

Consider Your Words

INTRODUCTION:

1. Wisdom is something we often attach to age and experience. And that is true in many ways.
2. Yet, God requires **godly wisdom** in all His people (Eph. 5:15-16 – “Therefore be careful how you **walk**, not as unwise men but as **wise**,¹⁶ making the most of your time, because the days are evil.¹⁷ So then **do not be foolish**, but **understand** what the **will of the Lord is**.”).
 - A. To be an acceptable child of God we must “walk,” or live our life, in a **wise** way, being aware of the evil that exists in this world.
 - B. This **wisdom** is based on one’s willingness to seek God’s will and obey it.
3. Thus, to be wise is to submit all aspects of our life to the “name of the Lord Jesus Christ,” or to his authority and power (Col. 3:17 – “Whatever you do in **word** or **deed**, do all **in the name of the Lord Jesus**, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.”).
 - A. I do not know if you are like me, but often I key on our “deeds” being done in God name, or assuring that we **act** according to his authority, while giving far less thought to how the Lord’s authority must rule our **words**.
 - B. Yet, to be wise we must **control** what we **say** (Proverbs 10:19 – “When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable, but he who **restrains his lips is wise**.”).
4. That is what I want to talk about today—about considering our **words**, about controlling what we **say**, and how that affects our lives and relationship with God.
 - A. For God is concerned about our words.
 - B. And our words are powerful.
 - C. So, we need to be concerned and be aware of the use of our tongue so that we will not sin against God.

BODY:

I. God is concerned about our words.

- A. Our words affect our purity and holiness (Matthew 15:18-20 – “But the things that **proceed out of the mouth** come from the heart, and **those defile the man**.¹⁹ For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.²⁰ These are the things which defile the man; but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile the man.”).
 1. **Our words can defile us** (i.e., to profane, desecrate, pollute, make unclean – **Mounce/Vine**)
 2. Why? Because our words come from our heart!
 3. So, our words tell others what is in our heart, even if they say nothing more than we are careless with our speech, **which is a serious matter!**
- B. Our words will either justify or condemn us (Matthew 12:35-37 – “The good man brings out of his good treasure what is good; and the evil man brings out of his evil treasure what is evil.³⁶ But I tell you that **every careless word** that people speak, they shall **give an accounting for it in the day of judgment**.³⁷ For by **your words** you will be **justified**, and by **your words** you will be **condemned**.”).
 1. Note the connection between what we **treasure in our heart** and what we **say!**
 2. Thus, even to be **careless** with our words, whether through ignorance or lack of concern, is not treated lightly by the Lord.
- C. Our words affect how others perceive our relationship with Him.
 1. Outsiders (Colossians 4:5-6 – “Conduct yourselves with **wisdom toward outsiders**, making the most of the opportunity.⁶ Let **your speech always be with grace**, as though **seasoned with salt**, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.”).
 - a. Our speech, our words, as if seasoned with salt, are to show God’s wisdom as best we can in **every opportunity**, while also bestowing grace, or favor, to those who hear us!
 - b. So, we must take care and be prepared to address the world for God’s glory.
 2. Brethren:

- a. We are to be an example to our brethren in our **speech** and **deeds** (1 Timothy 4:12 – “Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in **speech**, conduct, love, faith and purity, **show yourself an example of those who believe.**”).
 - b. Our words should build up our brethren with wholesomeness and grace (Ephesians 4:29 – “Let **no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth**, but only such a word as is **good for edification** according to the need of the moment, so that **it will give grace to those who hear.**”).
3. Because God is concerned, as His people we had better be concerned about our words!

II. Our words are powerful.

- A. Our words require more control than any other aspect of our lives (James 3:2-4 – “For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone **does not stumble** in what he **says**, he is a perfect man, **able to bridle the whole body as well.** ³ Now if we put the **bits into the horses’ mouths** so that they will **obey us**, we **direct their entire body** as well. ⁴ Look at the **ships** also, though they are so great and are driven by strong winds, are still **directed by a very small rudder** wherever the inclination of the pilot desires.”).
 1. The struggle to control one’s words is so great that to master the tongue opens the door to mastering the rest of one’s life!
 2. So, if you want your life and that of your family to be controlled for God’s glory, **you must focus on controlling the tongue**—the words that you say!
- B. Words have the power to set our lives on fire (James 3:5-6 – “So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire! ⁶ And the **tongue is a fire**, the very **world of iniquity**; the tongue is set among our members as that which **defiles the entire body**, and **sets on fire the course of our life**, and is **set on fire by hell.**”).
 1. Just as a spark can start a great fire, a few careless words can set our life on fire!
 2. All of us who have lived long enough have seen this happen, maybe in our own lives!
 3. This danger is amplified by...
 - a. The **restless evil** of our tongues (James 3:7-10 – “For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by the human race. ⁸ But no one can tame the tongue; it is a **restless evil** and **full of deadly poison.** ⁹ With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it **we curse men**, who have been made in the likeness of God; ¹⁰ from the same mouth come both **blessing** and **cursing**. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way.”).
 - i. That that tongue is a **restless** [unstable – 1:8] **evil** likely means that it is always apt to break out without notice and spread its deadly poison.
 - ii. So, we must be vigilant!
 - b. How our words can affect others (Proverbs 15:1-4 – “A **gentle answer turns away wrath**, but a **harsh word stirs up anger.** ² The tongue of the wise makes knowledge acceptable, but the mouth of fools spouts folly. ³ The eyes of the LORD are in every place, watching the evil and the good. ⁴ A **soothing tongue is a tree of life**, but **perversion in it crushes the spirit.**”).
 - i. The Lord is watching, seeing whether we use our tongue for good or evil!
 - ii. Thus, it is important that we control our tongue to turn away wrath, to soothe the situation, and to speak truth that others might be uplifted in a godly way!
- C. The power of our words requires that we be **slow to speak** and **bridle our tongue** (James 1:19, 26 – “This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, **slow to speak** and slow to anger...²⁶ If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet **does not bridle his tongue** but deceives his own heart, **this man’s religion is worthless.**”).
 1. So much is riding on this! For, failure here can nullify our devotion/worship to God!
 2. So, we need to be concerned about our words and control them because of their power for good or for evil!

III. Areas of concern:

- A. Hurtful speech, such as gossip, slander, and lies (Colossians 3:8-10 – “But now you also, **put them all aside**: anger, wrath, **malice, slander**, and **abusive speech from your mouth**.⁹ **Do not lie to one another**, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices,¹⁰ and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him.”).
1. Our words must be characteristic of our **new self** that has been **renewed in Christ**, not of the old self of sin and hatefulness!
 - a. For, words hurt. The old saying, “Sticks and stone may break my bones, but words will never hurt me!,” is just false! And we all know it!
 - b. That hurt is often impossible to heal because hurtful words spread quickly!
 - i. There is an old story of a young man in a small town who in envy passed on a rumor about a man that spread until that man’s reputation was completely ruined!
 - ii. Upon learning that the rumor was false, the young man was sorrowful and sought advice on how to obtain forgiveness.
 - iii. He was told that before he should seek it from the man he should take a bag of feathers and lay a feather in every doorway in the town and the surrounding area.
 - iv. When he returned for further advice, he was told that before he sought forgiveness he should go and pick up every feather he had placed in the doorways!
 - 1) The young man responded that such a demand was “impossible.” The feathers had been blown away to who knows where!
 - 2) And that, of course, was the point! You cannot get back all the hurtful words!
 2. So, be aware of what you say and assure that your words are characteristic of Christ our Savior and the love and grace He has shown you!
- B. Foolish words and ungodly humor (Eph. 5:5-6 – “But **immorality** or any **impurity** or greed **must not even be named among you**, as is proper among saints;⁴ and there must be **no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting**, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.⁵ For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.”).
1. There are many things that are humorous, but completely unfitting for Christians!
 2. Instead, our speech that concerns any needed topic should be approached with thankfulness toward God! For, such a mindset does not easily produce filthy or improper speech.
- C. Profaning God’s name, or failing to give it the holiness it demands—to treat it as something common, to present it as unclean.
1. To understand the seriousness of this we must understand how holy God’s name truly is!
 - a. Psalmist (Psalm 111:9-10 – “He has sent redemption to His people; He has ordained His covenant forever; **Holy and awesome is His name**.¹⁰ The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom...”)
 - b. Moses (Exodus 20:7 – “You **shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain**, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.”)
 - c. Mary (Luke 1:49-50 – “For the Mighty One has done great things for me; And **holy is His name**.⁵⁰ “And His mercy is upon generation after generation toward those who **fear Him**.”).
 - d. These verses emphasize the **holiness of God’s name** along with our need to **fear Him** that we might treat his name with the reverence it demands!
 - i. I understand that God’s **name** is used throughout Bible to refer to God’s authority, power, majesty, etc., not just to a particular name, or designation, of God (Col. 3:17).
 - ii. What treating God’s name as holy demands, then, is that our **deeds** and our **words** must be in accordance with His authority, power, etc. (Leviticus 19:11-12 – “You shall not **steal**, nor **deal falsely**, nor **lie** to one another.¹² You shall not **swear falsely** by My name, so as to **profane the name of your God**; I am the LORD.”).
 2. We must keep constant check on our words to assure they **express God’s holiness**.

- a. The Jews, with all the faults we might see in them, believed God's name to be so holy that they refused to say it! We may think that extreme, but it presents a view of God's holiness that we can learn from.
- b. For, too often Christians can be careless and present God's name as common or unholy before others!
 - i. So, we must avoid meaningless and excessive use of His name (i.e., "I ate the whole pie! I swear to God!" or "What in God's name is that?"). (Mt. 5:37 – "But let your statement be, 'Yes, yes' or 'No, no'; anything beyond these is of evil.")
 - ii. We must avoid using His name as an exclamation (i.e., "**God!** You scared me!" or "**Oh my God!** What a great movie!" or "**Oh God,** here we go again!").
 - iii. Such speech shows carelessness (warned against in Matthew 12:35-37) and a lack of concern for the **excellencies of God** and His **holiness** that we are called to express to the world (1 Pet. 2:9 – "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a **holy nation**, a people for God's own possession, **so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him** who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.")!

D. Euphemisms:

1. Defined – mild or indirect words or expressions substituted for one considered to be too harsh or blunt or, in our case, ungodly
2. Euphemisms are difficult because we may have heard them all our life, even from people we respect, because they may be made up of words that appear harmless, and because on the surface they may not even make sense.
3. Euphemisms **profane God and His name.**
 - a. Often those who refuse to directly profane God name (i.e., like saying "Oh my God," etc.) are guilty of doing the same thing with euphemisms of those words (i.e., "Gosh," "golly," "gee.")
 - b. You may protest but consider how these are used (i.e., "Oh my gosh! What a great movie!," or "Golly/Gosh! You scared me!," "Oh gosh, here we go again!") and why these all begin with "g".
 - c. We must be aware of this in texting, etc., and avoid the use of "OMG!"
 - d. All of these show a lack of reverence for God, who He is, and the holiness of His name and are not taken lightly by God. They will not go unpunished!
4. Euphemism of "**curse words**"—words that seem far less harsh or offensive but are nothing more than different forms of the offensive words.
 - a. **Heck** is clearly another way of saying "**hell.**" "What the heck?"
 - b. **Darn** is a substitute for "**damnation.**"
 - c. And there are others that I could mention but are such that if you think about them, you will be able to figure them out.
5. There is also a very popular euphemism which you hear in kids' shows, cartoons, etc., that is designed to evoke a "curse word." That euphemism is "**What the...?**"
 - a. This is more deceptive because it stops short of saying the word.
 - b. But those who are more mature know what word(s) the world inserts at the end!
 - i. We would be appalled if we heard Christians or our children saying those words.
 - ii. So, we should be just as appalled to think that we or our children are evoking those words in the minds of others by our speech!
6. Euphemisms that **combine both** – "Dog gone it" and "Dad gum it."
 - a. Now, in and of themselves these make no sense.
 - b. But it is easy to hear what the mimic!
7. You may want to protest, but if I say, "Those who reject *gosh* will be *darned to heck*," I think you know exactly what I mean!

CONCLUSION:

1. So, let's remember who we are and guard our word, retrain our lips, so that we might glorify God both in our deeds and in our words!

2. For, as we have seen, God will judge us by our words and “by **your words** you will be **justified**, and by **your words** you will be **condemned**” (Matt. 12:17).
3. Will you come o Christ in F R C B?