

Sunday, November 15, 2009—The Weight of Our Words—Out of the Abundance of the Heart:
Expletives Deleted

Introduction

- The first principal of the tongue we learned in our introduction is that **Controlled Speech is a Measure of Maturity**.
- James 3:2—“*offend*”—means to cause one to stumble or fall, to stumble i.e. to err, make a mistake, to sin, to fall into misery, become wretched. Feet that stumble can bring you whole body crashing to the ground, and a tongue that offends is no less a threat. Therefore, an offending tongue reflects spiritual immaturity.
- Perfect—literally means complete or mature.
- The implication is clear; we are never spiritually mature until we no longer trip people up with our words.
- Luke 6:45-- how we talk and what comes out of our mouths is a reflection upon the condition of heart and our inner man.
- All talk is really heart talk. We show people who we are on the inside by the words that come out of our mouths.
- James 3:8-10--This is why cursing and using the Lord’s name in vain such serious issues in the Bible. They reflect a heart of rebellion against God.

Using God’s Name in Vain

- Exodus 20:7—the clear rule for using God’s name in vain is “Thou shalt not.”
- Notice how this verse not only forbids using the Lord’s name as a curse word but also warns of coming punishment for those who disobey.
- The Hebrew word translated “*vain*” means emptiness, vanity, falsehood, according to *Strong’s Concordance*.
- Essentially, to take God’s name in vain means to use it as though it has no worth or value.
- Perhaps that’s the root of our problem—we don’t appreciate the real value of God’s name. Too often we interpret God from our limited point of view instead of conforming our thoughts to who God says he is.

- The significance of God's name must be grasped in two dimensions: 1) its significance to God, 2) its spiritual significance to us.
- First, God's name has great significance to Him because it is a revelation of his glory. His name communicates His character. It is intrinsically tied to His being.
- Exodus 3:14-15
- John 8:58—God's name revealed that He is the eternally self-sufficient One, personally identified with Israel through the patriarchs.
- There are at least ten different compound names all depicting something a different attribute of God through the Old Testament.
 - JEHOVAH-JIREH = Jehovah will see, or provide. Genesis 22:14.
 - JEHOVAH-ROPHEKA = Jehovah that healeth thee. Exodus 15:26.
 - JEHOVAH-NISSI = Jehovah my banner. Exodus 17:15.
 - JEHOVAH-M^cKADDISHKEM = Jehovah that doth sanctify you. Exodus 31:13. Leviticus 20:8, 21:8, 22:32. Ezekiel 20:12.
 - JEHOVAH-SHALOM = Jehovah [send] peace. Judges 6:24.
 - JEHOVAH-Z^cBA'OTH = Jehovah of hosts. 1Samuel 1:3, and frequently.
 - JEHOVAH-ZIDKENU = Jehovah our righteousness. Jeremiah 23:6, 33:16.
 - JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH = Jehovah is there. Ezekiel 48:35.
 - JEHOVAH-'ELYON = Jehovah most high. Psalms 7:17, 47:2, 97:9. JEHOVAH-RO'I = Jehovah my Shepherd. Psalms 23:1.
- Psalm 22:22
- Proverbs 18:10
- Isaiah 30:27—the name of the Lord is also associated with justice and judgment.
- In the New Testament the names for Jesus are also revelatory of His character, worth, and work. The name *Christ* is the title of His Messiahship, communicating that He is the promised King and reflecting the integrity of God in keeping His promise to Israel.
- Matthew 1:23—the name Emmanuel means God with us.
- Matthew 6:9—The word "*hallowed*" literally means sacred, set apart, holy. This petition at the opening of the Lord's Prayer acknowledges that the father name is to be honored and revered.
- Philippians 2:9-11—God guarantees that everyone will bow in response to Jesus' name in submission to all Christ claims to be. Even those who make an expletive of His name will one day exalt Him.

- Theologically speaking. God's names are not adjectives—they are nouns. His names are more than descriptive; they are substantive. Therefore, we need to give the name of God its proper respect.
 - Psalm 52:9—Wait on God's Name
 - Psalm 145:1-2—Bless and Praise God's Name
 - Micah 4:5—Walk in the Name of the Lord
 - Malachi 3:16—Esteem God's Name
 - Malachi 4:2—Fear God's Name
- When we use one of his Names in an empty, negative context, it reveals a lowered estimation of His worth. Degrading God's name is the ultimate statement of a wicked and proud hearth.

Sensuous Speech

- Another form of speech that reveals the condition of the heart is sensuous speech.
- Expressions of immoral, sensual speech are not compatible with our newness in Christ. Words, phrases, stories, jokes, and tales that deal with immorality are clearly renounced in Scripture.
- Ephesians 5:3-13
- In verse three Paul mentions three types of poor speech that is not becoming or fitting who we are in Jesus Christ.
 - Filthiness—literally means obscenity or anything that is opposed to purity and morality.
 - Foolish Talking—basically this language that is offensive to Christian decency. This would certainly include words that are vulgar and indecent in their connotations.
 - Jesting—is humor or joking in a bad sense. It is the light-hearted sinful speech filled with double meanings—jokes, puns, and plays on words.
- Paul says that these negative speech patterns are not convenient and are associated with the unfruitful works of darkness in verse 11.
- Whenever or however sensuous speech affects believers, the harmful results are numerous:
 - It neutralizes our sensitivity to moral purity.
 - It contributes to a widespread sensual mind-set.
 - It reflects a lack of self-control.
 - It increases our vulnerability to sexual sin.
 - It robs God of His glory in our speech.

Heart Talk

- Christ recognized that all talk is heart talk.
 - Matthew 12:33-37
- In fact, our words are such an accurate reflection of our spiritual condition that Christ concludes this section by saying that our words will be the basis for His judgment. Our words affirm our true inner condition.
- Romans 3:10-18—notice that after a general description of the Romans’ spiritual disability, Paul specifically details the tongue as the initial manifestation of their inner worthlessness. The bottom line is simple, a sinful heart produces sinful speech.
- The picture here is vivid: throats are portrayed as open graves. Open graves vent the smell of death. Our throats, tongues, and lips are all part of the ventilation of our inner spiritual condition. Sin is vented through the mouth, disseminated by the tongue, and its deadly poison waits in the lips.
- In nearly every Scripture passage where the tongue is mentioned or illustrated, there is also insight into the heart problem that prompted the sinful talk. Examining these problems is step one in transforming speech from the inside out, so let’s look at three heart problems—pride, anger, and fear.
- The Proud Heart
 - Spiritually speaking, pride is the elevation of self at the expense of God and his glory. It results in a self-serving lifestyle and takes credit for what God has done and given.
 - Pride is directly connected with negative speech patterns in a variety of ways.
 - Psalms 10:2, 4—boasting, reviling God, cursing, lying, and contention may all result from pride.
 - Psalms 59:12—proud people slander righteous people.
 - Psalms 73:6-11—scoffing, malice, and oppressive threats are the by-products of a proud spirit.
 - Proverbs 8:13—pride and arrogance result in evil behavior and perverse speech.
 - Proverbs 13:10—pride breeds quarrels.
- The Angry Heart
 - Anger is one of our most powerful emotions. Though anger is vented in many ways, it is often expressed through our words. Hatred and bitterness are the poisonous fruit of long-term, unresolved anger.

- An angry spirit creates dissension, lying lips, strife, and threats (Proverbs 10:12, 18; 15:18; 24:28-29; 29:22; 30:33).
- Slander, murmuring, and cruel words are obvious outgrowths of an angry heart (Deuteronomy 1, Numbers 14, Proverbs 27:4).
- Rebellion, both in spirit and in word, is often the result of anger (Ephesians 6:4).
- A bitter spirit is a corrupting influence with great potential to create trouble (Hebrews 12:15).
- The Fearful Heart
 - Fear often arises in regard to potential loss, and such fear frequently motivates or manipulates us. Our feelings (and words) are strong when faced with the possible loss of safety, position, reputation, security, family, friends, wealth, power, or happiness.
 - It was fear of the Canaanites that caused the Israelites to murmur, rebel, reach false conclusion (beguilement), and plot murder (Numbers 14:9-10).
 - The Pharisees lied to protect their positions when they feared a national acceptance of Christ as the Messiah (John 8:44-45).
 - The chief priest brought false witness against Christ because they feared Rome and the potential loss of authority and prestige (Matthew 26: 59-61).
 - Peter cursed and swore because he was afraid of being identified as one of Christ's disciples (Matthew 26:73-74).
- A New Heart
 - Though the technique of physical heart transplants is continually being refined, spiritual heart transplants are readily available.
 - II Corinthians 5:17
 - Philippians 3:13-14