



# Gracious Conversation

## A ctivity

Make a list of common insults you have heard.

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## B iblical Insight

A wise man once said, “Never break the silence unless you can improve on it.” Our words have the ability to build up or destroy; they can encourage or discourage; they either harmonize or disrupt. With such power at the tip of the tongue, we need to learn the art of effective communication. In Ephesians 4:29, the apostle Paul gave four characteristics of “Christian” words:

(a) They are wholesome, not corrupt. Such words build relationships, praise the good in all things, and have positive influence on those who hear them.

(b) They are constructive. The words of Jesus build character in those who hear them; they support the virtues of family, church, and government.

(c) They are appropriate for the occasion. In 2 Timothy 4:2, Paul wrote, “Be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke, and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.” Even good words can be inappropriate at the wrong time, and a silent, caring touch is the most eloquent communication.

(d) They are gracious, giving pleasure, delight and favor. These words focus on what others need rather than on what they deserve.

Christian communication reflects the love of Christ. It demonstrates that an awareness of His undeserved love changes our language.

## C omposition

Colossians 4:6 says, “Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.” For each of the following negative phrases, look up the Scripture reference and formulate a positive alternative phrase.

Use your head! (Isaiah 1:18) \_\_\_\_\_

I was just teasing. (Matthew 5:23,24) \_\_\_\_\_

Why can't you be like that? (Romans 5:8) \_\_\_\_\_

Can't you do anything right? (Galatians 6:1) \_\_\_\_\_

You'll never make it! (Philippians 4:13) \_\_\_\_\_

## D iscussion

Ecclesiastes 10:12 speaks of graciousness in conversation, and Proverbs 13:3 addresses guarding our conversation. Discuss each Scripture and then tell how graciousness can guard conversation in keeping with God's Word.

## E valuation

Read Ephesians 5:4. A survey showed that only 10 percent of all teenagers are offended by dirty jokes. What do you do when someone tells you a dirty joke? What do you think Jesus would have done if someone told Him one?

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**Lesson 72**

- A: Answers will vary. Remind the boys to not bring up things of a vulgar or racial nature. They can refer to the fact they have heard insults of such a nature without mentioning the exact wording.
- C: Isaiah 1:18            Let's think this through together.  
Matthew 5:23,24        I'm sorry. Please forgive me.  
Romans 5:8             I love you regardless of how you are.  
Galatians 6:1          Let me help you.  
Philippians 4:13        You can do everything through Christ.
- D: Graciousness means friendly, kindly, good, bestowing favor. These qualities avoid rash, foolish, or destructive words. Answers will vary.

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