

Lesson Ten

TONGUE CONTROL - THE CHALLENGE OF GROWING UP SPIRITUALLY

James 1:26; 3:1-12

Introduction

The Power of God's Words

"And God said, Let there be light: and there was light" (Gen. 1:3).

"The worlds have been framed by the word of God..." (Heb. 11:3).

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation" (Rom. 1:16).

"For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword..."
(Heb. 4:12).

"Of his own will he brought us forth, by the word of truth" (Jas. 1:18).

"...having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which lives and abides" (1 Pet. 1:23).

The Power of Our Words

"Death and life are in the power of the tongue" (Prov. 18:21).

"He that guards his mouth keeps his life; but he that opens wide his lips shall have destruction"
(Prov. 13:3).

"Whoso keeps his mouth and his tongue keeps his soul from troubles" (Prov. 21:23).

"A soft answer turns away wrath: but a grievous word stirs up anger. The tongue of the wise utters knowledge aright, but the mouth of fools pours out folly" (Prov. 15:1,2)

"A gentile tongue is a tree of life; but perverseness therein is a breaking of the spirit"
(Prov. 15:4).

"Keep your heart with all diligence for out of it are the issues of life. Put away from you a wayward mouth. And perverse lips put far from you" (Prov. 4:23,24).

"In the multitude of words there does not want transgression but he that refrains his lips does wisely" (Prov. 10:19)

"Even a fool when he holds his peace is counted wise..." (Prov. 17:28).

"And the tongue is a fire: the world of iniquity among our members is the tongue, which defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the wheel of nature, and is set on fire of hell" (Jas. 3:6)

I. The Vital Importance of Tongue Control to the Life of a Christian

A. An uncontrolled tongue the source of much trouble

(Prov. 21:23), can "set the woods afire"(Jas. 3:5,6).

B. *An unbridled tongue is the instrument of sin (Ps. 39:1).*

C. *A man's religion made meaningless by an uncontrolled tongue. (James 1 :26)*

D. *The control of the tongue is a sign of spiritual maturity. (James 3:1,2)*

II. The Power of the Tongue (James. 3:3-6)

A. *A little member which can do great things*

1. *Like the small rudder of the ship which controls the direction of the whole vessel.*

2. *Like a little flame which can start an destructive fire of enormous proportion.*

B. *The fire of the unbridled tongue is kindled from hell.*

III. The Tongue is Untamable - Must be Controlled Always (James. 3:7,8)

A. *All kinds of wild animals have been tamed by men, but the tongue cannot be "domesticated" and must therefore be constantly controlled.*

B. *The tongue is a restless evil, filled with "deadly poison". .Capable of great harm the tongue is always poised for escape.*

IV. The Tongue can both Bless and Curse (James. 3:9-12; Prov. 18:21)

A. *The Curse of the Tongue out of Control:*

1. *Hasty words - "a mouth too quick on the trigger"*

a. *Prov. 29:11, 20*

b. *Eccl. 5:2*

c. *James 1:19,20*

2. *Lies*

a. *definition: "A false statement or action, esp. one made with the intent to deceive."*

b. *Prov. 6: 16, 17 An abomination to God.*

c. *Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount - Matt. 5:33-37 (truth not perjury His concern)*

d. *To be put away by the Christian - Eph. 4:25; Col. 3:9*

e. *The awful fate of liars - Rev. 21:8*

f. *The kind of God we serve - Titus 1:2*

g. *The example of Jesus - 1 Pet. 2:21,22*

Discuss the more subtle forms of lying (deception) that the Christian should avoid.: Gen.

12:11-19 Gen. 37:29-35 Ps. 12:2,3 1 Thess. 2:5 Prov. 26:18,19

Discuss some of the famous lies recorded in the Bible? Who told the first lie?

3. Gossip, talebearing
 - a. Definition: "to engage in idle talk or rumors about others".
 - b. Promotes strife. Prov. 26:20 1 Thess. 5:13
 - c. Separates friends. Prov. 16:28

How to prevent gossip:

- 1) *Be sure every word you speak is not only true but upbuilding. Eph. 5:29*
- 2) *Always ask two questions before speaking: Is it true? Is it loving? Eph. 4:15*
- 3) *Don't listen to gossip. Suggest the need to ascertain that the information is true and if so that you go and talk directly in love to the person being discussed.*

Discuss the effect of gossip on the life of a church.

4. Evil speaking, backbiting (disposition to defame and judge harshly)
 - a. Forbidden to the Christian: 1 Pet. 2: 1 2 Cor. 12:20 Jas. 4:11,12
 - b. Characteristic of a reprobate mind. Rom. 1:28,30

Discuss the possible motives for speaking evil of or defaming another?

What is the solution? Mt. 7:1-5 Eph. 4:31,32 Gal. 6:1,2 Jas. 5:19,20

5. Murmuring
 - a. Definition: "giving audible expression to unwarranted dissatisfaction"
 - b. Christians warned against it. 1 Cor. 10:10 Phil 2: 14

What -was the nature of the "murmuring" of the children of Israel? What spirit int them do you think caused this complaining way? Ex. 14:11, 12 Num. 16:41

What causes us to become "murmurers" today? How can we prevent it?

Is there a constructive way to handle dissatisfaction?

6. Profane and Impure Speech
 - a. Ex. 20:9 Lev. 19:12 Jas. 5:12 (Mt. 23:16-22)
 - b. Eph. 5:4

Discuss ways we can treat holy and serious things with contempt by our speech. Discuss some kinds of speech that are impure and not befitting a child of God.

B. The Blessing of the Bridled Tongue (Tongue ruled by the will of Christ)

1. Truth Eph. 4:25 Produces trust and confidence
2. Words that edify and give grace Eph. 4:29
3. Thanksgiving Eph. 5:4
4. Loving words Eph. 4:15
5. Words of helpful correction for the erring 1 Thess. 5:14 Gal. 6: 1,2
6. Words of encouragement 1 Thess. 5:14
7. Words of kindness Prov. 31:26
8. Most important: Words of salvation Acts 8:4 Phil 2:15, 16

Conclusion

A. Where should we begin in our effort to control our tongue and make all our words a blessing?
Mt. 12:34,35 Mt 15:19

B. What will we be judged by? Mt 12:36,37 What are "idle words"?