

WHAT "CORRUPT COMMUNICATION" SIGNIFIES

"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth; but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." – Eph. 4:29.

CORRUPT communication is the spreading of evil report or message instead of good. Our text might be understood to mean a corrupting communication according to the course of ordinary conversation. Our minds might get us into all kinds of difficulty with ourselves and with others, if we did not keep a rein upon them and hold them within certain bounds; but our tongues might do even more injury than our minds. What we may think injures only ourselves; but if our tongues come into the matter, not only are our own minds defiled, but there is contagion, there is rancor; for the tongue spreads the matter all around. And whether the matter be true or false, the influence is corrupting, degrading, tending, perhaps, at times even toward immorality.

It would appear that not only amongst the worldly, but amongst the Lord's people there is a tendency to relate little incidents or make little remarks which, while not necessarily sinful, tend to cause sprouts of evil to develop. It is along this line that the Apostle says we should let no corrupt communication proceed out of our mouth. If, by any mischance, any corrupting information has come to our attention, we should see to it that it goes no further. We have sometimes wondered whether it is the quality of the natural mind to use the tongue to the disadvantage of others, or whether evil spirits have something to do with it.

Let us, as the Apostle enjoins, drop evil communications; shun them, and hold fast only to that which is edifying – the word "edifying" having in it the thought of an edifice, a building, the up-building of each other.

BROAD SCOPE FOR CONVERSATION ON RICHES OF GOD'S GRACE

But some, even of those who profess to love the Lord and to be trying to walk in his footsteps, will say, "I never speak anything but the truth; and I mean no harm to anybody; but I must have something to talk about [R4770 : page 63] when my neighbors come in, and many of them would think me tiresome if I should try to interest them in religious matters." But it is evil speaking, slander all the same, and the scandal-monger, however refined his methods or words, well knows that so far from the scandal ministering grace to the hearer, it ministers evil; that the hearer, impelled by the forces of his fallen human nature, goes out to tell the scandal to others. The fallen nature feasts and revels in just such things, deluding many that they are thus moralizing, preaching against sin, and that in thus discussing and impliedly denouncing the transgressions of another, they are mentioning matters abhorrent to themselves. Alas! their reasoning is seriously defective when the Lord's counsels in righteousness are ignored.

There is surely broad scope for conversation among Christian people on the subject of the riches of God's grace in Christ Jesus our Lord, expressed in the exceeding great and precious promises of the Divine Word. In these things we have indeed that which not only ministers grace to the hearer, but that which adds also to the grace of the speaker. It showers blessing on every hand so far as the New Creature is concerned, and assists in deadening the old nature with its evil desires, tastes and appetites.

This, evidently, is what the Apostle had in mind when he said that the Lord's people should "show forth the praises of him who called us out of darkness, into his marvelous light." And a heart filled with the spirit of love, the spirit of God, the spirit of the Truth, and overflowing with the same will be sure to bestow it upon others; for, "Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh"; "Blessed are the pure in heart." – I Peter 2:9; Matt. 12:34; 5:8.

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