

The person who loves will not allow unwholesome talk to come out of his mouth. The word translated "unwholesome" is a word used to describe fish or meat that has spoiled. It is also used to describe fruit or other forms of vegetation that have decayed and become rotten.<sup>7</sup> Hatred and anger bring decay to our thinking and result in rotten speech.

In Col. 4:6 Paul instructs the believer to "Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone." It may be that the "salt" here has the primary meaning of making conversation appetizing to the hearer. However, salt in the ancient world was a preservative. It was the agent used to hold back putrefaction. It speaks then of purity. In Mark 9:50, Jesus said to His team, whose conversation had evidenced decay on a recent occasion, (vs. 33), "Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with each other."

The salt in this case was grace that rendered pure their commitment to Jesus Christ and the work He had called them to do. Their task was to challenge the corruption of a fallen world by being new men in Christ, proclaiming the good news of His salvation.

In a team ministry, the pure objectives of serving Christ and accomplishing what He commands should superintend all that is said and done.

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<sup>7</sup>Arndt and Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, (Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 749.