

POWER OF THE TONGUE

James 3:1-18 ¹ Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. ² We all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check. ³ When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. ⁴ Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. ⁵ Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. ⁶ The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell. ⁷ All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind, ⁸ but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹ With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. ¹⁰ Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. ¹¹ Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? ¹² My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.

LAW

Exodus 20:16 One of Ten Commandments

“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him, slander him, or hurt his reputation, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way. **Exodus 23:1** (Cooperate in malicious witness)

Psalm 12:3-4 A prayer for God to deal with evil speech.

May the Lord cut off all flattering lips, the tongue that makes great boasts, those who say, “With our tongue we will prevail, our lips are with us; who is master over us?”

Matthew 5:22 Jesus' words

But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire.

Matthew 12:36-37 Jesus' words

I tell you, on the Day of Judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

Romans 1:29 Description of those who reject truth of God

They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents,

Proverbs 6:16-19

There are six things that the Lord hates, seven that are an abomination to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil, a false witness who breathes out lies, and one who sows discord among brothers.

GOSPEL

1 TIMOTHY 1:8-17 (selected verses)

We know that the law is good if one uses it properly. We also know that law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels....those who kill their mothers and fathers... slave traders and liars and perjurers... I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me faithful... even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy... the grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly... Christ Jesus came to save sinners – of whom I am the worst...

SANCTIFICATION, HOLY LIVING

Psalm 34:13

Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD. Whoever of you loves life and desires to see many good days, keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking lies.

[Ephesians 4:31](#)

Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.

[Titus 2:3](#)

Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good,

[Titus 3:2](#) **Everyone...**

To speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people.

[1 Peter 3:10](#)

For “Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit;

[James 1:19-20](#)

Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

[James 1:26](#)

If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless.

WISDOM, UNDERSTANDING

[Ecclesiastes 3:7](#)

A time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

[Psalm 64:3](#) **Reality of the evildoer's words**

They sharpen their tongues like swords, and aim their words like deadly arrows,

[Psalm 140:3](#)

Rescue me, O LORD, from evil men....They make their tongue sharp as a serpent's, and under their lips is the venom of asps.

[Proverbs 10:19](#)

When words are many, transgression is not lacking, but whoever restrains his lips is prudent.

[Proverbs 12:18](#)

Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

[Proverbs 15:4](#)

A gentle tongue is a tree of life, but a (perverse) deceitful tongue crushes the spirit.

[Proverbs 17:27](#)

Whoever restrains his words has knowledge, and he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding.

[Proverbs 18:21](#)

The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit.

[Proverbs 20:19](#)

A gossip betrays a confidence; so avoid a man who talks too much.

[Proverbs 21:23](#)

Whoever keeps his mouth and his tongue keeps himself out of trouble.

[Proverbs 29:20](#)

Do you see a man who is hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

NEXT WEEK: CRITICISM

[James 4:11](#)

Do not speak evil against one another, brothers. The one who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks evil against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge.