



THE BATTLE WITH THE TONGUE

But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. (James 3:8)



INTRODUCTION

In the previous message you studied one of the main battlefields of spiritual warfare, the mind. What happens in the mind affects the tongue and the tongue affects the spirit, soul, heart, and body. This message concerns another major arena of spiritual warfare, the battle with the tongue.



WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT THE TONGUE

Before you examine Satan's strategies for control of the tongue, read what the Bible says about the tongue in James 3:1-13. These verses reveal that although the

tongue is a little member of your body, it is very powerful. Through the tongue the whole body can be defiled. The tongue can never be tamed by man. Only when you yield your tongue to God can control be maintained over it. But even then, you can never relax your guard over the tongue believing you have totally conquered it.

The Bible compares the tongue to:

A fire: James 3:5

A burning fire: Proverbs 16:27

A world of iniquity: James 3:6

A beast that needs taming: James 3:7-8

A fountain of either fresh or bitter water: James 3:11

A tree bearing either good or evil fruit: James 3:12

An unruly evil: James 3:8

Deadly poison: James 3:8

A sharp razor: Psalms 52:2

A sharp sword: Psalms 57:4; 59:7

A poisonous serpent: Psalms 140:3

A deep pit: Proverbs 22:14



The Bible says the tongue is powerful because of the effect it has on others. The tongue actually has the power to bring death or life:

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

The tongue is powerful because of the effect it has on you. You can snare yourself with your own words:

Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth; thou art taken with the words of thy mouth. (Proverbs 6:2)



STRATEGIES OF SATAN:

THE BATTLE FOR THE TONGUE

Your tongue is closely related to your heart, body, soul, and spirit. For example, if Satan has control of your heart, he has control of your tongue:

But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.

For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies;

These are the things which defile a man...(Matthew 15:18-20)

A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil

treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil; for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

(Luke 6:45)

Satan uses the things you say to cause a breach (opening) into your spirit:

A wholesome tongue is a tree of life: but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit. (Proverbs 15:4)

By evil communication you create a breach through which Satan enters to war against your spirit. Satan also uses your lips to affect your soul:

A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul. (Proverbs 18:7)

Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles. (Proverbs 21:23)

Through the tongue, Satan affects your whole body:

And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity; so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of Hell. (James 3:6)

Your tongue affects your whole life:

He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life; but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction.

(Proverbs 13:3)

Satan seeks control of your tongue by tempting you to speak:



COVETOUS WORDS:

Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have; for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. (Hebrews 13:5)

IDOL WORDS:

But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. (Matthew 12:36)

FOOLISH WORDS:

The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge; but the mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness. (Proverbs 15:14)

UNPROFITABLE WORDS:

Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. (II Timothy 2:14)

FABLES AND COMMANDMENTS OF MEN:

Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth. (Titus 1:14)

EVIL ABOUT THINGS YOU DO NOT KNOW:

*But these speak evil of those things which they know not...
(Jude 10)*

*But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and
destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand
not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption. (II
Peter 2:12)*

FLATTERING WORDS:

*For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye
know, nor a cloak of covetousness; God is witness. (I
Thessalonians 2:5)*

ENTICING WORDS:

*And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with
enticing words. (Colossians 2:4)*



**MURMURING, COMPLAINING, AND BOASTING
WORDS:**

*These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their
own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words,
having men's persons in admiration because of
advantage. (Jude 16)*

*For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they
allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much*

*wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them
who live in error. (II Peter 2:18)*

VAIN WORDS:

*They speak vanity every one with his neighbor..(Psalms
12:2)*

PROUD WORDS:

...with their mouth they speak proudly. (Psalms 17:10)

BOASTFUL WORDS:

*How long shall they utter and speak hard things? And all
the workers of iniquity boast themselves. (Psalms 94:4)*



WORDS WHICH TAKE GOD'S NAME IN VAIN:

*Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain;
for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His
name in vain. (Exodus 20:7)*

CURSING AND BITTER WORDS:

*Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. (Romans
3:14)*

LIES:

*The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray
as soon as they be born, speaking lies. (Psalms 58:3)*

*Let the lying lips be put to silence, which speak grievous things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous.
(Psalms 31:18)*

SLANDERING WORDS:

Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son. (Psalms 50:20)

MALICIOUS WORDS AGAINST OTHERS:

Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deed which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words...(III John 10)

WHISPERING WORDS (GOSSIP):

A froward man soweth strife; and a whisperer separateth chief friends. (Proverbs 16:28)

TALEBEARING WORDS:

A talebearer revealeth secrets; but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter. (Proverbs 11:13)

BACKBITING WORDS:

He that backbiteth not with his tongue..(Psalms 15:3)

DISSEMBLING WORDS:

Dissembling words cause division:

He that hateth dissembleth with his lips, and layeth up deceit within him. (Proverbs 26:4)

CONTENTIOUS WORDS:

A fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for strokes.

(Proverbs 18:6)

WORDS OF STRIFE:

Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man: thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.

(Psalms 31:20)

WORDS OF DISCORD:

...he that soweth discord among brethren. (Proverbs 6:19)

DEVOURING WORDS:

Thou lovest all devouring words, O thou deceitful tongue.

(Psalms 52:4)

FROWARD AND PERVERSE WORDS:

Put away from thee a froward mouth and perverse lips put far from thee.

(Proverbs 4:24)

EVIL AND DECEITFUL WORDS:

Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit.

(Psalms 50:19)

*Let not an evil speaker be established in the
earth...(Psalms 140:11)*

MISCHIEVOUS WORDS:

*They also that seek after my life lay snares for me: and
they that seek my hurt speak mischievous things, and
imagine deceits all the day long. (Psalms 38:12)*

FILTHY WORDS:

*But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice,
blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.
(Colossians 3:8)*



**SPIRITUAL COUNTER STRATEGIES VICTORY
OVER THE TONGUE**

*When David realized the great battle with the tongue, he
cried out:*

*What shall be given unto thee? Or what shall be done
unto thee, thou false tongue? (Psalms 120:3)*

*The only way to win the battle with the tongue is by
application of spiritual counter strategies given in God's
Word.*



GET YOUR HEART RIGHT WITH GOD:

The first step in gaining victory over the tongue is to get your heart right with God:

But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.

For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies;

These are the things which defile a man...(Matthew 15:18-20)

Your mouth will speak what is in your heart. If your heart is not right, your tongue will reveal it. Use your tongue to get your heart right with God:

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth, the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

*For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.
(Romans 10:9-10)*



RECOGNIZE YOUR RESPONSIBILITY:

Recognize you will be held responsible for the words that come out of your mouth:

But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned. (Matthew 12:36-37)

And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant... (Luke 19:22)



REALIZE YOUR WORDS REFLECT ON THE GOSPEL:

As long as you believe your tongue is not important, you will not gain control of it. You must realize your conversation reflects on the Gospel of Jesus:

Only let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ...

(Philippians 1:27)

Because of this, you should set a good example by your conversation:

Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. (I Timothy 4:12)

What comes out of your mouth is noted by the heathen:

Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them. (Psalms 126:2)

You can actually win others to the Lord Jesus Christ by your conversation:

Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;

While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear or reverence of the Lord.

(I Peter 3:1-2)



KEEP YOUR WORDS FEW AND SIMPLE:

In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise. (Proverbs 10:19)

But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil. (Matthew 5:37)



THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK:

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear; slow to speak, slow to wrath. (James 1:19)

*If thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thyself, or if thou hast thought evil, lay thine hand upon thy mouth.
(Proverbs 30:32)*

The heart of the righteous studieth to answer: but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things. (Proverbs 15:28)

Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding.

(Proverbs 17:28)



SEPARATE YOURSELF:

Separate Yourself from those who can not control their tongue:

Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge. (Proverbs 14:7)



LEARN THE POWER OF PEACEFUL WORDS:

Peaceful words are more powerful than words of anger:

By long forbearing is a prince persuaded, and a soft tongue breaketh the bone. (Proverbs 25:15)

RECOGNIZE YOUR TONGUE IS A WEAPON:

Your tongue is a weapon you can use to overcome the enemy instead of being defeated by him:

And they overcame him (Satan) by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony... (Revelation 12:11)

If you control your tongue, it will put to shame those who falsely accuse you:

Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.

(I Peter 3:16)



TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR TONGUE:

With God's help, you can control the tongue. But YOU must take action to control your own tongue. The following verses indicate action from YOU:

For he that will love life, and see good days, LET HIM refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile. (I Peter 3:10)

...SPEAK evil of no man...(Titus 3:2)

SPEAK NOT EVIL one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother,

speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law; but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.

There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another? (James 4:11-12)

LET YOUR conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have... (Hebrews 13:5)

Only LET YOUR conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ... (Philippians 1:27)

That YE PUT OFF concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

And that YE PUT ON the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Wherefore PUTTING AWAY lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor...(Ephesians 4:22-25)

But now YE also PUT OFF...filthy communication out of your mouth. (Colossians 3:8)

LET no corrupt communication proceed out of YOUR mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. (Ephesians 4:29)

LET all...evil speaking be put away from YOU...(Ephesians 4:31)

...BE YE holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, BE ye holy; for I am holy. (I Peter 1:15-16)

PUT AWAY from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee. (Proverbs 4:24)

KEEP thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.

(Psalms 34:13)

I said, I WILL TAKE HEED to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me. (Psalms 39:1)

Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me; and to HIM THAT ORDERETH his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God. (Psalms 50:23)

THOU shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain. (Exodus 20:7)

THOU shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. (Exodus 20:16)



PATTERN YOUR CONVERSATION AFTER JESUS:

Jesus spoke gracious words:

And all bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth, And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?

(Luke 4:22)

He spoke words of authority about God:

And they were astonished at His doctrine: for He taught them as one that had authority and not as the scribes.

(Mark 1:22)

Jesus absorbed the push; He broke the cycle of evil with good.

There was no guile (sinful speaking) found in His mouth:

Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth; Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to him that judgeth righteously.

(I Peter 2:22-23)



USE YOUR TONGUE FOR GOOD:

Speak words of wisdom and kindness:

She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. (Proverbs 31:26)

My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding. (Psalms 49:3)

Talk about God:

I will speak of the glorious honor of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works. (Psalms 145:5)

My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness and thy salvation all the day... (Psalms 71:15)

My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long...

(Psalms 71:24)

Speak of God's Word:

My tongue shall speak of thy Word; for all thy commandments are righteousness. (Psalms 119:172)

With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth.

(Psalms 119:13)

I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed. (Psalms 119:46)

Speak words of comfort from God's Word:

Wherefore comfort one another with these words. (I Thessalonians 4:18)

Speak of the Kingdom of God:

They shall speak of the glory of thy Kingdom, and talk of thy power.

(Psalms 145:11)

Let your lips be filled with praise to God:

My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord; and let all flesh bless His holy name for ever and ever. (Psalms 145:21)

Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand. (Psalms 149:6)

I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever; with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations. (Psalms 89:1)

I will greatly praise the Lord with my mouth; yea, I will praise Him among the multitude. (Psalms 109:30)

My lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes.

(Psalms 119:171)

Because thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. (Psalms 63:3)

...and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips. (Psalms 63:5)

I cried unto Him with my mouth, and He was extolled with my tongue. (Psalms 66:17)

*Let my mouth be filled with thy praise and with thy honor
all the day.*

(Psalms 71:8)

*My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee; and
my soul, which thou hast redeemed. (Psalms 71:23)*



*I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall
continually be in my mouth. (Psalms 34:1)*

BEFORE YOU SPEAK, ASK THESE QUESTIONS:

1. Will what I am about to say bring glory to God?

*And whatsoever ye do in WORD or deed, do ALL in the
name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the
Father by Him.*

(Colossians 3:17)

2. Is it the truth?

3. Is it fair to all concerned?

4. Will it be beneficial to all concerned?

***5. Will it edify others (result in good will and better
relationships)?***

***6. If you are talking about another person, have you said
the same thing to him or her?***

7. Do you know that what you are saying is a fact or have you arrived at your own conclusions after hearing rumors?

8. If you have something against your brother or sister, have you attempted to be reconciled to them before discussing it with others?

9. Is it absolutely necessary that you say this?



REMEMBER THESE VERSES:

For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. (Psalms 139:4)

...the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning. (Proverbs 16:21)

The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips. (Proverbs 16:23)

A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth; and a word spoken in due season, how good is it! (Proverbs 15:23)

Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness. (II Peter 3:11)

A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.

(Proverbs 25:11)

*Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul
from troubles. (Proverbs 21:23)*

*He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life; but he that
openeth wide his lips shall have destruction. (Proverbs
13:3)*



CLAIM THESE PROMISES:

*Hear; For I will speak of excellent things; and the
opening of my lips shall be right things.*

*For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness is an
abomination to my lips.*

*All the words of my mouth are in righteousness; there is
nothing froward or perverse in them. (Proverbs 8:6-8)*



PRAY THESE PRAYERS:

*Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of
my lips.*

(Psalms 141:3)

*Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my
heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and
my redeemer. (Psalms 19:14)*

ESTABLISH THIS PURPOSE:

Thou hast proved mine heart; thou hast visited me in the night; thou has tried me, and shalt find nothing: I AM PURPOSED THAT MY MOUTH SHALL NOT TRANSGRESS. (Psalms 17:3)



TACTICAL MANEUVERS

The books of Psalms and Proverbs in the Bible have much to say about the tongue.

1. Look up each verse listed in the book of Proverbs. Write the comparisons on the chart. The first one is done for you as an example to follow.

Reference In Proverbs Good Tongue Evil Tongue

10:6 blessings violence

*10:11...10:14...10:20...10:21...10:31...10:32...11:9...11:11..
.11:13*

*12:6...12:13...12:17...12:18...12:19...12:22...13:3...14:3...1
4:5..*

14:25...15:2...15:4...15:7...15:14...15:28...17:9...19:1

2. In Proverbs 6:16-19 there is a list of seven things which God especially hates. Which three things are done by the tongue?

3. Read the books of Psalms and Proverbs and do the following:

A. Make a list of all the verses that refer to wrong use of the tongue. Make your list according to the following pattern:

Reference Wrong use of tongue

Psalms 5:9 Flattery

Psalms 10:7 Cursing and deceit

(continue this list)

B. Make another list showing the proper use of the tongue. Make your list according to the following pattern:

Reference Proper use of tongue

Psalms 19:14 Acceptable words

Psalms 34:1 Blessing and praising God continually

(continue this list)

4. "Thou shalt not raise a false report" (Exodus 23:1). The word "raise" in this verse means receive or utter. We are not to listen to or spread false reports. Philippians 4:8 indicates we are to think on only good reports. Here are some ways to recognize if someone is bringing you an evil report.



AN EVIL REPORT WILL...

-Raise questions about the motives or actions of other brothers and sisters in the Lord.

-Discredit spiritual leadership.

-Cause division and strife. When we are busy fighting between ourselves, we cannot

aggressively fight the true enemy, Satan.

-An evil report will always focus on the negative.



AN EVIL REPORT ARISES FROM MOTIVES OF...

-Pride: To exalt themselves, a person puts down someone else.

-Envy and covetousness: A person secretly desires what others have so criticizes them.

-Guilt: A person transfers his guilt to others. He feels guilty about his own sins and failures

so point out those of others.

-Rebellion: The rebellious spirit targets leadership. Read the story of Absalom in the Bible. (II Samuel 15) One way to recognize an evil report motivated by rebellion is by the statement used by Absalom: "If I were the leader I would..."

-Bitterness: A person has been hurt, so they hurt others with their words.



HOW TO RECOGNIZE AN EVIL REPORT...

- The person may test you first. They may ask "How do you feel about _____?" They are testing your feelings before proceeding with the evil report.***
- The person will create curiosity. They may say "You won't believe what I heard about _____" or "Did you hear the latest about _____". They are trying to motivate your curiosity to ask what they know.***
- They will claim to know the true story or have access to secret, inside information. This appeals to your pride. You want to become part of this select group with such knowledge.***
- They may disguise it as a request for counsel. "I need your opinion on a matter....", and then proceed to share an evil report under the guise of seeking spiritual counsel.***

- An evil report can even be shared through a prayer request. "We really need to pray for _____ because _____" and they proceed to share what is actually gossip about the individual.*
- An evil report is often shared under the guise of concern. The person begins by saying "I am deeply concerned about _____". This serves as an introduction to the evil report which follows.*



HOW TO STOP AN EVIL REPORT...

Ask the person bringing you the report the following questions:

- "Why are you telling ME this?"*
- "Where did you get this information?" (A person giving an evil report usually will not want to tell you their source.)*
- "Have you gone to the person you are talking about according to the principles of Matthew 18:15-17"?*

- "Have you checked the facts, or are you just repeating the story?"

- "Can I quote you when I check out the facts on this?"

- "Do you think this qualifies as that which we are to focus on according to Philippians 4:8?"

Or you may just simply say...

- "I really do not want to hear this."

