

A WORD WITH YOU - By Ron Hutchcraft

10290 – “Fine China – Not Paper Plates at Your House”

Ephesians 4:29

June 19, 2026

Oh, we have different kinds of meals at our house - 'paper plate' meals. You know, pizza, hamburgers, hot dogs - if you want to be more frank. And then we have the 'fine china meals'. We don't have too many of those, but on some special occasions we break out the fine china. We don't break the fine china; we break out the fine china. Now, it's very different the way we treat those two kinds of plates when we're finished eating. For example, when we have paper plates, we don't wash them after we're done. That probably doesn't come as a great surprise to you. We don't put them in a nice careful place to keep them there. In fact, we just kind of wad them up and throw them away because they're disposable. You don't wash those. No big deal!

Now, I'm sure you won't be surprised when I tell you what we do with our china plates. We do wash those. In fact, we put them back in a special place where they are stored until another special occasion. You'd better not drop them or you might be out of the family. I think we know it's fine china because my wife took something and wrote on the back "Fine China". Not really. But it's kind of nice, and we reserve that fine china for special uses. Paper? You throw that away because you know it's not worth much. So many people I know feel as if they are paper plates and they're throwing themselves away.

I'm Ron Hutchcraft and I want to have **A WORD WITH YOU** today about **“Fine China – Not Paper Plates at Your House.”**

Our word for today from the Word of God comes from Ephesians chapter 4 and verse 29. It's a great family verse here: "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs that it may benefit those who listen." This verse talks about two kinds of talk. There's the talk that tears people down, and there's the talk that builds people up.

There's been some recent social research that shows for every negative comment we get in our lives, we need seven positives to bring us back to zero. Is that pretty much the ratio at your house between you and your children; you and your husband or wife? So, I give you seven praises for every one criticism; seven positives for every one negative. Well, I don't know that we have to be legalistic about the ratio, but the point is God says here, "Don't let any tear-down talk come out of your mouth, but only what builds people up.

So, how is the praise ratio at your house? As parents it's up to us to communicate to our children that they are fine china, uniquely created, that they have valuable gifts in their

life that they have to give, and they can't throw themselves away. See, we do that by building them up.

Too many kids I know feel like paper plates. They've been criticized so much, they've been told what's wrong with them, what needs improving, but not what's right with them. They're never told the strengths that they have. We parents tend to focus on what's weak instead of what's strong, because we figure that's what they need to work on. But, you know, they need to hear from us over and over again the great strengths that God has put into them. They hear what's wrong with them all day long in school, "It is cool to be cruel." So they need your praise; they need your compliments. Not for our glory, but it glorifies the Creator who creates only masterpieces.

Think about what's coming out of your mouth, and whether it's more build-up talk or tear-down talk. What's the ratio between the two? Check up on the kind of talk that's going on at your house, especially that's coming from you. You're building either paper plates or fine china. Tell the people you love what's good about them. They will be a lot more likely to say no to what's cheap and to stay reserved for the things that really matter.

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