

T.H.I.N.K. Before You Speak

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Isaiah 29 verse 1 through 14. These are god's words. Wow. To ariel ariel. The city where David dwelt? Add here to year that feasts come around. Yet, i will distress All right, before we come to The memory work and then the family worship time. We're gonna go over think, before you speak. Again, something that is Very important to do. Because the scripture tells us that Where words are money? Transgression is not absent. And, Since we are sinners. And although, As believers, we are no longer in our sand.

We are in christ yet. Sin still dwells. In us, as Roman 7 reminds us. And since that is the case, Should not be surprising. That. There is. More talking than there needs to be. On each one of our parts. Now, one of the things that will help us, To guard against not just.

The. Uh, multitude of our words, the where words are many part but especially the Sin. This is not absent part. One of the things that will help us is What we have summarized under the acronym, think before you speak. And that's just a series of Of questions, a series of tests.

That anything that we are going to say, should have to pass. Before it comes out of our mouth. So is it true? Is it helpful? Is it important? Is it necessary? And is it kind? Most of what? Comes out of our mouths, especially that, which is Of a Uh, corrective or instructive or a rebuking.

Most of what comes out of our mouths is going to fail on the question of. Is it necessary? This has to do especially with the fifth commandment Whether we have been put in the position by god as the instructor, corrector rebukure, Of another. And, In many cases, the answer.

Is no, that's gonna change significantly. When you become a parent, It does change. To some extent. If you are an older sibling who has been entrusted, Uh, with teaching your instructing A younger sibling. It's very important. Uh, to remember. Uh, not to speak in that way in the church, unless you are an elder and have been made by Christ ordained by christ.

As a teacher of others, this is one of the reasons why Um, discussion-based study. Something that is fairly new in the history of the church and comes with the Uh, autonomy, and individualism and anti-authoritarianism that has really grown up. In america. Uh but of course, comes from the flesh, it's not unique to america.

But it's been an american emphasis The last couple of centuries. But we need to. Be asking the question isn't necessary. Am i the one who should be saying this? Or does the the place and the responsibility to say this? Uh, belong to somebody else. And you don't even have to, to think.

About the rest of think. If it's not your place. You just keep your mouth shut. Another place where much of what we Are going to say. Have fails. To pass the test for whether it should come out of our mouths is is it important? There are many things. That we might want to say that, just aren't that.

Important. Um, Now. Uh, something that means a lot to us or as interesting to us or That we are. Uh, sharing a part of our life with Uh, A lot of the, a lot of things that are not important in and of themselves, Become connectionally important, particularly with those whom.

The lord has has given us to share our life with Um, You know what our husband or wife. Is thinking you're interested in or whatever. Is often important to for the other just because it's something that they they think or something that they find interesting and they have a shared life together.

The. The fact that the lord has, Called us to have a shared life together as a household. Similarly, Oh, it makes a lot of what we say. Uh, fairly important now If it moves from. Shared life to point of contention, and suddenly becomes a lot less important. Because now, you don't have Uh, now the In that case.

The, the point of speaking. Has has become obsoleted and speaking actually accomplishes the other the opposite point. A disrupts, the shared life that we have to together. Um, The first part is it true? Actually requires us to have some humility. And recognize that. Not everything. We think is true is true.

Just because we think it's true. There are many things in which we are not experts. A five-year-old. Should not go around telling everybody her opinion on every subject of science and history. She just does not have as much learning. And she should assume that she can learn. From others.

A sensorious spirit, which is Uh, one of pride's, many siblings. May cause us to think or feel. That whenever we hear something that has not yet occurred to us, or that may seem to be in conflict with what we had previously thought that we need to answer it. Rather than take the other person statement or opinion.

As. An additional point of information that they think that for whatever reason it is, And perhaps, if it's something, that's Important to us. We make a mental note and And, you know, Uh do more research or whatever it is, we don't have to Turn every single thing that we disagree with.

Into. Um, Into a conversation or a debate. Obviously some of that is going to Fail on the point to visit important, or is it necessary? Uh, but you also need to have the humility to be able to say what i think. Is not necessarily true. And that humility will be something that serves you well in life, not just because you started 10 thousand less arguments over the course of your life than you needed to But because you were able to learn more By not assuming that knowledge ends with you.

Um, The, the ability to Hear something that conflicts with what you already thought. And use it as an opportunity, not for challenging. What the other person has said, but by enriching and augmenting. And maybe being confirmed in what you had previously, thought, and maybe being corrected and what you had previously thought, but that humility on the question of Uh, Is it true?

Is going to? Is going to go a long way. Towards enabling you to learn and grow. And then, by the time you get to Uh, passing the is it necessary? Am i the person who should say it and is it important? Is it a significant enough subject that has to be answered?

You'll actually have some learning. Uh, to be in the next place helpful.

One of the one of the tests that what we say should pass before it comes out of our mouth is Is it helpful now this This overlaps with important. And necessary because sometimes we are the person who should say it and sometimes it is a significant. Enough issue that it needs to be addressed.

But sometimes it has not the time. That the person who should say it about the important thing. Should say it. There are, there is an important timing question. For is it helpful? It includes the. Circumstances that you're in what you are trying to do with that person is trying to do, who else is around.

Often, there are things that if you say it in front of somebody else, It. Uh, it becomes a An issue of whether you are her causing the esteem of that person. To be

devalued something that in the fifth commandment, even those who are superiors, should be considering the dignity of those who are in fear, those who are placed under their authority, because they are not inferior in quality or inferior in the image of god.

They are inferior in hierarchy, in in chain of command. And so, Just regard for what somebody else might hear you saying, to the person in front of you might make what you are going to say to fail the helpful test just because of a timing issue. Sympathy with others is going to inform you for whether or not, something can pass the helpful test because you actually need to be observant of them.

And what their current mindset is to know if this is likely to be an opportune time in which they're able to hear you. Often somebody who comes and tells you something, what they are really communicating. Yes. Um, How happy they are about something, how upset they are about something.

Uh, they are telling you something, but really, they're posing the question. Do you care? That this thing happened to me. Or do you care that this thing? Pleases me.

And so, Whatever the whatever the problem is, that they've told you about Uh, if you immediately say, here's the thing, here's how we fix that problem. A b and c. But what they were really communicating by telling you, the problem was, i'm upset and i need to know that.

You care that i'm upset and what they hear instead is, you know, that's actually no big deal because it's easily fixable and here's how you do it. Well, the question, do you care? That i'm upset has just been answered. No, actually, i think you're a rational to be upset.

Okay, so in order to answer, is it helpful for me to say this? You need to be able to observe something about the, the condition of the person who is talking to you and what they are trying to. Uh, to Ask or convey. Uh, or accomplish. Uh, relationally and even after you get to it's true, it's necessary.

It's important, it would be helpful right now. It still has to pass. The question of what is the most helpful way to say it? And so things like turning and facing a person, and inclining yourself to them in your posture and the expression on your face, the tone of your voice.

Word selection. Uh, if there's something that is Uh, a minor corrective. And yet. The the person on the hole is praiseworthy, especially if it's somebody that you know, has a tendency to be easily discouraged. Then you. Then you might sandwich the correction within the context of all the praise.

Often one of the most important aspects of of, is it helpful in terms of how you phrase things is, Uh, are you presenting something atheistically? So only as an interaction between men and demand or man and creation, but not men and their creator. And man, and his creator in the context.

Of the creation. We want to speak in a way in which we're constantly reminding one another Of the sovereignty of god and the goodness of god, and the holiness of god, So that our conversation, Actually sharpens, one another to lives of thankfulness and honor and dignity. Uh, And obedience and and service, love to god.

And and love to one another. Um, and and that of course, bleeds into the last one. Is it kind? Is it kind and the first part of his accountant. Is it doesn't come from the kindness of your heart. Because, If we were to do this retrospectively, somebody says something, the other person gets hurt, a third person, who's observed, it, maybe in probably a parent was that kind?

And the person who's spoke initially says, yes, it was kind because and here's my, uh, very carefully thought out in the last half second because i hadn't thought about whether or not it was kind. But now i've been challenged. So i have to come up with my legal argument for, why it's actually kind And my entire legal argument for why it's actually kind is it past the true test?

They sent something that was an accurate. So they needed to hear what was true. And on that basis, it was kind because the truth is always kind. Well, the truth is always. Is also sometimes in the mouth of the devil. As we saw at, christ's temptation. And, Is it kind to begins in the heart?

Was the purpose of your speaking? To do a kindness. To the one whom you spoke. Remember, we go over this fairly often when we think about matthew 18, That the whole point in matthew 18 is recovering your brother. Not expressing your offendedness. Not getting justice for the offense. The point in matthew 18.

Is to recover your brother. And so, the first part of visit kind is Does it come from a desire to do a kindness? To the one whom to whom, i am speaking. And then it includes a lot of those. Things that we dealt with under the h on under, is it helpful?

Because, Is it kind is going to be kindness on the eyes. Kindness, on the faith, a kindness on the face. Kindness in the tone. And really, One of the things that will enable you to convey kindness with your words, Is if there's A. A context of a relationship in which you're constantly being kind.

So if you're kind with your time and if you're kind with your actions, you're kind with your possessions your kind with preferring others to yourself. Not only will that condition your own heart so that you are more likely to speak in a way of kindness. But the person who has been on the receiving end of all of that, kindness is not going to say, Um, is not going to suddenly say this is nasty.

I mean they may One of the problems when there's a fence. Is not just that too much offense has been given, but often that too much offense has been taken. We're to take as little offense as possible. That's one of the applications of the description of love. In in first corinthians, 13.

And so yes, we should always speak. What is true. We should always speak. What is helpful? Let our words be always with grace seasoned with salt, that it may edify that it may give grace. To the one who hears. Our words should be spoken the As important. Not only.

Where words are many transgressions, not absent, but we will give account to god for every idol word. Says the lord. It should be necessary. Fifth commandment. It should be kind. Uh, sixth commandment. After all. The. Origin. Of words. As a god, who communicates himself. And he has given to us words.

To be image, bearers. Who communicate ourselves and who communicate among ourselves? This is something. Um, That, that sets us apart from the beasts. You know, they have Methods of communication. They have sounds that they make, but they do not come communicate themselves. Uh, there's no soul. To be communicated to the other person.

Who has a soul. This is very important that we think before we speak. I'm afraid that. Quite often. There's no consideration before we speak. We just give vent to whatever. How it comes into our mind or our heart, which proverbs says makes us the fool. Um, but second to that often, we just before we speak.

We think it's true. There's no consideration of any other parts of of the test. We just whatever we thought was true. Inserted into the conversation. So, Let's governed by a bunch of different scriptures that we referred to and you probably Can think of many other scriptures that we didn't even refer to, but i hope.

That that's helpful to us.