

Lesson 18-20

Christianity Based on a Tamed Tongue

If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.
James 3:2b

I. The Bible has a lot to say about the tongue.

A. The Book of Psalms has something to say about the tongue.

1. Psalm 34:12-13

Who is the man who desires life, and loves many days, that he may see good? Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit.

2. Psalm

I said, "I will guard my ways, lest I sin with my tongue; I will restrain my mouth with a muzzle, while the wicked are before me."

3. Psalm 52:1-5

Why do you boast in evil, O mighty man? The goodness of God endures continually. 2 Your tongue devises destruction, like a sharp razor, working deceitfully. 3 You love evil more than good, lying rather than speaking righteousness. 4 You love all devouring words, you deceitful tongue. 5 God shall likewise destroy you forever; He shall take you away, and pluck you out of your dwelling place, and uproot you from the land of the living. Selah

4. Psalm 139:3-4

You comprehend my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue, but behold, O LORD, You know it altogether.

B. The Book of Proverbs has something to say about the tongue.

1. Proverbs 6:16-19

These six things the LORD hates, yes, seven are an abomination to Him: A proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that are swift in running to evil, a false witness who speaks lies, and one who sows discord among brethren.

2. Proverbs 12:17-19

He who speaks truth declares righteousness, but a false witness, deceit. There is one who speaks like the piercings of a sword, but the tongue of the wise promotes health. The truthful lip shall be established forever, but a lying tongue is but for a moment.

3. Proverbs 21:23

Whoever guards his mouth and tongue keeps his soul from troubles.

4. Proverbs 8:6-9

Listen, for I will speak of excellent things, and from the opening of my lips will come right things; 7 For my mouth will speak truth; wickedness is an abomination to my lips. 8 All the words of my mouth are with righteousness; nothing crooked or perverse is in them. 9 They are all plain to him who understands, and right to those who find knowledge.

5. Proverbs 13:3

He who guards his mouth preserves his life, but he who opens wide his lips shall have destruction.

C. Jesus had something to say about the tongue.

A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.

Matthew 12:25-37

D. James had something to say about the tongue (Jam. 3:1-12).

My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. 2 For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. 3 Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. 4 Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. 5 Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! 6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. 7 For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. 8 But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. 9 With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. 10 Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. 11 Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening? 12 Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.

1. James indicates that that even though the tongue is small in comparison to the rest of a person's body, it is a most _____.

2. James indicates that the tongue is a most difficult thing _____.

3. James indicates that the tongue can be a source of great _____ or it can be an unruly source of _____.

II. The tongue is a powerful force for good or evil (Pro. 18:21).

Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit.

A. On the positive side

1. It promotes _____ (Pro. 12:18, NIV).
2. It is to be filled with the law of _____ (Pro. 31:26).
3. It speaks things characterized by _____ (Pro. 8:6).
4. It _____ many (Pro. 10:21).
5. It imparts _____ (Eph. 4:29).
6. It brings _____ (Pro. 12:6).

B. On the negative side

1. It pours forth _____ (Pro. 15:2).
2. It _____ the spirit (Pro. 15:4).
3. It _____ people (Pro. 11:9).

III. The tongue is compared to many things.

A. On the negative side

1. Sharp sword (Ps. 57:4; 64:3)
2. Bitter words are as arrows (Ps. 64:3; Jer. 9:8)
3. Poisonous Snake (Ps. 140:3)
4. Devouring fire (Is. 30:27; Jam. 3:6)

B. On the positive side

1. Choice silver (Pro. 10:20)
2. Tree of life (Pro. 15:4)
3. Fountain of life (Pro. 10:11)

IV. There are several ways in which the tongue can be used.

A. We are to avoid the _____ uses of the tongue.

There are at least _____ negative uses of the tongue as described in the Bible.

1. Talebearing or Revealing Secret (Pro. 11:13; 18:8; 20:19; 26:20, 22).

A talebearer can be defined as one who habitually goes about telling others those things that were told him _____.

2. Hasty or Rash Words (Pro. 29:20; Eccl. 5:2-3)

Someone who is hasty or rash speaks of things before he has given sufficient time to thoroughly _____ the information about which he is going to speak.

At times this involves making _____ or commitments to do things without counting the cost involved in making such a commitment.

3. Idle or Careless Words (Mt. 12:35-36)

Someone speaks idle words when they speak words that have no _____ or have meanings that fail to communicate the intended thought.

4. Cursing (Ps. 10:7; 59:12; Rom. 3:14)

Cursing is speech that invokes evil or the hope of _____ upon another person.

5. Reviling or Railing (I Cor. 5:11; 6:10)

Reviling is speaking to or about another person in a reproachful way, bringing shame, disgrace or _____ to them.

6. Backbiting (Ps. 15:3; Pro. 25:23; Rom. 1:30; II Cor. 12:20)

Backbiting is speaking evil or repeating stories about an individual in their absence that would have the effect of _____ or putting into question their character or spirituality.

7. Gossip or Whispering (Pro. 16:27-28; Rom. 1:29; II Cor. 12:20)

Gossip is the same as backbiting but it focuses its venom on _____ at a time.

8. Slander or Malice (Pro. 10:18; Col. 3:8; I Pet. 2:12)

Slander involves spreading an evil report, false charges, misrepresentations or half truths that defame or damage another person's _____.

9. Unwholesome, Rotten or Worthless Communication (Eph. 4:29)

Unwholesome talk involves using language words that are crude, low or worthless in character and _____ for use in sanctified conversation.

10. Bitterness (Eph. 4:31)

Bitterness as it relates to speech is using words or phrases which display inward feelings of being _____, agitated, bitter or grieved with another person.

11. Course Jestng (Eph. 5:3-4)

Course jesting is joking about things that are abusive, offensive and low in _____ that are not suitable or fitting for any occasion.

12. Complaining, Grumbling or Murmuring (I Cor. 10:10; Phil. 2:14-15)

Complaining is privately or openly expressing displeasure or discontentment about a matter including matters that are only under _____.

13. Arguing or Disputing (Rom. 14:1; Phil. 2:14)

Arguing is participating in argumentative, contradictive and destructive reasonings that are coupled with _____ and contention.

14. Filthy Language (Col. 3:8)

Filthy language is language that is dirty, _____ and shameful which disregards decency and moral purity.

15. Lying (Pro. 12:22; Col. 3:9; Eph. 4:25)

Lying is twisting, distorting and misrepresenting the true facts in any context with the intention of _____ the listener.

16. Flattery (Ps. 5:9; 12:2-3; 78:36; Pro. 20:19; 26:28; 29:5; I Th. 2:5).

Flattery is the speaking of _____ compliments or adulations to a person with the intention of selfish gain or interest.

17. Contentious or Quarrelsome (Pro. 21:25; 25:24; 26:21; Luke 22:24; I Cor. 11:16)

To be contentious is to intentionally _____ and competition between individuals simply for the sake of argument.

18. Clamor (Eph. 4:31)

Clamor is using loud, _____ or boisterous tones with another person usually resulting from anger.

19. Striving about Words (II Tim. 2:14)

Striving about words is when a person continually argues about _____ meanings and definitions that are of no ultimate consequence in the communication process.

20. Godless Chatter or Idle Babblings (I Tim. 6:20; II Tim. 2:16)

Godless chatter or profane and idle babblings refer to empty, fruitless and _____ discussions that invariably have absolutely no positive result.

21. Sowing Discord (Pro. 6:14, 19; Acts 20:30; Gal. 5:20, NIV; I Tim. 5:13)

Sowing discord is when someone intentionally undermines the _____ by spreading innuendoes, half-truths and other lies for the purpose of separating one person (or persons) from another.

B. We are to cultivate the _____ uses of the tongue.

1. We are to speak of His _____ and praise all the day long (Ps. 35:28; 51:14; 66:17; 71:23-24).

My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing to You, and my soul, which You have redeemed. My tongue also shall talk of Your righteousness all the day long...
Psalm 71:23-24

2. We are to speak words of _____ (Ps. 37:30; Pro. 10:31).

The mouth of the righteous speaks wisdom, and his tongue talks of justice.
Psalm 37:30

3. We are to speak _____ words or words filled with grace (Eccl. 10:12; Col. 4:6).

The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious, but the lips of a fool shall swallow him up...
Ecclesiastes 10:12

4. We are to speak words seasoned _____ (Col. 4:6).

Salt was particularly valuable because of the properties that it has.

- a. It is essential for _____.
 - b. It is a symbol of _____.
 - c. It is a _____.
 - d. It is a _____ enhancer (Job 6:6).
 - e. It is antiseptic or _____.
4. We are to speak words that _____, encourage and lift up (Eph. 4:29; I Th. 5:11)
 5. We are to speak _____ of the Lord (Ps. 119:172).

V. There are some important things we can do to tame the tongue.

- A. In order to tame the tongue we must have _____ to tame the tongue (Ps. 17:3, NIV).
 1. This means acknowledging where we have failed and _____.
 2. This means that we ask for God's _____.
 3. This means that we take _____ for the wrongful things that we have said to other.
 4. This means that we _____ to those we have offended by our words.
 5. This means that we are willing to ask others to help us identify offensive speech _____ (Pro. 27:6, 17).
 6. This means that we must make good on _____ that we have made to others.
- B. In order to tame the tongue we must take personal responsibility for the words we speak and realize that God holds us _____ for every word that comes out of our mouth (Mt. 12:36).

When we understand this we will...

1. Think _____ we speak.
 2. Set a _____ or a sentinel in front of the door of our mouth (Ps. 141:3; Pro. 13:3; 21:23).
 3. Discern the _____ of others before, during and after we speak (Ps. 55:20-21).
- C. In order to tame the tongue we must deal with our _____ (II Cor. 10:4-5).

1. We must understand that what comes out of our mouth is actually a reflection of what is in _____ and mind (Mt. 12:34-37).
 2. We must understand that our mind and our mouth are somehow _____ (Josh. 1:8; Rom. 10:10).
 3. We must have right _____ (Ps. 19:14)
- D. In order to tame the tongue we must be willing to test our words before we speak them.

The eightfold test for the tongue (Phil. 4:8).

1. Is it true? Will it give an _____ impression?
2. Is it honorable? Should it be _____ by others?
3. Is it right? Is it appropriate to say _____?
4. Is it pure? Is it motivated by pride or _____?
5. Is it lovely? Will it _____ the lives of those who hear it?
6. Is it of good repute? Will it _____ anyone's reputation?
7. Is it characterized by excellence? Will it motivate others to be _____?
8. Is it worthy of praise? Will it _____ all who hear it?

--Adapted from Bill Gothard, *Instructions for Our Most Important Battle*

- E. In order to tame the tongue we must be not receive an _____ that is carried by others.

“An evil report involves distortion of facts or false information. It is given with wrong motivations and causes the hearer to come to inaccurate conclusions and to respond with unscriptural solutions.” --Bill Gothard

The stages of a disease are the same as the stages of defilement by an evil report.

The following material is summarized from notes by Bill Gothard's *Institutes in Basic Youth Conflicts*, 1981.

1. Stage One: _____ of Preventive Measures

...lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices. II Corinthians 2:11

Ignorance is not being aware of the destructive power of untrue or distorted words.

- a. Ignorance of how words destroy _____ (Pro. 17:9).
- b. Ignorance of how the unclean defile _____ (Hag. 2:11-14).

c. Ignorance of what _____ an evil report.

An evil report is an unauthorized, distorted or false report which influences us to form an _____ about another person.

d. Ignorance of how evil reports are _____.

Evil reports are communicated by words, facial expressions, gestures and tonal patterns.

e. Ignorance of _____ gives evil reports.

Potentially an evil report may come through any other person because of the fallen nature that we all possess.

f. Ignorance of how _____ we are to evil reports (Pro. 18:8).

g. Ignorance of how Satan _____ evil reports.

- To discredit spiritual leadership.
- To cause Christians to close their spirit to each other.
- To multiply conflicts and produce more ungodliness.
- To undermine the work of Christ in the world today.

2. Stage Two: _____ to Someone who is Infected

Exposure is entering into conversation with a person who is _____ of an evil report.

a. How to _____ a carrier of an evil report

- A carrier will usually _____ before giving you an evil report to see if you have a compatible spirit or will take the bait.
- A carrier will check your _____ of his report by giving you a small bit and observing how you react.
- A carrier will often get you to ask for the report by arousing your _____.
- A carrier will present themselves as somewhat of _____ in private matters which will cause you to believe what they say.

b. Questions to ask a carrier _____ listening to their report

- What is your reason for telling _____?
- Where did you get your _____?

- Have you gone to those directly _____?
- Have you personally checked out all of _____?
- Can I _____ if I check this out for myself?
- Would you be willing to write down your comment and _____?

3. Stage Three: Contamination or _____ by the Same Virus

Defilement or contamination is _____ an evil report from another person and _____ that it is true.

4. Stage Four: _____ as the Virus Overcomes the Body's Defenses

Infection is responding to an evil report with human reasonings and emotions rather than with spiritual understanding and _____.

Symptoms of Infection

- a. Believing the evil report is _____.
- b. Forming _____ based on that report.
- c. Focusing on the negative aspects of _____ involved.
- d. Judging _____ based on the evil report.
- e. _____ from the person in your spirit.
- f. Telling _____ of the evil report.

5. Stage Five: The Full Blown _____

Disease is being mentally and emotionally _____ by the evil report and becoming a carrier ourselves.

Symptoms of Disease

- a. Developing _____ and/or rebellion even though the person involved did not directly _____.
- b. Sensing an obligation to _____ as many as possible.
- c. Looking with _____ on others who are in similar areas of responsibility.

F. In order to tame the tongue we must _____ from the defilement caused by evil reports that we have entertained.

We cleanse ourselves of an evil report by doing the following:

1. Asking God to cleanse _____ from the evil report.

2. Asking God to give you a _____ for the person involved in the report.
3. Refusing to tell _____ about the matter.
4. Talking to others that you may have _____.
5. Talking to the one who contaminated _____.
6. If necessary seek out spiritual _____ to properly handle related matters.