to glorify Christ and to change the believer into His likeness (2 Cor. 3:18). When a Christian sins, He has to turn from this ministry to one of restoration. It grieves Him to see the believer's spiritual progress interrupted by sin. He must then lead the Christian to the place of repentance and confession of sin. (Ibid)

Charles Hodge - To grieve Him is to wound Him on Whom our salvation depends. Though He will not finally withdraw from those in whom He dwells, yet when grieved, He withholds the manifestations of His presence. ([Ephesians 4:17-32, 5:1-2 Commentary Online](#))

Lupeo - 26x in 21v - Matt 14:9; 17:23; 18:31; 19:22; 26:22, 37; Mark 10:22; 14:19; John 16:20; 21:17; Rom 14:15; 2 Cor 2:2, 4, 5; 6:10; 7:8f, 11; Eph 4:30; 1Th 4:13; 1 Pet 1:6. NAS = cause...sorrow(1), caused...sorrow(2), caused sorrow(2), distressed(1), grieve(3), grieved(7), grieving(2), hurt(1), made sorrowful(5), sorrow(1), sorrowful(1).

Expositor's Greek Testament - The Spirit is here regarded as capable of feeling, and so as personal. In Isa 63:10 (*But they rebelled And grieved His Holy Spirit; Therefore He turned Himself to become their enemy, He fought against them.*) we have a similar idea, following the statement that Jehovah was afflicted in all His people's affliction. These terms, no doubt, are anthropopathic (anthropopathy = the assignment of human feelings or passions to something not human, as a deity, in this context

Jehovah), as all terms which we can use of God are anthropomorphic or anthropopathic. But they have reality behind them, and that as regards God's nature and not merely His acts. Otherwise we should have an unknown God and One who might be essentially different from what we are under the mental necessity of thinking Him to be. What love is in us points truly, though tremulously, to what love is in God. But in us love, in proportion as it is true and sovereign, has both its wrath-side and its grief-side ; and so must it be with God, however difficult for us to think it out. ([Ephesians 4:30 Commentary](#))

Rick Renner has this note on the word group **lupe/lupeo**

Many years ago, when I first studied the word "grieve" in Ephesians 4:30, I ran to my bookshelf and pulled out my Greek New Testament to discover exactly what the word "grieve" meant. I found that this word was taken from the Greek word *lupete*. This surprised me, because the word *lupete* is from the word *lupe*, which denotes a pain or grief that can only be experienced between two people who deeply love each other. This word *lupe* would normally be used to picture a husband or wife who has discovered his or her mate has been unfaithful. As a result of this unfaithfulness, the betrayed spouse is shocked, devastated, hurt, wounded, and grieved because of the pain that accompanies unfaithfulness. This tells us, first of all, that the relationship that exists between us and the Holy Spirit is precious! The Holy Spirit is deeply in love with us. Just as someone in love thinks about, dreams of, and cherishes the one he loves, the Holy Spirit longs for us, thinks about us, desires to be close to us, and wants to reveal Himself to us. But when we act like the world, talk like the world, behave like the world, and respond the same way the world does, we cause the Spirit of God to feel shock, hurt, and grief. You see, when we deliberately do what is wrong, we drag Him right into the mire of sin with us, because He lives in us and goes wherever we go. The Holy Spirit convicted us of sin and brought us to Jesus; then He indwelt us, sanctified us, empowered us, and faithfully remains alongside to help us. So when we deliberately enter into sin, it grieves Him. Just as a husband or wife would feel who has just discovered that his or her spouse has committed adultery, the Holy Spirit is shocked when we dishonor His Presence in our lives.

One scholar has translated Ephesians 4:30 in the following way: "Stop deeply wounding and causing such extreme emotional pain to the Spirit of God, by whom you have been sealed until the day of your redemption."

We need to realize how precious the Holy Spirit is in our lives and honor Him by making sure we live holy and upright lives. If our behavior has been wrong, we should confess our sin and receive cleansing by the blood of Jesus so we can be restored to fellowship with the Spirit of God. So before you get started with your daily duties today, stop and ask, "Holy Spirit, is there anything in my life that causes You grief? If there is, please reveal it to me so I can change." (Sparkling Gems from the Greek)

Holy ([40](#)) (**hagios [word study]**) is literally holy one and refers to one set apart for a special purpose. **Hagios** was used throughout the NT to speak of anyone or anything that represents God's holiness: Christ as the **Holy** One of God, the **Holy** Spirit, the **Holy** Father, **holy** Scriptures, **holy** angels, **holy** brethren, and so on. Paul could have just written "Spirit" but he appends "Holy", which serves to give an added motivation to the exhortations previously mentioned, and most immediately that our speech be holy speech.

I love how the silver tongued orator **Alexander Maclaren** exposit Ephesians 4:30 (below are excerpts, consider reading the entire message **Grieving the Spirit**)...

THE miracle of Christianity is the Incarnation. It is not a link in a chain, but a new beginning, the entrance into the cosmic order of a Divine Power. The sequel of Bethlehem and Calvary and Olivet is the upper room and the Pentecost. There is the issue of the whole mission and work of Christ—the planting in the heart of humanity of a new and divine life. All Christendom is **professing** to commemorate that fact to-day! but a large portion of us forget that it was but a transient sign of a perpetual reality. The rushing mighty wind has died down into a calm; the fiery tongues have ceased to flicker on the disciples' heads, but the miracle, which is permanent, and is being repeated from day to day, in the experience of every believing soul, is the inrush of the very breath of God into their lives, and the plunging of them into a fiery baptism which melts their coldness and refines away their dross. Now, my text brings before us some very remarkable thoughts as to the permanent working of the Divine Spirit upon Christian souls, and upon this it bases a very tender and persuasive exhortation to conduct. And I desire simply to try to bring out the fourfold aspect in these words. There is, first, a wondrous revelation; second, a plain lesson as to what that Divine Spirit chiefly does; third, a solemn warning as to man's power and freedom to thwart it; and, lastly, a tender motive for conduct. 'Grieve not!...

And I pray you to remember that however much your Christian thought and Christian faith may be centred upon, and may be drawing its nourishment and its joy from, the work of Jesus Christ who died on the Cross

for our salvation, and lives to be our King and Defender, there is a gap—not only in your Christian Creed, but also in your Christian experiences and joys and power, unless you have risen to this thought, that the Divine Spirit is not only an influence, a wind, a fire, an oil, a dove, a dew, but a Divine Person. We have to go back to the old creed —‘I believe in God the Father Almighty and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord, I believe in the Holy Ghost.’...

HOLINESS FOR WHICH THE DIVINE SPIRIT WORKS

Christianity is intensely ethical, and it sets forth, as the ultimate result of all its machinery, changing men into the likeness of God. Holiness is that for which Christ died, that for which the Divine Spirit works. Unless we Christian people recognise the true perspective of the Spirit's gifts, and put at the base the extraordinary, and higher than these, but still subordinate, the intellectual, and on top of all the spiritual and moral, we do not understand the meaning of the central gift and possible blessing of Christianity, to make us holy, or, if you do not like the theological word, let us put it into still plainer and more modern English, to make you and me good men and women, like God. That is the mightiest work of that Divine Spirit.

Nothing here about irresistible grace; nothing here about a power that lays hold upon a man, and makes him good, he lying passive in its hands like clay in the hands of the potter! You will not be made holy without the Divine Spirit, but you will not be made holy without your working along with it. There is a possibility of resisting, and there is a possibility of co-operating. Man is left free. God does not lay hold of any one by the hair of his head, and drag him into paths of righteousness whether he will or no.

But whilst there is the necessity for co-operation, which involves the possibility of resistance, we must also remember that that new life which comes into a man, and moulds his will as well as the rest of his nature, is itself the gift of God. **We do not get into a contradiction when we thus speak, we only touch the edge of a great ocean in which our plummets can find no bottom.** The same unravellable knot as to the co-operation of the divine and the creatural is found in the natural world, as in the experiences of the Christian soul. You have to work, and your work largely consists in yielding yourselves to the work of God upon you.

Work out (present imperative = Make this your life long passion and pursuit beloved!) your own (**Whose?**) salvation (So here "salvation" speaks of "present tense" salvation - progressive sanctification, growth in holiness - Three Tenses of Salvation) with fear and trembling (Not a shaking fear as bespeaks those who do not know God as Father, but a holy reverence and awe, an abiding sense that He is holy, holy, holy and that we should seek no less of a goal in this short life journey toward eternity, cp 1Pe 1:15, 16-note, 1Pe 1:17-note), for it is God (the indwelling Holy Spirit) that **worketh** (present tense = continually) in you both to **will** (The Spirit gives us the desire) and to **do** (The Spirit gives us the power) of His good pleasure (**The net result?** Spirit initiated and energized conduct gives our Father pleasure!).' (Php 2:12-note, Php 2:13-note)

Brethren! If you and I are Christian people, we have put into our hearts and spirits the talent. It depends on us whether we wrap it in a napkin, and stow it away underground somewhere, or whether we use it, and fructify and increase it. If you wrap it in a napkin and put it away underground, when you come to take it out, and want to say, 'Lo! there Thou hast that is Thine,' you will find that it was not solid gold, which could not rust or diminish, but that it has been like some volatile essence, put away in an unventilated place, and perfectly secured: the napkin is there, but the talent has vanished. **We have to work with God, and we can resist.** Ay, and there is a deeper and a sadder word than that applied by the same Apostle in another letter to the same subject. **We can 'quench' the light and extinguish the fire.** (1Th 5:19-note)

What extinguishes it? Look at the catalogue of sins that lie side by side with this exhortation of my text! They are all small matters—bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, evil-speaking, malice, stealing, lying, and the like; very 'homely' transgressions, if I may so say. Yes, and if you pile enough of them upon the spark that is in your hearts you will smother it out. Sin, the wrenching of myself away from the influences, not attending to the whispers and suggestions, being blind to the teaching of the Spirit through the Word and through Providence: these are the things that 'grieve the Holy Spirit of God.'

Many a man has been kept from doing wrong things by thinking of a sad pale face sitting at home waiting for him. Many a boy has been kept from youthful transgressions which war against his soul here, on the streets of Manchester, full as they are of temptations, by thinking that it would grieve the poor old mother in her cottage, away down in the country somewhere.

We can bring that same motive to bear, with infinitely increased force, in regard to our conduct as Christian people. '**Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God.**' A father feels a pang if he sees that his child makes no account of some precious gift that he has bestowed upon him, and leaves it lying about anywhere. A loving friend, standing on the margin of the stream, and calling to his friends in a boat when they are drifting to the rapids, turns away sad if they do not attend to his voice. That Divine Spirit pleads with us, and proffers His gifts to us, and turns away—I was going to use too strong a word, perhaps —sick at heart, not because of wounded authority, but because of wounded love and baffled desire to help, when we, in spite of it, will take our own way, neglect the call that warns us of our peril, and leave untouched the gifts that would have made us safe.

Dear brethren, surely such a dissuasive from evil, and such a persuasive to good, is mightier than all abstractions about duty and conscience and right, and the like. 'Do it rightly,' says Paul, 'and you will please Him that hath called you'; leave the evil thing undone, 'and my heart shall be glad, even mine.' You and I can grieve the Christ whose Spirit is given to us. You and I can add something to 'the joy of our Lord.' (Excerpted from Alexander Maclaren's message **Grieving the Spirit**)

F B Meyer has the following thoughts on the **Holy Spirit**...

WE MUST WATCH CAREFULLY OUR OWN ATTITUDE TO THE HOLY SPIRIT. (Ephesians 4:30, Ephesians 5:18)

He is not merely an influence; He is a person, and may easily be grieved. The Dove of God is very tender and gentle; and if there are thorns in the nest, He cannot remain. The things that grieve Him are instantly recognised by the holy soul by an immediate veiling of the inner light. They are enumerated here as bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, railing, with all kinds of malice. There is no secret of the inner life more necessary than to retain the inner presence of an ungrieved Spirit.

But let us also seek to be filled by Him. We have drunk of Him, as Jesus has placed the pitcher to our lips; but we should never rest till He has become in us a spring of water, leading up to eternal life. The Holy Spirit is in every believer; but He cannot be said to fill each. There is all the difference possible between a few drops at the bottom of a bucket and a brimming well; between a few stray flowers scattered sparsely through the glade, and the myriads that make it blue with hyacinths or yellow with primroses.

To be filled with the Spirit was the blessing of Pentecost; but it awaits us all. Indeed, we are here bidden to be Spirit-filled. It is a positive command. We have no option than to obey it. Mentioned in the same paragraph with the love of husband to wife, and the obedience of child to the parent, it is as obligatory as either. Let no reader of these lines rest without seeking and receiving by faith this blessed gift, which God is able to make abound towards us. Receive it without emotion by faith: reckon it is yours: and act as if you felt it (**Ed Comment**: Note that the present tense command indicates that filling is not a one time occurrence but in fact is our daily, moment by moment need! A Christian is to live a supernatural life before a natural and spiritually dead world, and the only hope ["prayer"] we have of living such an "other worldly" life is by continually yielding to the control of the Holy Spirit. And as Meyer says, we do so as an act of faith, independent of "feelings" or "manifestations", and this faith shows itself to be effective by its obedience to the Spirit's urgings and enablings). ([Devotional Commentary of Ephesians, by F. B. Meyer](#))

R Kent Hughes...

Do we have the frown or smile of the Holy Spirit upon us? To gain His smile, I would like to suggest a spiritual exercise which can be done alone, but may be enhanced in tandem. If you are married, ask your spouse to participate. If you are single, invite a Christian friend to go through this exercise with you. Take each of the four categories in succession — truth (Ep 4:25), anger (Ep 4:26, 27), theft (Ep 4:28), and speech (Ep 4:29) — and reflect out loud to your partner as to whether this area of your life has the smile or frown of the Holy Spirit. If you fall short, confess your sins to God and each other, and invite your partner to pray for you. Be assured that the Holy Spirit will attend your conversation with great joy. ([Ephesians The Mystery of the Body Preview](#))

S Lewis Johnson has this comment on grieving the Holy Spirit...

Now there's some other things that we can say about this. He says, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit." We know from the standpoint of New Testament teaching, that when we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit comes to indwell us permanently. Paul does not say, "Grieve not away the Holy Spirit," as if it's possible for us, having believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, to live in such a way that the Holy Spirit departs from us. No, it is simply, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God." We cannot grieve him away. He's always there. In fact, he's with us wherever we are at all times. And all of the things that we utter are uttered in the presence of the Holy

Spirit.

There's another thing about this word. Grieve is a love word. You don't grieve people who don't love you. Sometimes people use words like that. But, to truly grieve a person, what is necessary is that the other person must have high regard for you. So that grieve is a word of love. That is the word that is used here: grieve not the Holy Spirit of God. He is grieved, because we are the objects of the love of the triune God. The God who elected. The God who redeemed us. The triune God who brought us to the knowledge of this redemption and regenerated us, came to dwell in us through the Spirit. So when we say things that are displeasing to the Lord, not edifying, things that are said about others, we grieve the Holy Spirit. A love word. If you've ever had a relationship to a father or a mother in which you displeased them, you know exactly what Paul is talking about. My father was grieved, my mother would be grieved with me, because they loved me. So, this is a wonderful little statement, really, "grieve not the Holy Spirit of God." We cannot grieve him away. And he loves us. ([Pdf](#))

BY WHOM YOU WERE SEALED FOR THE DAY OF REDEMPTION : en o esphragisethete (2PAPI) eis hemeran apolutroseos
(Eph 1:13) (Eph 1:14; Hosea 13:14; Luke 21:28; Romans 8:11,23; 1Corinthians 1:30; 15:54)

Sealed ([4972](#)) (**sphragizo** [**word study**] from **sphragis** = seal, engraved object used to make a mark - denoting ownership, approval, or closure of something normally done by pressing into heated wax usually attached to a document or letter) means to set a seal upon, mark with a seal. In the secular Greek use of sphragizo, the sealing signified at least four results --

(1) Finished Transaction

(2) A Mark of Ownership -- Buyers of timber in the forests of Asia Minor would select trees which would be felled, stamped them with the buyer's seal, and floated them downstream. At the port in Ephesus, the markings would identify the logs. God stamps us with His seal, indicating ownership.

(3) A Bond of Security -- Both Daniel's lions' den and Christ's tomb were sealed by royal decree. When we come to Christ, we are sealed with the Holy Spirit, implying security.

(4) An Imprint of Authenticity or of Identity -- In ancient times, everyone's unique seal, when pressed into wax, imprinted his identity.

Sphragizo - 15x in 14v - Mt 27:66; John 3:33; 6:27; Rom 15:28; 2 Cor 1:22; Eph 1:13; 4:30; Rev 7:3ff, 8; 10:4; 20:3; 22:10. NAS = put...seal on(1), seal(2), sealed(9), set a seal on(1), set...seal to(2).

Charles Wesley wrote in "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"...

Adam's likeness now efface

Stamp Thine image in its place.

God places the Holy Spirit in us permanently as His "signet" (*signet* = a seal used to stamp or authenticate documents)

Sealed is in the **aoist tense** which is a past completed action. The passive voice signifies that subject, believers, are acted upon by an outside force or power, God. The indicative mood is the mood of certainty which states a thing as being a fact -- the point is that every believer receives the Holy Spirit the moment he or she believes.

The good news then is that the "sealed work" (see **note** Ephesians 1:13) of the Spirit is final and cannot be "unsealed," even though we may "grieve" the Spirit! Amazing grace and mercy!

In antiquity people used seals to authenticate documents (Jer. 32:10), and archaeologists have discovered more than 1,200 seals from Old Testament times.

S Lewis Johnson has an interesting discussion of **sealing**...

This was particularly significant for the Ephesians, because in Ephesus, there was a great deal of trading going on in timber. And it was a kind of center for that. And individuals in the harbor of Ephesus in those days, which was different from the Ephesus of the present time, the harbor would be filled with logs which had been brought down from that inner part of Asia Minor. And when individuals came from the other cities, round about, or the villages, round about, to buy lumber, because there was a good bit of industry in that area, they would buy some of the logs that were floating in the harbor, and they would take a seal. And they would make their particular mark on each of the logs that belonged to them which they bought. And later on, when the time came for them to take possession of these things, someone would come back with the seal, and then the particular logs that belonged to him would be identified, and then taken to the particular place

where they were to be used.

Well, it's something like that with us. Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God by whom you were sealed unto the day of redemption. So, the Holy Spirit has been implanted within us as a person who dwells within us permanently, and that is the sign, that's the seal of our redemption. And the time is coming when the Lord Jesus shall come for our redemption, and he shall obtain his property, and each of us shall have the seal, the seal of the Holy Spirit. So, don't grieve the Holy Spirit by whom you were sealed unto the day of redemption. I think that that expression, the day of redemption, in the light of the Apostle's statements elsewhere, refers to the time when we receive our glorified bodies. ([Pdf](#))

Day (2250) (hemera) can describe a literal day, but in this context more likely is used figuratively to describe the period of time appointed for the final redemption.

Paul emphasizes the great hope (absolute certainty of future good) of this future and final aspect of our **redemption**...

And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. (Ro 8:23-note)

Comment: This verse describes "future tense salvation" (see Three Tenses of Salvation) which Peter wrote was "ready to be revealed in the last time" {1Pe 1:5-note, 1Pe 1:13-note, Ro 8:30-note} when we are finally freed even from the presence of **Sin**. Because believers are already new creatures possessing the divine nature, their souls are fit for heaven and eternal glory. They love God, hate sin, and have holy longings for obedience to the Word. But while on earth they are kept in bondage by their mortal bodies, which are still corrupted by **Sin** and the **flesh** both of which are still present in our decaying bodies.

Paul alludes to this day in his letter to the Philippians...

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly (expectantly) wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ Who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory (**At which time our "redemption" will be complete**), by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself. (Php 3:20, 21-note)

Redemption (629) (apolutrosis [word study]) from **apo** = marker of dissociation or separation + **lutroo** = to redeem in turn from **lúo** = loosen what is bound, loose any person tied or fastened) describes the payment of a price to ransom (**lutron** = money for a ransom = ransom or price paid for a slave who is then set free by the one who bought him), to **release** (of someone from the power of someone else), to **buy back** or to **deliver** one from a situation from in which one is powerless to liberate themselves from or for which the penalty was so costly that they could never hope to pay the ransom price. In other words, the idea of **redemption** is deliverance or release by payment of a ransom.

Related Resources: Word Studies on other words related to **redemption**...

Redeem (1805) exagorazo

Redeem (3084) lutroo

Redemption (629) How to do Greek Word Study (See also)

Redemption (3085) lutrosis

Barclay writes that **apolutrosis** conveys

In every case the conception (of) the delivering of a man from a situation from which he was powerless to liberate himself or from a penalty which he himself could never have paid." He goes on to relate that the Roman philosopher Seneca who tutored and advised Nero was "full of this kind of feeling of helpless frustration. Men, he said, were overwhelmingly conscious of their inefficiency in necessary things. He said of himself that he was a homo non tolerabilis, a man not to be tolerated. Men, he said with a kind of despair, love their vices and hate them at the same time. What men need, he cried, is a hand let down to lift them up. The highest thinkers in the pagan world knew that they were in the grip of something from which they were helpless to deliver themselves. They needed liberation. It was just that liberation which Jesus Christ brought. It is still true that he can liberate men from helpless slavery to the things which attract and disgust them at one and the same time." ([Barclay, W: The Daily Study Bible Series, Rev. ed. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press](#))

Apolutrosis was used was used in secular Greek as a technical term for money paid to buy back and set free prisoners of war or to **emancipate** (= to liberate a person from subjection or domination, to free from restraint, control, or the power of another)**slaves**

from their masters.

Apolutrosis would have been a very meaningful term to the first century reader as there were by some accounts up to 60 million slaves in the Roman Empire! Many of these slaves became Christians and fellowshipped in the local assemblies. A slave could purchase his own freedom, if he could collect sufficient funds or his master could sell him to someone who would pay the price and set him free. Redemption was a precious thing in Paul's day.

Jesus answering the unbelieving Jews who claimed never to have been enslaved to anyone (which of course was incorrect historically)

"answered them" declaring "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the **slave of sin**." (Jn 8:34)

Believers have been ransomed, bought out of slavery to **Sin** (Ro 6:16), even as was foreshadowed in the OT by the redemption of a bondservant by the kinsman-redeemer (Lev 25:49). (See **Kinsman-Redeemer = Goel; Goel = Kinsman Redeemer = in Ruth**)

Before redemption we were held captive by Satan to do his will (1Jn 5:19, Ep 2:2) and were enslaved to our old sin nature inherited from Adam (1Co 15:22, Ro 5:12). As noted above a Roman or Grecian slave could be freed with the payment of money, but **no** amount of **money** can set an enslaved sinner free. We owed a debt we could never pay, while Christ paid a debt He did not owe.

The **redemption** of a sinner is only possible by payment of the **ransom** price, the blood of Christ. Peter writes that believers

were not **redeemed (lutroo)** with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile (a lifestyle that is without purpose, unfruitful, and useless) way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ." (1Pe 1:18, 19-note, cf 1Cor 6:20-note; Rev 5:9-note)

Jesus explained to His disciples that

even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life **aransom** (lutron = the ransom price) for many. (Mk 10:45, cp cf Mt 20:28)

I Gave My Life for Thee

[Play Hymn](#)

Frances Ridley Havergal
(Her first hymn!)

I gave My life for thee,
My precious blood I shed;
That thou might **ransomed** be,
And quickened from the dead.
I gave, I gave, My life for thee,
What hast thou given for Me?

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Sensitivity to the prompting of the Holy Spirit, even in little things that seem harmless, marks the mature Christian. While preaching in a small church in Florida, a young evangelist noticed that his gold wristwatch sparkled in the light. He wrote,

"I saw people looking at it. The Lord said to me, 'Take it off. It's distracting.' I said, 'Lord, I can surely wear a wristwatch that my daddy gave me.' But it was sensitivity that God was teaching me—to be sensitive to the little things. I took it off and . . . never wore it in the pulpit again."

It's not always easy to know when God is speaking, because inner urgings may arise from fear, selfish desire, or Satan. Yet if we learn biblical principles through reading the Word, and if we daily yield ourselves to the Holy Spirit, we will gradually come to recognize His gentle prompting. The writer of Hebrews said that mature believers have had their senses "exercised to discern both good and evil" (Heb 5:14-note). Whatever exalts Christ over self comes from God, and we can obey with confidence. But whatever is unkind, unloving, and self-seeking grieves the Spirit. When we do something like this, we must confess our disobedience to God at once to restore our fellowship with Him.

"Lord, make me sensitive" is a prayer that should always be on our hearts. —D. J. DeHaan. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

**When we yield ourselves to the Spirit's control,
we do not lose our self-control.**

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THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

In Morning and Evening **Spurgeon** wrote...

All that the believer has must come from Christ, but it comes solely through the channel of the Spirit of grace (cp 2Ti 2:1-note). **Moreover, as all blessings thus flow to you through the Holy Spirit, so also no good thing can come out of you in holy thought, devout worship, or gracious act, apart from the sanctifying operation of the same Spirit.** Even if the good seed be sown in you, yet it lies dormant except he worketh in you to will and to do of his own good pleasure. Do you desire to speak for Jesus—how can you unless the Holy Ghost touch your tongue? Do you desire to pray? Alas! what dull work it is unless the Spirit maketh intercession for you! Do you desire to subdue sin? Would you be holy? Would you imitate your Master? Do you desire to rise to superlative heights of spirituality? Are you wanting to be made like the angels of God, full of zeal and ardour for the Master's cause? You cannot without the Spirit—"Without me ye can do nothing." (Jn 15:5) O branch of the Vine, thou canst have no fruit without the Sap! O child of God, thou hast no life within thee apart from the life which God gives thee through His Spirit! (Jn 3:6, 6:63, 2Co 3:6, Ro 8:2-note, Ro 8:6-note) Then let us not grieve Him or provoke Him to anger by our sin (Ps 106:33-note). Let us not quench Him in one of His faintest motions in our soul (1Th 5:19-note); let us foster every suggestion, and be ready to obey every prompting (cp 1Ki 19:12KJV). If the Holy Spirit be indeed so mighty, let us attempt nothing without Him; let us begin no project, and carry on no enterprise, and conclude no transaction, without imploring His blessing. Let us do Him the due homage of feeling our entire weakness apart from Him, and then depending alone upon Him, having this for our prayer, **"Open Thou my heart and my whole being to Thine incoming, and uphold me with Thy free Spirit when I shall have received that Spirit in my inward parts."** (Ps 51:12KJV)

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G Campbell Morgan adds that...

Two ideas are brought prominently before the mind in this injunction, and their interrelationship is very suggestive. The first is that of the character of the Spirit, in that Paul here, with evident intention, employed the full and solemn description, "the Holy Spirit of God," every word of which is full of meaning, while laying the supreme emphasis upon the holiness of the Spirit. The other is that of the deep love-nature of the Spirit, in that Paul speaks of Him as being capable of sorrow, for the simple meaning of the injunction is, "Cause not sorrow to the Holy Spirit of God." The interrelation of the ideas reveals to us the effect which sin produces on the Spirit of God. It causes sorrow. Perhaps no Apostolic injunction, if its force be rightly apprehended, constitutes a more prevailing incentive to a walk which is in holiness and truth. Thus is created that new fear which is of the very essence of safety. The old slavish fear of God, which was fear of His anger, and of suffering which such anger might bring to us, is completely done away by the manifestation of His love in Christ but now a new fear takes possession of us; and that is a fear lest anything we do or say should cause sorrow to Him. The old fear produces no high spiritual or moral results. This new fear keeps the soul in living touch with the loving Lord and so ensures its growth in strength and purity and beauty. (Morgan, G. Campbell. Life Applications).