

Taming Your Tongue

Lesson 18

Memorize (Select One) –

- ✓ Psalm 19:14 – Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my rock and my Redeemer.
- ✓ Colossians 4:6 - Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.

Your tongue is the tattletale on your heart. Its misuse is the easiest way to sin. What you are will inevitably be disclosed by what you say.

In the Bible, the tongue is described as wicked, deceitful, perverse, filthy, corrupt, flattering, slanderous, gossiping, blasphemous, foolish, boasting, complaining, cursed, contentious, sensual, and vile. And this list is not exhaustive!

In describing man's total depravity, the Scriptures declare, "Their throat is an open grave, with their tongue they keep deceiving, the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness." (Romans 3:13 & 14).

Jesus set forth the seriousness of your speech when He said, "Every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the Day of Judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned." (Matthew 12:36 & 37).

When a sinner receives Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, he becomes a new creation. His whole being is transformed and indwelt by the Holy Spirit. A transformed nature will involve a sanctified life that leads to sanctified speech. Taming your tongue is possible but not automatic. Sanctified speech requires your cooperation with the Holy Spirit as you discipline yourself in putting on the new man speech which is presented to you in the Scriptures.

I. Preliminaries to Tongue Taming

A. Read James 3:1-12 and answer the following questions:

1. How does James describe a man who can bridle (control) his tongue? _____ (verse 2).

2. What can the tongue do to the entire body?
_____ (verse 6).
3. Who is able to tame the tongue without God's help?
_____ (verse 8).
4. State the utter inconsistency of the tongue _____
_____ (verse 9).

B. Read Colossians 3:1-10 and answer the following questions:

1. What is the person who has been risen with Christ told to do with sinful forms of speech? _____ (verse 8).
2. What form of sinful speech is common to the old self?
_____ (verse 9).
3. The old must be replaced by the new. The two words that express this are the words _____ (verse 10).

C. Proverbs 6:16 states that there are particular sins that God hates. Read verses 16-19 and list those which relate to the tongue:

- _____
- _____
- _____

II. Principles for Tongue Taming

- A.** According to James 1:19, everyone should learn to be _____ to speak. This requires that a person _____ before they speak.
- B.** Proverbs 10:19 states, "When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable, but he who restrains his lips is wise." Therefore, the wise will be a person of _____ words. (cp. Prov. 13:3)
- C.** Based upon Ephesians 4:29, my words are to be phrased in such a way that they _____ others. This will give _____ to those who hear. Avoid words that _____ people down.
- D.** Weary souls can be helped with _____ words (Prov. 16:24).

- E.** More than saying pleasant words, God tells us that our words must be _____ (Prov. 15:23b).
- F.** Words bear results long after they are spoken. “A man will be satisfied with good by the _____ of His Words.” (Prov. 12:14)
- G.** According to Psalm 34:1-3, describe the best use of the tongue.
- _____

III. Practicing Proper Use of the Tongue (How might you commend the following people?)

- ◆ Cashier at store _____
- ◆ Waitress _____
- ◆ Teacher _____
- ◆ Neighbor _____
- ◆ Fellow employee _____
- ◆ Parent _____
- ◆ Child _____
- ◆ Janitor _____

IV. Communication Guidelines

Provided by Pastor Tim Keller:

1. Be a ready *listener* and do not answer until the other person has finished talking (Prov. 18:13; James 1:19).
2. Be *slow to speak*. Think first. Don't be hasty in your words. Speak in such a way that the other person can understand and accept what you say (Prov. 15:23, 28; 29:20; James 1:19).
3. *Don't go to bed angry!* Each day clear the offenses of that day. Speak the truth but do it in love. Do not exaggerate. (Eph. 4:15, 25; Col. 3:8; Matt. 6:34).

4. *Do not use silence to frustrate the other person.* Explain why you are hesitant to talk at this time (Prov. 10:19; 15:28; 16:21, 23; 18:2; 20:15; Col. 4:6).
5. *Do not become involved in quarrels.* It is possible to disagree without quarreling (Prov. 17:14; 20:3; Rom. 13:13; Eph. 4:31).
6. *Do not respond in uncontrolled anger.* Use a soft and kind response and tone of voice (Prov. 14:29; 15:1; 25:15; 29:11; Eph. 4:26, 31).
7. *When you are in the wrong, admit it and ask for forgiveness* and ask how you can change (Prov. 12:15; 16:2; 20:6; 21:2; Matt. 5:23-25; Luke 17:3; James 5:16).
8. *When someone confesses to you, tell him you forgive him.* Be sure it is forgiven and not brought up to the person, to others, or to yourself! (Prov. 17:9; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13; I Pet. 4:8).
9. *Avoid nagging* (Prov. 10:19; 16:21, 23; 17:9; 18:6, 7; 21:19; 27:15).
10. *Do not blame or criticize the other person.* Instead, restore.....encourage.....edify (Rom. 14:13; Gal. 6:1; I Thess. 5:11).
11. *If someone verbally attacks, criticizes, or blames you, do not respond in the same manner* (Rom. 12:17, 21; I Pet. 2:23; 3:9).
12. *Try to understand the other person's opinion.* Make allowances for differences.
13. *Be concerned about the other person's interests* (Eph. 4:2; Phil. 2:4; 3:15, 16).

IV. Practical Application

Having read and worked through this important lesson, list two **specific** ways you will give effort toward sanctified speech.

Now, consider that person who knows you well and loves you enough to tell you the truth. Get alone with them and ask them to help you to grow by telling you how you may be more like Christ in the stewardship of your words. Ask them to be direct and specific . Be sure to thank them for their help!