

“Let Not Your Mouth Lead You Into Sin”

Sermon Notes

➤ **Through the grace of the gospel, we must learn to tame our tongues before the throne of the triune God**

Titus 2:11-12

**Your sins of speech do more damage in your walk with the Lord than you might realize, so...*

1. Curate your prayers (vv.1-3; Matthew 6:5-8)

2. Keep your promises (vv.4-7; Matthew 5:33-37; Matthew 23:16-22)

Next Week: Ecclesiastes 5:8-20 - “He Who Loves Money Will Not Be Satisfied”

Community Group Study Guide

For the Week of December 6th-12th

Getting Started

1. Sins of speech are legion in this world - sadly, even in the church and among the people of God. Recognizing that the following list isn't exhaustive (but is fairly representative), how many of these have you been guilty of since you've been born again? Crude joking¹, lying², gossip³, swearing⁴, babbling⁵, boasting⁶, slander⁷, sensual speech⁸, blasphemy⁹. Given what Jesus teaches us about the connection between our hearts and our mouths (Luke 6:45), how does this make you feel?

Digging Deeper

2. In his delightful little book *Life Together* (1938), the 20th century pastor-martyr-sage-spy Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote these simple, yet convicting, words:

"Often we combat our evil thoughts most effectively if we absolutely refuse to allow them to be expressed in words... Thus it must be a decisive rule of every Christian fellowship that each individual is prohibited from saying much that occurs to him."

Bonhoeffer calls this "The Ministry of Holding One's Tongue" Have you ever thought of becoming slow to speak as a ministry - as a way to serve other people? Discuss.

Open Your Bible to the Book of Proverbs...

3. When it comes to surveying the biblical terrain on taming the tongue, nothing compares to the book of Proverbs. Take time to read and discuss the following references as a group. You may not get to all of them, but give some thoughtful reflection to you ones you do: Proverbs 10:19; 12:18; 12:22-23; 13:3; 14:23; 15:1-2, 4, 7-8, 12, 23, 26, 28, 29, 31-32; 17:27-28; 18:2; 18:13, 21; 20:19; 26:4-5; 29:11, 20; 30:32.

Have any of these verses become precious to you over the course of your walk with the Lord? If so, which one(s)? Why? Given what's happening in your life at the moment, which of these proverbs is God's word for you in a particular way right now? How come? Please share why with the group.

4. After Proverbs, James might be the next book of the Bible to which we'd turn in order to further develop a biblical theology of taming the tongue. In fact, James is the author who furnishes us with that very phrase. Consider the following passages from the epistle of James: James 1:5-8, 1:8,

1 Ephesians 5:4
2 Exodus 20:16
3 Romans 1:29
4 Hosea 4:2
5 Proverbs 10:8, 10
6 James 4:16
7 Ephesians 4:31
8 2 Corinthians 12:21
9 Leviticus 24:10-16

1:13; 1:19-21; 1:26; 2:2-4, 12-13, 15-16; 3:1-12; 4:1-3, 9; 4:11-17; 5:1, 9, 5:12-18.

How many different sorts of speech does James identify throughout his letter? Is there a verse that seems especially relevant that you might offer as counsel to a brother or sister in our church who might be struggling this season? If so, which verse? Don't forget to make a note of it and put it in a place where you'll remember to share it with them in the days ahead.

5. What does Jesus teach us in Matthew 12:36-37 about the careless words that we speak in this life? What sort of a personal motivation is this for you to grow as it relates to self control in matters of speech?
6. Psalm 141:3 is a good place to begin when it comes to learning how to tame our tongues. What does the psalmist pray here? Do you pray this way? If so, what's been the result? If not, are you ready to start?
7. What does the gospel have to do with taming our tongues? Consider the relentless connections the Apostle Paul makes between our words and the good news of the gospel in Ephesians 4:29-5:10. How many times in this portion of Scripture does he anchor his call to tame the tongue in the finished work of Christ and our union with him? If you were to put it in a sentence, how would you say it? Try completing this phrase: "The gospel is the answer taming the tongue because _____".
8. The following is a list of practical steps we might consider in our quest to tame the tongue. Work carefully through them as a group. As you close your time in prayer, make sure to ask the Lord for his help in applying these to our lives.
 - Meditate on God's Word day and night, especially upon the truths of the gospel - the matter of first importance (Psalm 1:1-6; 1 Cor. 15:1-5)
 - Seek to crucify indwelling pride and cultivate Spirit-empowered humility (James 4:6)
 - Listen well to others when they're speaking (Proverbs 18:13)
 - Ask good questions (Proverbs 18:15)
 - Speak only the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15)
 - Learn to cover and confront others' sins in wise proportion (1 Peter 4:8; Luke 17:3-4)
 - Aim to encourage and build up (Ephesians 4:29)
 - Pray with and for others as often as you can (1 Thessalonians 5:17)
 - By the grace of God, be ruthless in setting a guard over the door of your mouth (Psalm 141:3; James 1:19; Ecclesiastes 5:1-7)