

Worldliness: The Tongue

Introduction

1. Being a Christian affects the way one talks

Ps 39:1 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.

2. There are many misuses of the tongue. These include but are not limited to:

A. Lying, cursing, making casual oaths, angry words, gossip, flattery, grumbling, complaining, etc.

1) There are many ways in which we can misuse our tongue in dealing with one another.

3. In the lesson this morning on Worldliness: The Tongue, I am going to be concentrating on two areas in which Christians are sometimes guilty of misusing the tongue.

A. I am going to be talking about "gossip" (idle talk), and "cursing" (using euphemisms).

Gossip (idle talk)

1. Have you ever heard someone say "Can you keep a secret?"

A. When I hear those words it gives me an uneasy feeling inside.

B. I'd like to think that I can keep a secret - but I am also concerned that the one telling me was not able to keep a secret entrusted to them.

1 Timothy 1:6 from which some, having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk.

2. **People often love to tell or hear something new.**
 - A. **It is because of this desire that many become guilty of the sin of "gossip".**
3. **Luke describes the Athenians and strangers who visited Athens during Paul's visit as people who spent**

Acts 17:21their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing.

Telling or Hearing Something New Can Be Good or Bad

GOOD:

1. **Telling others the good news of Jesus Christ is good.**
2. **Relaying joyful news about others is good.**
3. **Sad news can also be a good thing to tell others.**
 - A. **This helps brethren be aware of a physical or spiritual need.**
 - 1) **This may not always be something we enjoy passing along but it is sometimes necessary.**

BAD:

1. **News of a personal nature or that does not concern all the brethren does not need to be told.**
 - A. **Some believe that everything they know about somebody, everyone else should also know.**
 - 1) **They enjoy "hearing and telling some new thing".**
2. **This is known as "gossip".**

The Sin of Gossip

1. **Gossip is defined as: "idle talk, **not always true** about people and their affairs".**

 - A. **It is extremely dangerous. When one talks to another about his dislikes or opinions about someone then it puts another in uneasy position.**

2. **Gossip is a sin which will cause one to experience the second death if it is not repented of.**
Romans 1:29-32
 - A. **One who likes to gossip does not have the love of the brethren in their best interest.**
 - 1) **They are grouped with all those other unrighteous qualities of life.**
 - B. **Notice verse 32: Paul says - They know God's ordinances, yet those that practice gossip also give hearty approval to others that do so.**
 - 1) **We must be careful then not to receive gossip from others!**
 - C. **Paul was afraid he would find "gossip" a problem at Corinth when he visited there.**

2 Corinthians 12:20 For I fear lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I wish, and that I shall be found by you such as you do not wish; lest there be contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, backbitings, whisperings, conceits, tumults;

- 1) **All these sins that Paul mentions seem to go right along with gossip.**
- D. **Paul rebukes those who are idle and are guilty of gossip.**
1 Timothy 5:13

3. Participating in gossip is often times easy to do.

A. We try to justify our actions with the reason that we are trying to help.

1) And we may be. But telling people who are not involved and will not likely help the situation can only lead to trouble.

B. Before relating news to others, about others, we would be smart to ask ourselves these questions:

1) Will it build up the body of Christ?

2) Will it promote peace and harmony in the church?

3) Is it really necessary to tell?

4) Will it help the person being told and the person that it is about?

5) Are we sure it is the truth?

4. We will be responsible for every careless word we render.

Matthew 12:36-37

A. The reason is explained in the two verses preceding these.

Matthew 12:34-35

1) Gossip is a sin that can be forgiven by God but the consequences can be as far reaching as a forest destroyed by fire by one match.

Strive to Build up Not Tear Down

1. **Striving to maintain peace and harmony is required of each Christian.**
 - A. **This is not always possible to maintain but we are responsible for trying!**
Philippians 2:1-2
Ephesians 4:1-3
 - B. **If our words are words of gossip then our heart is not pure and clean as it ought to be.**
 - C. **If on the other hand, our words are uplifting, helpful, and true, then our heart is in the right condition!**
2. **THINK, THINK, THINK before speaking.**
 - A. **Even if what we are about to say is true, is it something that others who are not involved need to know?**
 - B. **We must learn to bridle our tongue.**

James 1:26 If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless.

- C. **Most of us have been the subject of gossip at one time or another in our lives - it is not pleasant.**
 - 1) **Let us all remember to watch over our heart in all that we do:**

Proverbs 4:23-24 Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life. Put away from you a deceitful mouth, And put perverse lips far from you.

- 2) **If we would put into practice the "golden rule" of Matthew 7:12 AND Philippians 2:3-4, we would not be guilty of this terrible sin.**

Matthew 7:12 Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

Philippians 2:3-4 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

- 3. Gossip is a sin that can come upon one suddenly.**
 - A. When you least expect it, you may soon be engaging in gossip.**
 - B. As soon as other people start entering your conversation, be careful. Your conversation can lean towards gossip in no time!**
- 4. We all need to heed the words of the apostle Paul that he wrote to the Thessalonian brethren:**

1 Thessalonians 4:11 that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you,

- 5. Let us all concentrate on encouraging and building up one another. Nobody benefits from gossip!**

Cursing or Euphemisms

Matthew 12:34-37

- 1. One of the songs in our song book is entitled "The World's Bible." The second stanza of the song states: "We are the only Bible the careless world will read. We are the sinner's gospel. We are the scoffer's creed. We are the Lord's last message given in deed and word. What if the type is crooked? What if the print is blurred?"**
- 2. Every Christian must strive to make the BEST "imprint" on the world that he possibly can. If our type has become covered with the dirt and grime of sin, we will not be able to make a good mark on the paper of life!**

3. Improper speaking is one way in which we can “blur” our message to the world. Paul told Timothy:

1 Timothy 4:12 Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

4. Virtually every Christian realizes that vulgar speech, curse words, swear words, using the Lord’s name in vain, etc. are condemned in the Bible;

A. Yet, how many saints have unknowingly been guilty of such by using words of a more “mollified” nature?

1) Such IS the case when using many of today’s euphemisms.

5. What is a euphemism?

A. Defined as: “the substitution of a mild, indirect, or vague expression for one thought to be offensive, harsh, or blunt.”

B. Is it bad or good?

1) Depending on what word it replaces makes it either one we could use or one we should not use.

C. Some examples we certainly understand:

- 1) “passed away” “is at rest” **DIED**
- 2) “full-figured” **FAT**
- 3) “economical” **CHEAP**
- 4) “sanitary engineer” **GARBAGE MAN**

a. In these examples the euphemistic renderings would be appropriate to use because they are not replacing or signifying anything which would be improper.

6. Let us consider some words in which the counterparts are terms that the Christian should not use profanely – for to do so would be wrong.

- A. Gee – euphemism for Jesus**
- B. Golly – euphemism for God**
- C. Gosh – euphemism for God**
- D. Heck – euphemism for Hell**

1) There are many other words that we may use that are nothing more than euphemisms for deity or cuss words.

I do not feel comfortable in this public setting to begin naming the various words and the euphemisms for them. However, I do have a listing of over 40 words and euphemisms that I will give to any of you adults who are interested in making sure you are not using a substitute for an offensive word.

7. Terms such as “Jesus,” “God,” and “Hell,” are found in numerous passages throughout the Bible, but never are these words used loosely or irreverently.

- A. Let us not be careless in our words, but rather very careful.**
- B. Just as a person is known by the “fruit of his lips.” Let us each strive to rid ourselves of any defilement of the flesh. Paul wrote:**

2 Corinthians 10:4-5 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,

1) May we all strive to control our tongue.

- C. Let’s never forget the pure and holy words of Jesus:**

Matthew 12:36-37 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."

The story is told of the woman who became conscious stricken because of her gossiping ways. She went to the preacher, confessed her sin of spreading malicious rumors about her neighbors; and after the preacher prayed with her for God's forgiveness, she asked what could she do to repair the damage she'd done.

The preacher handed her a bag of feathers, took her to the roof of the building, and had her empty the feathers into the wind. Looking into her astonished face, the preacher then said, "I want you to go into the city and return to me every one of those feathers."

"Why...that's impossible," said the woman, "the wind has scattered the feathers to who knows where. I'll never be able to find them all."

"I know," nodded the preacher. "Now perhaps you can see how utterly impossible it will be for you to undo the damage performed by your wagging tongue. **Even though God has forgiven you, the harm you've done cannot ever be totally undone.**"