“My Son Curses”

I have a 17 year old son who is a Christian. I am having some trouble with him using curse words. He says it is not wrong as long as he does not use God’s name in vain. I have told him he is not being a good witness and the Bible says to speak in ways to encourage and build people up. I told him is not suppose to be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of his mind. And his mind can’t be renewed with words coming out like curse words. He says he is not cursing at anyone but that it helps him to express his feelings. I told him he is supposed to be in control of himself including his tongue. He says he is in control and is able to not curse when he chooses not to. What can I say to him and back up with scripture to show him that it is wrong as a Christian to curse?

Dear friend,

Ephesians 4:29 says, Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.

Other versions translate unwholesome as foul, dirty, corrupt, abusive, and rotten. Notice none of them have anything to do with taking Gods name in vain.

Its interesting when you look up the meaning of the Greek word translated unwholesome
1) rotten, putrefied
2) corrupted and no longer fit for use, worn out
3) of poor quality, bad, unfit for use, worthless

These all describe cursing, which has been rightfully called

words used by angry people with stunted vocabularies.

You can offer all this to your son, but I think that as a parent, your power comes from providing him with the motivation to control his tongue like he says he can (and you KNOW he can!)like losing privileges when he loses control. You are the gatekeeper of the perks and privileges of living in your home, and you can encourage him to develop his self-control and character by choosing not to curse. Of course, the way to change is to displace the unwanted behavior with a new one, so be prepared to provide him with alternative words and phrases. You might even give him the assignment of Googling the phrase alternatives to cursing (after you do it first, so you know what hell encounter).

Hope this helps!

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