

FATHER'S HEART MINISTRIES  
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THE POWER OF THE TONGUE

INTRODUCTION

The following verses of Scripture all emphasise the vital importance of the mouth and the tongue:

Ps.34:11-13

*“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”*

General Observations:

1. Life in its fullness and the fear of the Lord are associated together.

The measure, in which we have the fear of the Lord, is the measure in which we enjoy true life!

“**Fear**” is the Hebrew word **Yare’** and has the connotation of reverence, respect and honour.

**Fearing God** is that motivation which produces godly living.

2. In the context of this verse, the fear of God begins with:

*“Keeping your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking lies.*

“**Evil**” means that which is of inferior quality, or the inability to measure up to a certain standard.

“**Evil**” means to operate in your speech below a godly standard and so giving pain causing unhappiness!

“**Lies**” is deceitful speech, or falsehood designed to inflict hurt and harm! In Hebrew “*deceitful*” is **Halaq** which means:

- To be smooth
- To be seductive
- To slippery
- To flatter

Of Jesus the Scripture says:

Isa.53:9

*“There was no deceit in His mouth”*

There was no smooth talking; flattery; guile or seductive speech in Him!

1 Pet.2:22

*“No deceit was found in His mouth”*

In Greek “**deceit**” has different shades of meaning:

- Dolios – dishonesty and trickery
- Dolos – slyness
- Doloo – distort

Jesus never distorted the image of His father in His speech.

So, do not speak to lead astray; to flatter; to trick; to seduce – all this indicate a wrong motive, or that your speech is designed to mislead people to ascribe a value or worth to you that is really non existent. Some people use cleverly invented words to draw people to themselves.

“**Lies**” also means immoral and unethical activity released by speech! It really reveals an improper attitude toward God or people!

“**Lips**” in Hebrew is **Sapah** which means: *“the organ of speech”*

Metaphorically it denotes a *gate* of honesty or deception.

It also means:

- To open the lips – to open up a gate
- The boundary of a garment; boundary of land, or the edge of something – the side or brim!

So, this verse says: *“When you open your gate (lips) do not overstep the boundary or borders of honesty and integrity in your speech. Be careful not to stray into deception or deceptive speech. Watch your words.*

“**Speaking**” is **Dabar** in Hebrew which means: *“to say”*, *It is mental or oral communication. Used in the sense of:*

- *Promising*
- *Instruction*
- *Reporting*
- *Directing*
- *Announcing*
- *Decreeing*

*So, when you make a promise, report an event, directing people, decreeing in prayer, or when you make your statements, do not overstep the boundaries of honesty, integrity and purity in your speech!*

Note:

The first area of our life in which the fear of the Lord will be practically manifested is our tongue and lips!

If we can keep our tongue from evil and our lips from speaking lies, then we can move on into the fullness of the fear of the Lord. Then out of the fear of the Lord come life and many good days! The fear of the Lord; life; good days and the proper use and control of our tongues and lips are all bound together.

Prov.13:3 states:

*“He who guards his lips guards his soul, (life) but he who speaks rashly will come to ruin”*

“Soul” is **Nepes** and means:

- The whole personality – the real you
- The inner self, or constitution
- Your thoughts, emotions, intellect, decision making and will

Note:

If you want to guard your soul, you must guard your lips.

**Nasar** is to guard. It means:

- To keep
- To protect
- To observe
- To inspect
- To watch

The first “guard” in this verse means:

*We must by means of introspection and watchfulness prevent ourselves from straying beyond the boundaries of honesty and integrity in our speech. To subject your “gate” to the laws of purity and morality!*

The second “guard” in this verse is **Samar** and means: “to preserve and protect”, “to pay close attention to the laws and statutes of a covenant. So, he who stays within the boundaries of honesty, purity and integrity in his speech will preserve and protect his thoughts, emotions and his personality by paying close attention, or observance to the laws and principles that governs speech!

Principle:

If you control the tongue, then you have protection, but if your tongue gets out of control and you are not master of your words, then the end is ruin – to miss your destiny!

Consider Prov.21:23

*“He who guards his mouth and his tongue keeps himself from calamity”*

Again, the vital area you must protect is your mouth and your tongue, if not calamity comes upon you!

**“Calamity”** means:

- A great misfortune, disaster and affliction.

How do you stop misfortune, disaster and affliction – guard your mouth!

Prov.15:4

*“A wholesome tongue is a tree of life; but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit” (KJV).*

The word “tongue” in this verse is connected to speech and utterance.

*“A tongue that brings healing is a tree of life, but a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit” (NIV)*

Where the King James Version says: “a wholesome tongue”, the literal Hebrew says, “the healing of the tongue”

This clearly indicates that our tongue can need healing. The tongue is one area where sin is always manifested in every life!

The tongue is one area in which we offend others, and it must be healed.

This verse then should read:

*“The healing of the tongue is a tree of life”*

*Note again the close connection between life and the correct use of the tongue.*

*The alternative is “perverseness in the tongue is a breach in the spirit”*

**“Perverseness”** means: “The wrong use”, or “the misuse of the tongue is a breach”, or “a leak in the spirit”

*It is useless we ask God to fill us with His Spirit, His anointing and bless us, but it runs out through our tongue!*

**“Breach, or crushes”** is **Seber** and means: “to bruise”, “to fracture”, “to cause an opening in the wall”

“**Spirit**” is **ruah** and refers here to the rational mind, or seat of the senses, affections and emotions!

So, wrong use or misuse of the tongue which implies improper speech, utterance and conversation causes a bruise to the emotions. It fractures relationships; it leads to deformity of the rational mind and opens a life up to demonic bondage!

Principle:

You must keep a tight reign on your tongue if you are going to contain the blessing of the Lord.

Prov.18:21

*“Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit”*

Two alternatives:

- Life
- Death

They are both in the power of the tongue.

The tongue has inherent power to produce two types of fruit: life and death!

These two processes are mutually exclusive!

“**Death**” denotes both physical and spiritual death! It is the gradual separation of God from an individual who produces speech which is not in harmony with his character.

Prov.4:20-23

*“Above all else guard your heart for it is the wellspring of life”*

“**Heart**” is **Leb** which means: *“the inner constitution, or centre of your life”*

*So the heart is the source of life, it is the source of all that you speak or minister!*

In the New Testament **Leb** is used to signify the mind, or discernment! Wisdom and understanding reside in the heart.

The heart is the seat of the will.

Your mouth can push your heart off equilibrium.

You keep your heart by controlling your tongue!

Jer.17:9

*This verse says that the heart is the point of origin of moral evil.*

**“Guard”** is spoken of as guarding over your own storehouse which is full either of good or bad treasure. This word also means that you guard your heart as a soldier guards the city gates. Watch over your affections to prevent an invasion of foreign values, or maintain an alertness as a discipline as a soldier guarding over a castle to protect the king with!

Guard the heart to prevent it from causing spiritual defilement to yourself or other people.

Read Matt.12:33-37

Fruit is the product of the root.

The root is the source, the origin of the fruit.

The root is unseen, under the ground.

The fruit is above the ground – seen!

Fruit is the manifestation of the root!

**Each one of us eats the fruit of our own tongues:**

- **Improper use = death**
- **Proper use = life**

Matt.12:33-37 speak of the connection between the heart and the mouth.

God forms an estimate of the heart's condition by analysing our tongues!

Your true spiritual condition is directly connected to the state of your tongue!

Here Jesus establishes the direct connection between the mouth and the heart, using parabolic language.

Principles:

- The heart overflows through the mouth.
- Jesus refers to the heart as the tree and the words that come out of the mouth as the fruit.
- The kind of words that come out of your mouth will indicate the condition of your heart. Vs. 35 *“the good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good words. An evil, out of the evil treasure in his heart brings forth evil words”*

- A good heart produces good words. An evil heart produces evil words remember what evil means: *words of inferior quality, the inability of your words to measure up to a standard, to operate in your speech below a Godly standard.*

Matt.7:17-18

*“Every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit – a good tree cannot bear good fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit.*

Principle:

The nature of the tree (*heart / life*) inevitably determines the kind of fruit (*words*). *Conversely, when we see the kind of fruit, we know the nature of the tree!*

Note:

The tree is the good heart and the fruit is the mouth!

If the heart is good, the words that come from the mouth will be good!

If the words that come from the mouth are evil, we know that the heart is evil.

Principle:

There is an absolute, inescapable connection between the state of the heart and the state of the mouth.

Matt.12:34

*“Out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks”*

Principle:

When the heart is filled, it overflows through the mouth, and that overflow tells us the real condition of the heart.

A Biblical picture of the tongue

Jas.1:26

*“If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless”*

**“Religious”** is the Greek word **Threskos** and means: *“devout”* This word describes the diligent performer in his outward spiritual service to God. It describes the external acts of service: *soup kitchens, open air ministry etc.*

*They do all the external functions, yet inwardly they are bent and crooked.*

We may sing, dance, quote Scriptures etc, but if we do not keep our tongues under control, our religion is worthless and unacceptable to God.

Principle:

It does not matter how much you do for God, if you do not control your tongue, your religion is worthless.

If you want to impress God with your religion, the first thing He will say is: *“Show me your tongue”*

*God is going to judge from your tongue whether your religion is valid and acceptable or not!*

Principle:

The improper use of your tongue can invalidate your total service unto God.

Pictures that will illustrate the function of the tongue in our lives

Jas.3:2

*“We all stumble in many ways, if anyone is never at fault in what he says; he is a perfect man, able to keep his whole body in check”*

Principle:

If you can control your tongue, you can control your whole life.

You are a perfect man if you can control your tongue!

**“Perfect”** is the Greek word **Teleios** which means:

- Full-grown
- Mature
- Complete
- No deficiencies or shortcomings
- Having measured up to a certain standard

It does not mean sinless perfection. It speaks of maturity as contrasted with infancy and childhood.

Principles:

The control of the tongue and its proper use is connected to your level of growth.

Immaturity, or being a child or babe in Christ is connected to the improper use of the tongue, causing others to be offended.

Five diseases that commonly infect our lives through the misuse of our tongue

1. Excessive talking

Prov.10:19

*“When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise”*

If you say too much, you are bound to say something wrong.

Read Ecc.5:1-2

Important:

It is just as much a sin to sing a lie as it is to tell a lie.

We sing: *“All to Jesus I surrender”*, but when the offering basket comes around, we don't tithe or give, which is part of your consecration to Him!

The two actions are not consistent!

He is going to hold you accountable for the words you speak or sing in His presence!

Jas.3:8

*“No man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison”*

People who are always talking are restless people!

Excessive talking is a sure indication that your heart is not at rest.

2. Idle or careless words

Matt.12:36

*“But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgement for every careless word they have spoken”*

Principle:

We are going to have to answer for words that were idle, insincere, and that we did not really mean, that we were not prepared to stand behind.

Matt.r5:37

*“Simply let your yes, be yes and your no, no; anything beyond comes from the evil one.*

Principle:

If we say more than we mean – exaggerate -, or if we over

Emphasise, we must know that this come from the evil one.

### 3. Gossip

#### Lev.19:16

*“Do not go about spreading slander among your people”*

We gossip when we go about spreading slander, idle, untrue, and exaggerated, malicious talk.

The word Devil means *“a slanderer”*

This is the main description of Satan in the Bible!

If you gossip, or tell tales, you are doing the devil's work for him!

You are a representative of Satan!

#### Principle:

Be careful not to give out gossip!

We have a responsibility not to receive gossip!

#### Prov.20:19

*“A gossip betrays a confidence; so avoid a man who talks too much”*

#### Principle:

If you entertain a gossip and listen to their words, you become an accessory to the gossip!

#### Read Prov.6:16-19

Seven things are listed that the Lord hates.

There are three that are related to the tongue:

- A lying tongue
- A false witness
- A man who stirs up dissension among brothers

#### Prov.12:22

*“The Lord detests lying lips, but He delights in men who are truthful”*

There are two sets of opposites in this verse:

Detest	Delight
Lying	Truthful

If it is not truthful, it is a lie!

If it is a lie, the, the Lord detests it.  
If it is truthful, the Lord delights in it!  
See also Matt.8:44 + rev.21:8 + Rev22:15

4. Flattery

Read Ps.12:1-3

David speaks here about a state of moral decline in the human race!

Note:

Vs.1

*"The faithful have vanished"*

What is the result?

Everyone lies to his neighbour, their flattering lips speaks with deception.

A judgment of God is pronounced upon these flattering lips.

*"May the Lord cut off all flattering lips and every boastful tongue"*

Prov.26:28

*"A lying tongue hates those it hurts, and a flattering mouth works ruin"*

Principle:

People who flatter you have impure motives. They inflate your ego and hold you in so called high esteem by their words. They want something from you!

5. Hastiness of speech

Prov.29:20

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

Moses was just once hasty in his words: God said, *"speak to the rock, and it would bring forth water"* But he was so angry with the children of Israel that he said to them: *"You rebels, must we bring you water out of this rock?"*

*Then instead of speaking to the rock, he smote it.*

Num. 20:7-12

That act of disobedience, expressed in hasty words, cost him the Promised Land.

Vs.32

*“They angered him also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes because they provoked his spirit, so that he spoke unadvisedly with his lips”*

Notice the diagnosis:

A provoked spirit causes us to speak unadvisedly with our lips.

Conclusion

The Bible declares that we must *“purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God”*

We've got to constantly check our conversations, our speech and the way we talk. Part of the purifying process is the cleansing of our lips and mouths.

God cannot entrust us with His holy things, if we cannot bridle our tongues and subject our mouths under His absolute Lordship.