

Neither give place to the devil

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Date: 22 May 2011

[0:00] Jesus. Ephesians 4 from verse 22 to verse 32.

Maybe straddle the fence.

Cover both sides of it, you know. Be a worldly Christian. Billy Sunday used to say about so-called worldly Christians, you might as well talk about a heavenly devil.

It's just such an untruth, isn't it? Even so, if you are saved, Christian, are you giving place to the devil?

Giving place to the devil. That's what we're talking about. Neither give place to the devil. We see that in verse 27. The context here, we're talking Ephesians 4, 22 to 32.

[1:11] Now, just last week, Julie and I had a romantic day out together. I just thought I'd take her out for the day and spoil her rotten. And, you know, I'd spent lots of money on her.

We went to the zoo. We went to the zoo. And we had a lovely time. And you're looking at all the animals. And they let us out as well, which is good. And when we went to the zoo, I was busy taking lots of little snapshots of all the different animals.

And I took some of Julie, too. And I took some of Julie, too. She's my favourite animal. And when we were taking some shots of these different animals. And we went down to the lion cage. The lion cage.

And I had the camera there. And I was stretching out towards this lioness. And I'm trying to get a good close-up. You know, I'm putting my hands over the barrow fence. But the lioness was still behind the fence.

But then, I was just getting strategically positioned. And, roar! You know, she let out this big roar at me.

[2:14] And it was really, roar! I should have had a microphone instead of a camera just to capture the moment. Because it was pretty scary having this lioness roar at me. And then there was the big fellow lion there as well.

And he was pretty threatening. I was just glad there was a fence between me and the lion and the lioness. But, you know, the Bible says that the devil roams around like a roaring lion.

He prowls around. He's seeking whom he may devour. And we have got a real enemy as Christians. We have got an enemy that we're going to combat. And he's out there to trick us.

And we need to be careful not to give place to the devil. Not to give him a foothold. Not to give him an inch. Not to let him have a scarrick in our lives.

And our text tells us of the newness of life in Christ. We read here in the context here of Ephesians 4, 22. It tells of the old man and the new man. It tells of a putting off and a putting on.

[3:14] It says of a putting away and of a being. And central to this theme in this context here is neither give place to the devil. What are some of the ways that we, as God's people, may give place to the devil?

I put it to you. There's three things you could see here. In effect, in this context here, neither give place to the devil. And one of the ways we can give place to the devil is with our mind.

It's with our mind. With our thoughts. With our understanding. In verse 18, it talks about having the understanding darkened. Being alienated from the life of God. That's of the unbeliever.

But even for we as Christians, the old man is still something we've got to fight, isn't it? I know for me, the old Andrew Craig is just as ugly as he ever was. And I've got to fight him every day.

You know, his flesh is there, his self is there, his sinful nature is there. And the Bible says that our mind can be corrupt according to the deceitful lust.

[4:17] There's some people seeing doctors lately, have you had your grey cells checked lately? The grey matter. You know, we tend to lose it as we

get older too, I know. I can testify of that.

And that's not to say the older people have got less. Not casting aspersions on the older saints here today. But we know that the grey cells are under attack.

The brain, the mind. And our mind can be corrupted according to the deceitful lust. Friends, our mind is a fertile ground. But the devil wants to sow his dastardly seeds.

His thoughts. He wants to sow those thoughts into our mind. But rather, God wants the new man to be renewed in the spirit of his mind.

Verse 23. To be created in righteousness and true holiness. To be born again, to be made new. Our mind can be renewed. We can learn of Christ and our understanding, our peace of mind, our attitude can change when we become that new man in Christ.

[5:19] But friends, neither give place to the devil. What's your mind? What's your mind? Watch that. You don't give place to the devil in your thought life. In the life of your thinking.

Of your understanding. Neither give place to the devil. But rather, verse 23. Be renewed in the spirit of your mind.

Another area we can give place to the devil, we can see, is our mouth. Another place we can give place to the devil is what we say.

And how we say. We are told to speak the truth. To speak the truth. In verse 25. We read there. Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour, for we are members one of another.

Why should we speak truth? Because we are members one of another. It's not the sense of considering our brother, our sister. How can I bear blessing to others with what I say, with my speech, with my speaking, with my voice.

[6:29] People matter. People matter. And we should consider others when we think about, before we speak, think about what others will say, will understand.

When you lie, you give place to the devil. Verse 25 says, putting away lying, speak truth. Don't lie. Verse 26, we're urged, be ye angry and sin not. Let not the sun go down upon your wrath. In other words, don't blow your stack and say things or do things that you're going to be ashamed of, that you're going to regret.

Neither give place to the devil with your mouth. You've heard the saying, some people have got a tendency to put their foot in it. I've had that on occasion. We don't want to give the devil place with our mouth.

Because the devil would love to use our mouth to bring cursing, to do damage, to do the devil's work. Who's the devil?

[7:28] The accuser of the brethren. Watch what we say. Consider what we say before we say it. Verse 29. Don't curse and lose it. Verse 29, it says, let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but rather that which is good.

To the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. It talks about the mind corrupt according to the deceitful lust.

The mind can be corrupt. The mouth, we say, let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth. Corrupt communication. Consider, are the words you use corrupt?

Are they swear words? Are they curse words? Are they words that condemn, that hurt, that harm, that do damage? That word corrupt. We've got to watch it, don't we, brothers and sisters? Watch the words before they come out.

Is that word that I'm thinking of saying corrupt before I say it? And instead, say rather something good. Something that is edifying. Something that's going to minister life to people.

[8:37] Something that's going to build up your brother or sister in Christ. Something that is going to be ministering. Serving. The new man's mouth is going to bless. It's going to give blessing.

It's going to give that which is good. It's going to give that which is grace. It's going to give that which is the gospel. As we know, as Peter tells us, But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts.

And be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear. Be ready to give the gospel with your mouth.

Use your mouth for God's glory. We've heard the saying, Go wash your mouth out. Go wash your mouth out. Verse 31 says there's some things we should wash out of our mouth.

There's some things that we should leave off saying. Verse 31, Friends, watch what you say.

[9:49] Neither give place to the devil. We can give place to the devil with our mouth. Wouldn't it be rather a blessing that your mouth would be used to minister the gospel? That would be used to minister grace?

That would be used to minister God's good things. Instead of a tendency to clamor, it means outbursts. So evil speaking. The devil does enough of that.

Neither give place to the devil. With your mind, instead renew your mind. With your mouth, instead, that which is good to the use of edifying. Give place with your mind.

Avoid it. Give place with your mouth. Avoid it. Now, as all well-meaning preachers try to do, I want to give you a third M. So make it memorable. And considering this text talks about giving place to the devil, we could think of giving place with our money.

Giving place with our motives. But I think especially you could take, from this context here, giving place with your ministry. Are you giving place to the devil with your ministry?

[10:54] In other words, your way of serving. In your place of serving. In your giftings. In your callings. Verse 24 it says, And that you put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

That which ought to be driving the new man is a willingness to serve. A willingness to do that which is righteous. To do that which is holiness. To do that which will minister to others.

Verse 25 it tells us of our relationships. Verse 25 it tells us of speaking truth with his neighbour. The Christian life isn't, as we talked about earlier, me, me, me, I, I, I.

But ministering to others. It's about others. It's having a concern for your neighbour. So you want to speak truth to your neighbour. What's the best truth you can give your neighbour? The Gospel. You want to speak truth to your neighbour.

And as members of one another, when you come to church, there's opportunity to edify.

Opportunity to bless your brother. To bless your sister. We're members one of another. Neither give place to the devil.

[12:00] Are you giving place to the devil with your ministry? It could be, now, it doesn't apply to anyone here today, but when you miss church, you miss the opportunity to minister. It's giving place to the devil, isn't it?

It's giving place to the devil when you can't edify your brother, your sister. It's giving place to the devil when you can't edify and minister grace to others.

Because you're not here. How can you minister effectively? It's giving place to the devil when you miss that opportunity to minister. It could be there's opportunities you have to minister that you haven't even thought of yet.

There's opportunities to minister in the newsletter today. There's opportunities to minister. Someone ministered this morning, painting the graffiti that was on the wall. That was an opportunity to minister.

We can give place to the devil. We can say, oh, that's beneath me. That's something that others can do. That's something that I can choose to neglect.

[12:59] Don't give place to the devil with your ministry. Every one of you here has a ministry. There's different people been ministering right through this service. In music, in ministry, in message, in testimony, in song.

How can you find a place to minister and be in that place of ministry? How can you be used of God to minister to the people that are around about you?

And who are the foremost people for you to minister to? Your own family. Fathers. What a place of ministry you have.

What a place of ministry for all the fathers here today. Your children. You know, I look back at my children and now my grandchildren, and I think, wow, I've made some impact there, but there's more that I could have done in reflection.

More that I could have done. As parents, we should be motivated to minister to our children with a love for them as married couples. The best friend that you marry.

[14:11] The love of your life. Your spouse. We should be motivated to minister to them. To serve them. To love them. To serve them. To be a servant to them.

As Christians, we care about ministry. We care about relationships with other people. Especially those that matter. with our family, our spouse, our fellow saints.

We want to be a blessing. We want to be a blessing. It says in verse 28, talks of the context of giving, of sharing, of considering others. Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that need it.

The reason why we work is so we've got something to give. The reason why we labor is so we have something that is good. It's a gift to bless others. It's beyond our own needs.

Ministry is about serving. It's about working what is good to the benefit of others. We hear how we want to minister that which is good. The grace.

[15:20] Minister grace. Minister that which is good with our mouth. We want to minister that which is good in our serving. In our serving God and our serving for others.

It's that motivation that drives us. Identifying that it may minister grace to the hearers. Is what we minister grace? I know sometimes we can minister law.

Can't we? We want to minister grace. And the one that needs the most grace is the one that's looking at us in the mirror every day. We want to minister grace unto the hearers.

You know, God's helping me to show more grace, to exercise more grace, but I need a whole lot more grace. And verse 30 it says, not only ministering grace but grieving not the Holy Spirit of God whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption.

Now we've heard about praying. We've heard about reading your Bible. I need to do a whole lot more of that. People are talking about fasting. There's different ways you can minister unto God. You can minister unto the saints.

[16:24] But most of all, grieve not. Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God. Do we grieve the Holy Spirit of God by a neglect of ministry, by a neglect of prayer, by a neglect of His Word, by a neglect of sharing, of considering one another?

Is the Holy Spirit grieved by our unfaithfulness? Is the Holy Spirit grieved when we ignore His promptings? Is the Holy Spirit grieved when we ignore His calling?

When we neglect His giftings that He's given to us? Is the Holy Spirit of God grieved at our lukewarmness? Is the Holy Spirit of God grieved with our lack of zeal?

Is the Holy Spirit of God grieved with our lack of fervour for the things that count? Are those gifts that He's given to you sitting dusty on the shelf, unused, neglected?

Seek to be used of God. There's opportunity with that opportunity this morning. Unexpected opportunity to minister when someone wasn't here that was rostered. If you want to be involved in the church, engaged in the church, put up your hand and say, send me.

[17:36] Speak to me. We're getting a new roster ready. We'd love new people on the roster. But if you're going to put yourself on the roster, be here. Be here. Don't let the 10 down. Be here.

We don't want to grieve the Holy Spirit of God. How can we grieve the Holy Spirit of God? By our actions and by our inactions. It's serious to grieve the Holy Spirit of God.

Thank God ministry is possible because of His grace. We can't do anything except He enables us. If we do it of our own self, we'll fall sadly short.

Friends, just to consider further, be kind one to another. Tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, have forgiven you.

It says it all, doesn't it? It's about one another. One another. Are we ministering grace? Are we grieving the Holy Spirit or are we giving grace?

[18:39] Is there that new man in you who's created unto righteousness and true holiness? Is there that willingness in you to give, to minister grace to others, to edify, to build up people?

Is your heart attuned to the Holy Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit of God? Or do we grieve Him? Do we desire to obey the Holy Scriptures and minister in the real world with the real people that He's given to us?

The real people in your life is your children, your grandchildren, it's your family, it's your friends, it's your fellow saints. It's God's people that you can be a blessing to.

Neither give place to the devil. Neither give place to the devil. Consider your mind. Is it corrupt according to deceitful lusts? Is your mind getting besieged and bombarded such that you're giving way to the devil?

But you're giving an inch, you may be giving a mile. Consider the mind. Use it to think godly thoughts. bathed in the washing of the Word.

[19:48] Let it be washed, let it be renewed. We're constantly barred by the world's messages, by the devil's messages. He wants your mind to be filled with all sorts of rubbish.

Instead, be renewed in the spirit of your mind. Consider your mouth. Are you using it for God's glory? Our curse words is swearing and angry and hateful words coming out of your mouth?

Or are they words that will bless? Are they words that will lift? Are the words that you speak going to minister grace? And consider your ministry. Are you a giver? Are you giving grace?

Are you ministering grace? Or are you grieving the Holy Spirit? Is He using you? Friends, be ye kind one to one another. Tender hearts are forgiving one another even as Christ even as God for Christ's sake have forgiven you.

a dream. Thank you.