

Our Words – Lesson Outline

Our words come from what's in our hearts

We know this because according to [Luke 6:45](#) -
45 A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.

So, whatever is in your heart is going to come out of your mouth.

You can tell a lot about yourself by listening to what you say.

-The great thing is, if you don't like what you say, you can do some [heart work](#) and submit it to God for cleansing.

[Ephesians 4:29](#) says,

29 Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

[The King James](#) says it like this:

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.

I looked up unwholesome/corrupt in the original Greek

It means rotten, putrid, unfit for use, poor quality

We are not supposed to let anything corrupt come out of our mouths.

Instead, we are to allow edifying things out

Edify - to instruct and improve especially in moral and religious knowledge ([Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary](#))

The words that come out of our mouth are supposed to help others, instructing them.

-This does not mean beat them over the head with it.

Instead:

Look at that phrase:

- Building them up according to their needs
- Giving good advice, encouraging them in the faith, setting the example
- Depending on the situation and what it is they need at that moment

Now, look at [Ephesians 5:3-4](#) which says:

But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. 4 Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving.

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In [the King James](#), verse 4 says:

4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.

Instead of talking foolishly, being obscene, coarse joking, we should be giving thanks.

[Colossians 3:8-10](#) says it plainly:

But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

Okay. so what exactly are these things we aren't supposed to do?

Well, the coarse jesting would be off-color jokes (both sexual and nonsexual, including racist, commonly called "dirty" jokes), making fun of people either in front of them or behind their back, scheming,

It's also double-entendre

Intentionally saying things that can be taken 2 ways instead of actually saying it

Bragging or "talking big"

[Proverbs 27:1-2](#) *Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring. 2 Let someone else praise you, and not your own mouth; an outsider, and not your own lips.*

If you are going to boast, [1 Corinthians 1:31](#) says it should only be in the Lord

Therefore, as it is written: "Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord."

If you're gonna brag, brag on Jesus and *His* greatness, not your own.

Just make sure you don't do it in a way that you are the center of attention

Gossiping - [Ephesians 5:11-12](#)

Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. 12 It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret.

-We aren't even supposed to talk about the ugly things people are doing

-We can pray for them and ask God to help them

-We can confide in a friend about our own troubles or what we have suffered and ask for advice or prayers

-We just need to make sure we aren't doing it to gossip or share what bad thing they are doing just to talk about it.

-It's okay to only say they are struggling or they need help.

-The Lord knows what their struggles are.

-Sharing it with others to show how much you know or to try to "be somebody" is gossip.

-Some people do it because of the power they think it gives them

-That's not power, that's sin. Don't do it!

A HUGE NO-NO is sharing a secret someone has shared with you

- Someone telling you something in private is a gift from them.
- They are saying they care about and trust you
- They are being vulnerable and letting you into their inner selves
- This is something that absolutely must not be violated or disrespected

[Proverbs 11:13](#) *A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy person keeps a secret.*

Cussing - [James 5:12](#)

12 Above all, my brothers and sisters, do not swear—not by heaven or by earth or by anything else. All you need to say is a simple “Yes” or “No.” Otherwise you will be condemned.

[Matthew 5:33-37](#)

33 “Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not break your oath, but fulfill to the Lord the vows you have made.’ 34 But I tell you, do not swear an oath at all: either by heaven, for it is God’s throne; 35 or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. 36 And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. 37 All you need to say is simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.

I’ve heard people use the phrase, “I swear to God!” in various ways,

- Sometimes to prove they are telling the truth
- Sometimes as a way of letting off steam.
- That violates both James 5:12 and Matthew 5:36-37

My question to you - is cussing only swearing oaths?

What about using those certain words we know are bad?

Or, is substituting a supposedly clean word but using it the same way still cussing?

- Look at the intent of it.
- Why did you say it?
- What was in your heart when you said it?

Case in point -

Someone I know stubbed his foot really hard.

- He said “God!” in a dramatic way, paused and quickly followed it up with “bless America!”
- He changed what he was going to say because people were around.
- He was not being patriotic!
- He was being sinful.
- He was taking the Lord’s name in vain.
- He wasn’t calling out to God to help him in that situation, he was expressing himself
- He was swearing, plain and simple.

What's in your heart at that moment defines the meaning of the words you say.

Don't make the mistake of thinking it's no big deal.

It's a very big deal.

[Matthew 12:36](#) says we will give an account for every empty (idle) word we say

Words are powerful.

Listen to:

[Proverbs 18:21](#)- *The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit.*

Think about it - you can destroy someone with your words

- You can hurt their feelings and cause long term damage
- Can you think of a time long ago someone said something hurtful to you?
- Why cause that same harm to someone else?

You can ruin someone's life with your words - character assassination.

If someone says something bad about someone else, even if you know both people well, there will be some doubt there.

- Depending on what you say, you can really destroy them.
- People tend to believe the bad things they hear about others
- Once they believe it, it's often hard for them to let it go, even when told the previous statement was a lie

In my line of work, one rumored doubt about my professional honesty could cost me not just my job, but my career - a career I've spend 20+ years building.

At the same time, by speaking good and encouraging things you can make their life better

Remember [Ephesians 4:29](#)

We are supposed to speak what is helpful to others for their building up

- Ever talked to someone who was really down and had real doubts or pain about something?
- Ever throw them a lifeline by giving them words of encouragement and hope, or the truth of the Scriptures?
- Anyone ever do that for you?

Words are powerful and they can make or break someone whether you mean them to or not. You have the power to make that decision and to choose which way the conversation will go based solely on the words you choose.

A few more verses that speak to that are:

[Proverbs 16:24](#) - *Gracious words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.*

[Proverbs 15:4](#) - *The soothing tongue is a tree of life, but a perverse tongue crushes the spirit.*

[Proverbs 11:9](#) - *With their mouths the godless destroy their neighbors, but through knowledge the righteous escape.*

[Psalm 19:14](#) *May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.*

Part of our faith walk is focusing on making sure our words and heart are pleasing to God, who is our Rock and our Redeemer.

-We are supposed to want to please Him.

-Editing our words by filtering them through Scripture is a good way to do that.

Okay, so then - what should we say?

[Ephesians 4:29](#) told us we should say what is useful for edifying, or building up, others.

Remembering that what we should say depends on the situation and their particular needs

[Ephesians 5:4](#) said we should speak thanksgiving.

-Expressing thankfulness for whatever we can, whenever we can, keeps our focus on the Savior and off of us or others

-It helps us remember it is about Him, not us, as well as what He has done and is doing for us

-This in turn helps strengthen our faith

[Colossians 4:6](#) tells us to:

Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

[Colossians 3:16-17](#) sums it up well:

16 Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. 17 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

One last thought - if you are making an effort to only say good things, not bad things, this is going to affect your heart and thoughts because you are going to be thinking about what you are saying.

This affects your thoughts, which affect your heart, which affects your mouth.

By working on any one of these you actually affect all three.

By continuously working on them you will begin to see a change in yourself in all the areas as you honestly seek to improve your faith walk.

This week's homework -

Read [James 3:1-13](#)

- Pray and ask the Lord to help you examine your tongue and its habits.
- Ask Him to show you any areas you need help.
- Be brave enough to prayerfully ask Him to help you with the areas He shows.

This week's Memory Verse-

[Psalm 141:3](#) - *Set a guard over my mouth, Lord; keep watch over the door of my lips.*

More verses to consider:

[Proverbs 15:1](#)- *A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.*

[Proverbs 31:8](#) *Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute.*

[Psalm 71:8](#) *My mouth is filled with your praise, declaring your splendor all day long.*

[Proverbs 21:23](#) *Whoever keeps his mouth and his tongue keeps himself out of trouble.*

[Proverbs 19:1](#) *Better is a poor person who walks in his integrity than one who is crooked in speech and is a fool.*