

An Unexpected, Obligatory Privilege

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[0 : 00] The following message is given by Walt Alexander, lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens, Tennessee.! For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at TrinityGraceAthens.com.

! Ephesians chapter 4, beginning in verse 29. Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion that it may give grace to those who hear.

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

This is the word of the Lord. Thank you, God. Well, there are at least two things I know about you. The first is, you talk.

Man, do you talk. Now, some of you talk more than others. Some of you are unable to stop talking, seemingly. Some of you like to talk.

[1 : 12] Some of you, not so much. Didn't take me long after getting married to realize that my wife has a very different understanding of talking than I do in frequency, length, and depth.

It seemed to her that I could not talk enough when I was exhausted from talking. But I'm pretty sure it's not just me. One study referred to women as lean, mean, communicating machines.

Speaking over double the number of words as men each day. And when men get home from the office each day, they've spent all their 7,000 words. But the woman is just getting started.

But whether you're male or female, whether you like to talk or not so much, you talk every day, nearly all day long. Unlike Narnia, no other creature in the world talks.

But you talk because you're like God. You're created in His image and you're called to follow Him by moving out into the world, to build relationships, by talking, to form trust and tell others about the grace of God in Jesus by talking.

[2 : 23] But there's another thing I know about you. You talk, but I also know that your talk gets you into a lot of trouble. Now some people's foot never seems to come out of their mouths.

But whether you talk too much or not enough, what you do say gets you into trouble. Maybe it's the mutterings of frustration at the slow driver in the left lane.

Maybe it's bad backtalk at your mother, just soft enough so that she cannot hear clearly. Maybe it's the slow leak of discontent and grumbling that fills the room when you walk into it, such that everyone hears what you're saying, even though there's not a sound.

Maybe you mainly talk without a sound to yourself, replaying conflicts in your head, repeating the wrongs of others in your heart, rehearsing the troubles that are facing you.

You assume that because your words are only to yourself, that they don't matter. But maybe you're loud. Maybe you yell and shout.

[3 : 33] Maybe you're infamous in the family for keeping a long record of wrongs, and then when provoked, blurting them out. James says, if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he's a perfect man.

None of us are perfect. We all stumble. Much of the trouble in our lives boils down to trouble with our talk. How many of us would like an audio recording of our words from the past week to be played for all to hear?

But the Lord hears. But the trouble our words bring about is not isolated to ourselves or our friends, close friends and family.

Our words bring down trouble on brothers and sisters in the local church. It's for this reason that the Apostle Paul turns to our words right here. Our words have tremendous effect on others in the local church.

Far too often our words tear apart and tear down the unity the Spirit of God has created. Far too often we bite and devour one another. Isn't that what Christians are known for in the community?

[4 : 38] For biting and devouring. For gossiping and slandering one another. But our words don't have to tear down and tear apart. They have tremendous potential for good.

The Apostle is trying to rivet us for a new vision for our words. Using our words to build up. He's teaching us how to use our words now that we've been raised to new life.

We're no longer the same. Our lives are no longer the same. Our words must no longer be the same. And the Lord wants to unveil for us an unexpected privilege for all our words.

All of our words must be conformed to this unexpected privilege. In a word where we're going to let all the words of your mouth give grace to all who hear.

Let all, every one of them, the words of your mouth give grace to all who hear. We're going to break this out. Three points. The first one is the power of our word.

[5 : 39] The power of our words. You know, as we've said the past couple weeks. And as you've noticed, after unfolding the wonderful works of God in Christ. In many long, jam-packed sentences.

These verses come at us fast and hard. They're direct. They're short. They're loaded with commands. The Apostle Paul is trying to unveil how we are to live now. Well, now he turns and says how we are to talk now.

Something drastic has taken place in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. And our union with him. And so there's new power that's meant to be deployed in our talking.

And he begins with this blunt, vivid prohibition. He says, verse 29, Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouth. Literally, it's all corrupting talk from your mouth.

Let it not come out! This prohibition alerts us to the reality that our words often corrupt.

[6 : 40] This word for corrupt is just the same word for rotten or decaying food. Bad food. Bad fruit, like Jesus says. Same word. Comes from a bad heart.

Decaying. Food. Our words often corrupt. They tear down, tear apart. They destroy and divide. They have tremendous power to harm.

The proverb says, Death and life are in the power of the tongue. Nothing compares our words to sword thrust. Alerting us to this power.

Now words don't seem so powerful at first. They're shared so easily. They roll off our tongue. They're but a breath with a tonal quality to them.

They come out quickly. They're so small. So insignificant. So much so that they don't seem to matter at all. We used to say on the playground, Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.

[7 : 35] How could words hurt me? But they do hurt. The power of words is seen after they come out.

Anger words destroy. Complaining corrodes. Crudeness corrupts. Slander tears down. Sarcasm hardens us to the goodness of God.

Lies circulate. Falsehood. Flattery puffs up and leads to ruin. Who doesn't know the power of words to decay and defile? Defile. Consider gossip and slander.

Proverbs 18.8 says, The words of a whisperer are like delicious morsels. They go down into the inner parts of the body. Words of the whisperer are like delicious morsels.

They go down. Proverbs 26.22 repeats this same proverb exactly. It gives us a glimpse into the power of words. Few set out to gossip and slander.

[8 : 39] Few set out to tear down the lives and livelihoods of others, but we do. Sometimes we gossip and slander because we like to be in the know.

To be the one on the inside. The ones with the low down. Did you really know why Jim and Tammy split? We see ourselves as a bit of a community informer.

Informing us on all the movements of the community. And so we like to be in the know. As one of my friends says, Gossip in the local church begins with a prayer request.

Or maybe we know what we're doing. Maybe we're trying to pay one another back. Maybe we hate how we're passed on that promotion for someone less talented than us.

So we spread half-truths. Maybe we're frustrated by how things keep working out well for our friend. So we unload all of our criticisms upon them. Sometimes we even think, I have to let it out.

[9 : 40] I have to get this out of me. I feel it so deeply. No matter where they occur. Or how they occur. The words of gossip and slander begin with a whisper.

And they go all the way down into the heart. They're like delicious morsels. Turning down a bit of church hallway gossip is harder to do than turning away a bowl of moose tracks.

They're fun to devour. That's what he's saying. They go down so well. What begins in a whisper, This is the point settles down deep within the hearts of someone else. And they're never the same again.

That's how the words corrupt. Once someone was our friend. But after indulging the whispers, Things are never the same. Love is replaced with speculation. What's going on there?

Why did they do that? Trust is replaced with suspicion. Things tumble forward into all sorts of trouble. Broken trust. Broken homes. Broken marriages.

[10 : 45] Broken friendships. Broken churches. And all of it begins with a whisper. And if it wasn't clear before, It must be clear now that our words have tremendous power to corrupt.

To tear down. To tear apart. To defile and decay. To destroy and divide. This prohibition though, It's not meant to merely alert us to the reality that our words corrupt.

This prohibition is meant to produce a spiritual gagging effect. Rotten and decaying food has a smell. It has a stench. Decaying food begins with a faint smell, But gradually decomposes into a nauseating odor.

I remember one day in college, Purchasing a Thai chicken microwave dinner. I was alone in a house of 10 or 11 guys.

I was talking a little bit about that house a couple weeks ago. I warmed it up and was ready to feast all alone in my house. I took a bite or two and I thought, This is disgusting. What I was thinking is pad thai that I wanted.

- [12 : 07] I was walking to throw it away, But for some reason I decided to walk into one of my roommates room, And slide it all the way up underneath their bed in the corner.
- And I just went about the rest of my day. No one was there. Just me and the Lord and pad thai. Now, a couple weeks later, I don't know how long, honestly.
- The two guys in that room began talking about a smell in their room. Now, it's a house of 10 or 11 guys. Smells are something we were very familiar with.
- But that smell got worse and worse, And eventually became a nauseating, gagging-like odor. Several days later, I came in and these two roommates had pulled everything out of their room.
- All their bedding, All their clothes, And were holding that pad thai, Thai kitchen, Little dish. And, you know, We're all, It's just molded over and reeking at that point.
- [13 : 19] We're like, Ah! And they're walking around the house talking about who, Who, you know, Who did this? Who did that? I said, Oh yeah, I put that in there. Totally forgot.
- Well, Corrupt speech is like that. A moldy, Corroded, Nauseating, Thing.
- The idea is that in the Christian life, We're obviously born again. Our minds understand the truth of Calvary. Our hearts have been born again. But our emotions are supposed to have an emotional effect to corrupt speech.
- Such as we, Just a gagging type response to corrupt speech. What was once preciously, Deliciously devoured, Must be spat out.
- How could we chew on corrupt words any longer? That's what's going on here. He's trying to get this through our minds, So much so, That we resolve to never let our words corrupt again.
- [14 : 22] All that corrupting talk in your mouth, Don't let it come out! There's to be no corrupt words, Spoken of any kind, In any form, At any time, By anyone, In the church of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- But I must add, Our words are powerful to corrupt, Because they reveal a corruption within. When you go to the doctor, They often pull out that wooden tongue depressor, And tell you to stick out your tongue, And say, Ah!
- My older brother and I were in there, Getting tested for strep one time, And he just yanked it out of the nurse's hand, When she tried to do it to me. Don't hurt my brother! Apparently, Doctors can tell a lot about your health by your mouth.
- Biblically, You can tell a lot about your health, Your spiritual health by your mouth. Jesus said, Out of the abundance of the heart, The mouth speaks.
- The Lord is pulling up a doctor's chair this morning, And saying, What is your mouth telling us about your heart? Open your mouth.
- [15 : 37] Let's talk about your words a little bit. Let's talk about what's coming off. You know, So often, We think our deepest problem is that we talk too much, Or too little, Or too quickly.
- But the deepest problem is that much of our talk flows from a heart that demands its own way, And we'll do anything to get it. And always shifting, And always spinning, Always turning things, And torting to its own design.
- The real war with our words, The real battle is a war within our hearts. Why do you get angry with the children? Why are you so quiet when others are around?
- Is it really your personality? Why do you nag? Why do you grumble and complain? Why do you find it hard to be grateful? Why do you find it hard to stop whispering about others?
- Why do you stop? Why do you find it hard to stop talking about other people? These verses are calling us, And just as Scripture calls us, To begin with ourselves. So often we start talking about talk and corruption.

[16 : 36] We start pointing about everybody in the room. But we must begin with ourselves. R.C. Chapman said, To reform the church of God, We must always begin with self-reform. Schisms, That's just a famous word used to refer to divisions in the church over the years.

Schisms and divisions will increase so long as we begin with reforming others. Who's on your reformation list? I hope it's you.

I want it to be me. Wisdom is only with the lowly. Begin with self-reform. What are your words saying? What are they revealing?

Secondly, The power of our words. Secondly, The potential of our word. Our words have tremendous power, But they also have tremendous potential.

While our words are powerful to corrupt, They have tremendous potential for good. While we're commanded to lay down corrupt words, We're commanded to take up other words That are good and give grace.

[17 : 40] Look down at the rest of verse 29. Verse 29, He says, But only such as is good for building up, As fits the occasion, That it may give grace to those who hear.

But only as is good for building up. That word good is the same word used in 28 When it was referring to honest work. So the idea is let the thief no longer steal. Let him do honest work.

Make a good wage. And have something to share. So in the same way that we reject Covetousness, selfishness, laziness in our work. And instead work to share with others.

Now we're to reject complaining, Crudeness and criticism in our speech. And instead talk to serve others. To build up others. You must only speak to build up others.

Let all corrupting talk Not come out of your mouth. But only what is good for building up. Build up. Build up. That's that word from verse 12 and 16 When he's talking about the purpose of God.

[18 : 42] Equipping the saints for ministry. Building up the body of Christ. So that each part is built up. That's what God is doing. Outside of the Bible this word is used In construction. Constructing homes and buildings.

It's a contractor's word. And I love this image. God has began a good work in His people. He promises to bring it to completion. And now He wants to usher your words into the work.

Think about that. God who spoke light into darkness And created all things like that. Who needs no help in any way. Yet He wants your words to be in the game For building up others Into the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Sometimes we think about the way we talk As just who we are. Well my family we yelled at each other. So that's just who we are. Well no. We can't stop there.

You know we were quiet. You know kind of passive aggressive. Sweep everything under the rug. And you know keep a list. Sweep it but not really sweep it. You know whatever it is. That's not the way it is. Sometimes we think that the way we talk is our right.

[19 : 46] We're allowed to say whatever we want to say. We're allowed to say what we feel. But as Christians we surrender all those rights. We don't have rights in our speech.

We don't have rights as Christians honestly. We have a responsibility to take up the cross and die. That's what we have. Your words are meant to be used to build up. Ray Ortlund says as Americans We do have the right of free speech.

In our political culture we have the right. If it's a right nobody can stop us To blurt out whatever we feel. But when we become Christians We enter a new culture Where we surrender that right.

We stop blurting out whatever we feel. That's to be the church. Stop blurting out whatever we feel. So instead God's purpose for our words Is His purpose for the church.

To encourage. To build it up. To strengthen it. To make it grow. So could there be a more staggering purpose For our words Than aligning with the purpose of God For His saints.

[20 : 51] God wants to put your words in the game. Your words have been too long Taken up and defiling Decaying, destroying and dividing.

Your words have been too long Enlisted in slander and suspicion And sarcasm, criticism, crudeness And complaining. Too often we've been like Charlie Brown In one comic strip Lucy said to Linus It's very strange It happens just by looking at you Linus says What happens?

Lucy says I feel a criticism coming on How true is that?

How true is that of us? What if people Instead of bracing For the next criticism When we walked around the corner Were bracing For the next encouragement?

What if they were bracing For how you were going to build them up? What if they were bracing For how we were going to help? Our words must be good For building up.

[22 : 08] Our words must fit the occasion. The idea is These things are not separate. Our words must be good For building up And be good for fit And fit the occasion. The idea is Our word must build up And in order to build up They must fit the occasion.

They must resonate right then. You know We've all been around Someone who thinks Their new diet Or new discipline Or new workout program Or new school Or new church Or new whatever Is the solution The panacea We've discovered And they go around Sounding off You know Check back in with people like that In six months They probably abandoned that New thing That was going to change their life Well These verses call us To something very different They call us to Kind of step off Our platform Step off our promotion Instead We're meant to study The challenges And concerns Of our brothers and sisters And what they're facing And seek to encourage them In just the way they need That's the task That's been given us Every person is not the same Every person Do not face the same challenges And Jesus is not One size fits all The word of God Is wonderfully sufficient

But it's sufficient For everyone In all these different situations And so A word in season Is a tremendous gift Proverbs 25 11 says A word fitly spoken Is like apples of gold In a setting of silver Apples communicate This deliciousness And so Apples On a serving platter Is delicious Well how much more so Apples of gold In a setting of silver It's meant to resonate That's why Proverbs says In a contrary way Beauty In a woman without discretion Is like a ring of gold In a pig's snout It doesn't fit But words Are meant to fit Is there anything More delightful When someone Speaks a word That fits the occasion So as we navigate Through our life together God's called us To a wonderful Opportunity

A privilege To be thinking What do they need now What do they need Do they need comfort Do they need forgiveness Do they need Encouragement Do they need help Right now Do they need laughter Laughter is a Tremendous gift In a fallen world But laughter Will be in heaven too Do they need warning Do they need warning Do they need warning Do they need warning Our words are To build up To fit the occasion They are to give grace They give grace Look at verse 7 Look up in your Bible It says Grace was given To each one According to the measure Of Christ's gift And so we talked about that The past couple weeks About how the Lord The sovereign head Of the church Has given grace He's given gifts Different gifts But all gifts

Of grace Now he says Verse 29 That our words Can give grace To all who hear The idea is The words Of giving grace The ministry Of giving grace Is not reserved For the pastors And preachers Or something like that It's a ministry Given to all One commentator says It is an obligatory Privilege Of all Christians As well So this goal To give grace With your speech Is an obligatory Privilege Of all Christians It's obligatory It's very clear It's a command But it is a wonderful Privilege To give grace To all who hear So how do we give grace How do we give grace You know we often think about grace As the unmerited favor of God And it is It is true It's the unmerited favor of God We're not under the law anymore We're under grace

[26 : 26] Because of the work of Jesus Christ There's favor with God That we have That cannot be overturned Because of his finished work But grace is also The active power of God At work in sinners The grace of God Titus 2 says Trains us to renounce ungodliness And worldly passion To live self-controlled Upright lives In this present day And so The grace of God Is active to work in us And so Grace is something we can see Not always perfectly But we can see Grace is something we see If we're biblically informed And discerning I love the way The way the book of Acts Talks about Barnabas Now Barnabas I love this Barnabas had a nickname Barnabas is not a name It's not the name His mother gave him It literally means Son of encouragement That's Bar means Son Son of encouragement Barnabas That's his nickname What would your nickname be?

Would it have anything to do With encouragement And building up? Well look what he says When he goes to Antioch When Barnabas came And saw the grace of God He saw the grace of God He was glad And he exhorted them all To remain faithful to the Lord With steadfast purpose There's so much going on here And I can't jump off this message Into that one I love the fact that his heart Has been retrained So that what makes him glad Is the grace of God But what did he see?

He saw something Human beings can't produce He saw many people In the pagan city of Antioch Who had believed the Lord And had turned to him Had turned from their pagan ways He saw evidence of divine power No one confesses Christ as Lord 1 Corinthians 12 3 Apart from the Spirit of God So he was confessing And seeing the grace of God At work And so if we're biblically informed And discerning Grace is all over the place To be identified Celebrated Commended And enjoyed You can see grace Every time a teenager Prefers someone else to himself Every single time Is grace You can see grace Every time someone With chronic pain Smiles and sings praise to God I'm thankful for my friends You can see grace Every time a child says I'm sorry You can see grace Every time a shy couple

Welcomes someone new over You can see grace Every time an individual Steps out of their fear To share their faith You can see grace Every time a believer Shares how God Has changed them You can see grace Every time someone Serves someone Other than themselves The idea is The mind and heart Of the flesh Are set on The flesh Constantly Without interruption So every time someone Seeks to serve someone else To help one another Help someone else It is a work Of divine power And it happens All the time And so the idea Is the most Glorious way In which we give grace Is when we draw attention To evidences of grace When we see grace In the lives Of one another There is so much grace In this room You should not be here What are you doing In the church On Sunday morning It is a work

Of grace Why would you Want to worship This king Who you can't see Why would you Want to serve I tell people All the time There is easier Ways to do church Than come to a church Plan And so you are here What are you doing Here It is grace It is the grace Of God In your life You can't Make this up You can't Produce this This is grace C.J. Mahaney Says Truly edifying Words Are words That reveal The character And the promises And the activity Of God They are words Rooted in Derived from Scripture Words that identify The active presence Of God And words that Communicate the Evidences of grace That you observe In others They are identifying The activity Of God God is not After a mutual Affirmation Society But after a People riveted On grace The reality Is Without

[31 : 02] These words We are far Too often The last ones To know How God Is at work In our life We live Most of the day Unaware Of what God Is doing We live Even more so We probably live Most of the time Discouraged And disillusioned Because we don't See what God Is doing We need Encouragement We need These words You need These words Just this week Last Sunday I received a picture From a little girl Drew me this picture To my pastor That's grace Received a long note In the mail A member of this church Unloading about The grace of God And the answers to prayer In her life I was so deeply encouraged Don't belittle This ministry I mean this is

Tremendous It's so helpful I want to urge us To take up The practice Of encouragement And you are encouraging You're so encouraging So encouraging To me Everybody that visits This church Says you're an encouraging Church But we need More encouragement No one has ever Reached a point In their life Where they've said Okay enough encouragement It's never happening It's not going to happen We need it So down with Complaining Gossip Sarcasm Slander Suspicion And judgment Let us strive To encourage One another In the Lord Murray Harris The great New Testament scholar Said encouragement Is one of the most Important ministries In the church Of the New Testament One of the most What is the most Important ministry To you Testing the spirits Prophecy Tongues What is it Encouragement Is what Murray Harris Says So study the character Of Christ Study the fruit Of the spirit Study the gifts Of the spirit And when you see Those things In self-focused Centers You're seeing Grace

Point it out It's not enough To just be encouraged And drive home Happy Tell somebody Tell them Say thank you So much For not serving Yourself And serving me There are relationships In your life That will be Completely transformed If you take up The practice Of encouragement I believe that With all my heart Take it up Thirdly The purpose Of our words The purpose Of our words Our words Are powerful To corrupt But they have Tremendous potential For good And potential To build up To give grace That's one of the purposes But verse 30 Underlines a deeper purpose

Look at verse 30 With me He says And do not grieve The Holy Spirit of God So another command Do not grieve The Holy Spirit of God By whom you are sealed For the day of redemption So what is this command Where does this command Come from A lot of the smart guys Argue about whether This command is a new command Or whether it's tied To the one before And I believe it's tied To the one before I believe it's tied To our words Because it begins With a conjunction And do not grieve The Holy Spirit of God But I also think It functions much Like the warning did About anger When it said Be angry Do not sin Do not let the sun Go down on your anger And give no opportunity For the devil So I think it's meant To function as a warning After the command To let no unwholesome talk Come out of your mouth But only such is good For building up And so It is a warning For our words If the seriousness Of sinful anger Was heightened By the warning That it makes room For the devil The seriousness Of corrupt speech

Is heightened By the warning That it grieves The Spirit of God Corrupt speech Does not just Defile and decay Destroy and divide Corrupt speech Is not just Operating on a Horizontal plane Corrupt speech Grieves the heart Of God It grieves God Himself On the one hand The fact that it says That God can be grieved Is a bit mysterious God is unchanging The theologians would tell us He's the same yesterday Today and forever He's not emotional He doesn't have good days And bad days He doesn't rise and fall With emotion Or anything like that Because if He did He'd be subject to change And therefore would not Be unchangeable So what does it mean When it says God is grieved We see this in the Old Testament When it says God changed His mind Or regretted something That's not saying That God changed suddenly That there was a change In the divine being It's a way of speaking In a way that we can understand

[36 : 04] Revealing God's character And truth And so what does it mean When it says We can grieve The Holy Spirit of God It says When we act With corrupt speech We are opposing The Spirit of God We're turning against Him We're rejecting The Spirit Ignoring the Spirit The idea is The Holy Spirit Is not an impersonal power But the personal God There is one God Father, Son And Holy Spirit And so The Spirit Bears witness to the truth He intercedes for us He dwells with us He searches us He leads us He sanctifies us But most importantly For our context The Spirit unites us together How do we grieve The Spirit of God With our words?

We tear apart What God has united It's the Spirit In which we are By whom we are sealed Ephesians 1.13 We're granted access Through Christ In one Spirit To the Father Ephesians 2.18 There is one body And one Spirit Ephesians 4.3 The Spirit gets to work And brings people together With different backgrounds Different stories Different looks Different gifts And unites them together In the bond of Spirit And the bond of peace And so what is the Spirit Doing in the New Testament church In the local church Uniting people together So no wonder Our words that corrupt And divide Grieve the Spirit Of God Charles Spurgeon Once said Every year That the church Is kept a united church Is a year of miracle We've had a lot of years

Of miracles Why is it a miracle? Because it's a work Of the Spirit Left to ourselves We bite and bow We tear one another apart And so We're meant to be warned To not oppose The work of the Spirit To be careful With our speech This verse though Is also an exhortation It's a warning But it's an exhortation You know The reference is The Holy Spirit of God It's from the Old Testament It's from Isaiah 63 Which is a reference Sorry to be confusing To Numbers 11 through 15 When the Lord rescued The people from Egypt He went with them With a cloud by day And a pillar of fire By night It was the presence Of the Lord

With His people That set them apart From all the peoples Of the earth That's what made them Distinct The presence of the Lord Well the people Rejected it They grieved the Spirit They grumbled And complained How did they grieve The Spirit in Numbers You know We're alerted To the reality Of our words The danger of our words When we read Numbers How did they grieve The Spirit With their grumbling With their complaining With their words But now the Lord Has done something Greater In the Old Testament They were the people Of the Lord Because the Spirit Went with them But now we are The people of the Lord Because the Spirit Is in us That's what He's driving home That's what He's encouraging us To see Do not grieve The Holy Spirit of God That's a reminder Back to the grumbling In the wilderness But now He reminds us By whom you were sealed

For the day of redemption You were sealed With the Spirit of God You were set apart You were branded As the Lord's By the Spirit That was the down payment That was the promise And so what is He saying In these words It's an exhortation He's saying Guard So instead of Destroy and divide Use your words To guard To protect To prepare one another For the day of redemption The idea He's put the Spirit in you It's a down payment It's what you have Right now It is your companion Until the day of redemption When faith gives way To sight And so guard that work Protect it I remember years ago When I was 20 or so I fell asleep at the wheel I was returning To Tennessee On I-40 From an all night party With friends in South Carolina Fell asleep in my little

[40 : 55] Toyota Camry The first of many Toyota Camrys Mercifully As soon as I hit The concrete median And caught hold Of a few of my Hubcaps I woke up And was able to Steer Decisively But not quickly Away from the median Unless there be Greater destruction And now When I'm behind the wheel I'll do anything To stay awake Pound coffee Caffeine pills If things get really Desperate No-dos or whatever Roll down the window Eat sunflower seeds Turn up the A.C.

Crank music Slap myself in the face That frightening experience Has stayed with me As long as I'm Behind the wheel Sleep is not an option As long as you're On this side Of eternity Corrupt speech Is not an option That's what he's saying God Wants to put your Words in the game You talk And your talk Has led to a lot of trouble My talk has too God has An unexpected privilege For you Today it might begin With repentance I was walking The neighborhood This morning Repenting For just the mountains Of sin Over the years That my words Have brought about Deeply grieved And that might be

Where you need to start Today But God doesn't want You to stay there long Because he wants To put your words In the game You've been made new Don't you want Your words to align With that He wants your words To build up To give grace To guard the good deposit The spirit Has left What are you waiting for Let all the words Of your mouth Give grace To all who hear Father in heaven We offer ourselves To you Sincerely And completely Lord we don't want To be just Hearers of your word We thank you For speaking Your word To us We thank you For the spirit Of God I trust Illuminating your word But we want To be doers Any talk Of speech God We're so aware That we all stumble In many ways

With our mouths We want You to make us new Lord we We pray We pray against The work of the flesh We pray against The work of the enemy We pray for change We pray for growth Lord we pray For fruit Of fearing God And serving God And obeying God In our lives Because of a change In our words Come by your spirit I pray And help us In Jesus name Amen You've been listening To a message Given by Walt Alexander Lead pastor Of Trinity Grace Church In Athens, Tennessee For more information About Trinity Grace Please visit us At trinitygraceathens.com