

The Old Paths

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“Euphemisms”

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The word “euphemism” is defined as: “the substitution of a mild, indirect, or vague expression for one thought to be offensively blunt or harsh” (Webster’s). An example of a euphemism would be the phrase “pass away.” This is commonly substituted as a “milder expression” for the word “died.” Example: “I am sorry to hear that your mother passed away last week.” The apostle Peter used a euphemism for death when referring to the Lord’s crucifixion. He said, “*For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit*” (I Pet. 3:18). The word “suffered” is a euphemism for the word “died.” In fact, the NAS uses the word “died” in this passage.

Euphemisms have their place in our language, this is true. Sometimes, a milder expression of a particular thought is needed on occasion. However, there are some euphemisms which have no place in the speech of a Christian. The euphemisms of which we speak are words which would take the place of curse words. Sadly, some Christians have the practice of speaking in “euphemisms” in order to keep from saying an actual curse word. On the next column you’ll find 11 common euphemisms used today by people. This is not an all-inclusive list of such terms, but those listed will help make the

point. What are some common euphemisms today?

SOME EXAMPLES OF EUPHEMISMS

- 1) Gee (gees) - “euphemism for JESUS”
 - 2) Gosh - “an exclamation or mild oath. [euphemism for God]”
 - 3) Golly - “used as a mild exclamation ... euphemism for God”
- Therefore, when one says one or all of these euphemisms above, they are taking God’s name in vain! Brethren, let us think seriously about what we say, as well as what we are allowing our children to say.
- 4) Darn/Darned - “to curse; damn”
 - 5) Dang - “damn (used euphemistically)”
 - 6) Shoot - “euphemism for sh*t”
 - 7) Blame - “U.S. Slang ... to blast ... to blaspheme”
 - 8) Blast(ed) - “(euphemistically) to curse; damn”
 - 9) Blue Blazes - “slang: hell”
 - 10) Heck - “euphemistic of Hell”
 - 11) Dog gone - “God da*n”

All of these definitions can be found in almost any English dictionary. Some of these words may sound familiar to you, some may not, but the point is that these words are euphemisms for cursing. Unfortunately, there are others we could add to this list, but these words ought not soil the lips of Christians.

It is a sad thing to think about, but yes, there are some Christians who will take the Lord’s name in vain. Some do it constantly; not only through such euphemisms that we

have studied, but also in using the word “Lord” in a vain way. When someone says “Lordy, Lordy, _____ turned 40!” or, if someone says “Oh, Lord....”, that is taking the Lord’s name in vain. It is wrong to speak the Lord’s name in a way that would be described as “fruitless, worthless,” or “to no avail,” yet this is done when people take God’s name in vain!! In addition to this, how many times have we heard someone (usually younger) say “God!” No, they were not using God’s name in a reverent, respectful way, but used it in vain. Are we comfortable with our children speaking this way? If not, then are we comfortable with them using euphemisms? If so, why? Brethren, we will answer to God for such things (Matt. 12:36).

It must also be remembered that when we use euphemisms, though we have substituted words, we are still stating the same thought. For example, in using a euphemism like “pass away,” are we not still saying that someone died? Of course, we are. Therefore, are we not still cursing when we use a euphemism as a substitute for a certain word(s) that we recognize as cursing, or swearing? Of course, we are.

The Bible teaches us that our speech needs to be the best that it can be. Our speech must be “*sound*” (Tit. 2:8). It must be “*always with grace, seasoned with salt...*” (Col. 4:6). In fact, Paul said he had “*bold speech*” (II Cor. 4:7). Certainly, we ought to have this. “*Great plainness of speech*” is an admirable quality in a Christian also (II Cor. 3:12). Our speech ought not be with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but “*speaking the truth in love*” and “*speaking as the oracles of God*” (I Cor. 2:4; Eph. 4:15; I Pet. 4:11). Can we do these things without cursing, or using euphemistic curse words? Absolutely! In fact, how could we speak as God wants us to if we were using such euphemisms?

Jesus said that what comes from our heart, and leaves our mouth can defile us

(Matt. 15:18). Did you notice that one specific thing mentioned that comes from the heart is “blasphemies” (Matt. 15:19)? If we are guilty of such speech, it can and will defile us! James said that our tongue is an “*unruly evil*.” It is “*full of deadly poison*” (Jas. 3:8). In fact, James repeats the words of Christ when he says “*it* (the tongue, JJ) *defileth the whole body*” (Jas. 3:6). Therefore, let us be careful with the words we speak. Why? Because Jesus said, “*For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned*” (Matt. 12:37). Solomon wrote: “*Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few*” (Ecc. 5:2). This is certainly good advice for all of us.

CONCLUSION

Let us make sure our speech is “pure” and nothing which could give occasion “*to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme*” (II Sam. 12:14). Let us not be guilty of using euphemistic curse words, but stay away from them altogether. There are plenty of words in the English language we can use without resorting to using these types of words in our speech. We who are Christians have a higher and nobler calling, and ought to speak in like manner. May our prayer be like David’s who said, “*Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips*” (Ps. 141:3).

Sentence Sermons

- ◆ Where there is no thirst for righteousness, the sermon is “dry.”
- ◆ Gossip is like a balloon; it grows bigger with every puff.

“A Trip Through The Bible”

“**M**any years ago I entered this wonderful temple called the Bible. I entered at the portico of Genesis, walked down through the Old Testament art gallery where the pictures of Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joseph, Isaac, and Daniel hung on the wall. I passed into the music room of Psalms, where the spirit swept the keyboard of nature and brought forth the dirge-like wail of the weeping prophet Jeremiah to the grand, impassioned strain of Isaiah, until it seemed that every reed and pipe in God’s great organ of nature responded to the tuneful harp of David, the sweet singer of Israel. I entered the chapel of Ecclesiastes, where the voice of the preacher was heard, and into the conservatory of Sharon, and the Lily of the Valley’s sweet-scented spices filled and perfumed my life. I entered the business office of the Proverbs, then into the observatory room of the prophets, where I saw telescopes of various sizes, some pointed to far-off events, but all concentrated on the bright and morning star which was to rise above the moon-lit hills

of Judea for our salvation.

“I entered the audience room of the King of kings, and caught a vision of His glory from the standpoint of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; passed into the acts of the Apostles, where the Holy Spirit was doing His work in the formation of the infant church. Then into the correspondence room, where sat Paul, James, John, and Jude, penning their epistles. I stepped into the throne room of Revelation, where all towered into glittering peaks, and I got a vision of the King sitting upon His throne in all His glory, and I cried:

“All hail the power of Jesus’ name,

Let angels prostrate fall,

Bring forth the royal diadem

And crown Him Lord of all.”

Editor’s Note:

I have printed the above a couple of times over the years before moving to Owensboro. But, I like to print it from time to time because I think this is a beautiful writing. I hope you like it, too.

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I want the truth, give me book, chapter, and verse!

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MEETING TIMES:

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Sunday Morning Worship _____ **10:20 am**

Sunday Evening Worship _____ **6:00 pm**

Wednesday Evening Bible Study _____ **7:00 pm**

Don’t forget the call-in radio program on **WBIO, FM 94.7**, Sunday afternoon from 12:30-1:00 pm. **Call: 683-5200** with your Bible question.

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