

## Our Christian Walk – The Power of the Tongue

### Section I – Life and Death in the Mouth

There are some things God said that should stop us in our tracks. Proverbs 18:21 is one of them:

**“Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.”**

*(Proverbs 18:21, KJV)*

That’s not poetic. That’s not symbolic. That is **truth**.

The power to create or destroy, to heal or harm, to build or break—is not in your fists. It’s in your **mouth**.

The words you speak have weight in the **spiritual realm**. What you release into the atmosphere can shift environments, destroy reputations, resurrect hope, stir up demons, or open the door to angelic intervention. And many believers never walk in full victory—not because they lack faith, but because they misuse their **tongue**.

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### Words Reveal What Rules the Heart

**“Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.”**

*(Matthew 12:34, KJV)*

Your mouth is a window to your soul. You don’t have to guess what someone believes—you just need to **listen long enough**. If bitterness is in the heart, it will come out in sarcasm. If pride is rooted deep, it will come out in boasting. If carnality has crept in, it will show up in gossip, criticism, and crude joking.

That’s why James says:

**“If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.”**

*(James 1:26, KJV)*

That word “vain” means useless—empty—powerless. So you can dance, sing, tithe, and pray—but if your mouth is out of control, your walk is disqualified.

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## **The Tongue Doesn't Just Express—It Directs**

**“Behold, we put bits in the horses’ mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body.”**

*(James 3:3, KJV)*

James paints the picture of a massive animal being controlled by a **small piece of metal**. The direction of the body is determined by **what is in the mouth**.

Then he compares it to a ship:

**“Behold also the ships, which though they be so great... are turned about with a very small helm...”** *(James 3:4, KJV)*

Your life—your direction—your entire walk with God—can be steered off course by the words you say. One word spoken in the flesh can cause a month of damage. One outburst in anger can rupture a relationship. One whisper of slander can split a church. And one word of faith, one word of truth, one word of prayer—can change everything.

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Your tongue is not just a thermometer that reflects your temperature.

It is a **thermostat** that sets the spiritual climate around you.

You are either speaking death—or speaking life.

You are either fueling fear—or building faith.

You are either partnering with hell—or aligning with heaven.

## **Section II – The Tongue’s Capacity for Destruction**

If the tongue has the power of life and death, then it should come as no surprise that the Bible doesn’t downplay its danger. In fact, **James devotes nearly an entire chapter** to the destructive potential of the tongue—not just of wicked men, but of believers.

**“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, KJV)*

This is not hyperbole. This is **Holy Ghost warning**.

Let’s break this verse down.

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**“The tongue is a fire”**

Fire can warm—or it can destroy.  
It can purify—or it can consume.  
One match in the right place can save a life—or burn down a forest.

So it is with the tongue.

A single word spoken in wrath can scar a child for life.  
A lie can ruin a reputation that took decades to build.  
A whispered rumor can divide a church that took years to grow.

**“Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out:  
so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth.”** (*Proverbs 26:20, KJV*)

Some people don’t carry fire in their hands—they carry it in their **mouths**. And every conversation they touch ends up scorched.

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### **“A world of iniquity”**

James calls the tongue “a world of iniquity.” That means the tongue is like **a universe of sin all by itself**.

Lying, slander, gossip, boasting, flattery, blasphemy, cursing, filthy talk, false witness, mockery, manipulation—**all these sins live in the world of the tongue**.

The serpent did not strike Eve with fangs—he **used words**.  
Delilah didn’t overpower Samson with ropes—she **talked** him down.  
The Pharisees didn’t stone Jesus—they **accused Him with words**.

The devil’s favorite weapon isn’t always violence—it’s **speech**.  
And many saints fall—not because they are beaten by the enemy—but because they cooperate with him through their lips.

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### **“It defileth the whole body”**

Jesus said the same thing in Matthew 15:11:

**“Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man;  
but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.”**

You can eat kosher, live modestly, wear holiness from head to toe—but if your speech is filled with venom, **your walk is corrupted**. It doesn’t matter how clean your outside looks—if your tongue is unclean, your entire body is **defiled**.

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### **“It setteth on fire the course of nature”**

This phrase in Greek literally refers to the *wheel of life*—everything you touch, every relationship, every environment—your marriage, your children, your ministry, your friendships—can be set on fire and **destroyed** by a single careless mouth.

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### **“It is set on fire of hell”**

James pulls no punches here. When you use your mouth for evil, **you are not just being carnal—you are partnering with hell.**

Hell is not just beneath us—it longs to rise through us. And the quickest doorway is an unbridled tongue. Satan is the father of lies—and every time we lie, mock, gossip, or curse—we are echoing his language.

This is why Paul told the Ephesians:

**“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, KJV*)

Words can do one of two things:

1. Corrupt the atmosphere and grieve the Holy Ghost
2. Edify the listener and glorify God

There is no neutral ground.

There is no “I was just joking.”

There is no “I didn’t mean it like that.”

Jesus said:

**“Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.”**  
(*Matthew 12:36, KJV*)

Not just the angry words. Not just the blasphemous ones.  
Every idle word. That’s how seriously God takes the tongue.

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✦ You can speak in tongues on Sunday  
and tear people down with your tongue on Monday.  
And the Lord says, "**These things ought not so to be.**" (*James 3:10*)

### Section III – A Sanctified Tongue: Speaking with Power, Purpose, and Purity

The answer to a destructive tongue is not silence—it is **sanctification**.

God didn't give us speech to waste or to weaponize.

He gave it to us so we could **build, bless, speak life**, and **declare His Word**.

The sanctified tongue doesn't just avoid cursing—it becomes a **channel of the Holy Ghost**.

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### A Changed Heart Produces Changed Speech

We already saw in Matthew 12:34 that:

**"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."**

So the only way to change your speech is to let God **clean your heart**.

That means:

- If you have a gossip problem, you have a **bitterness** problem.
- If you're always sarcastic, you may have a **pride** problem.
- If you're constantly negative, you may have a **trust** problem—because fear is doing the talking.

But when the Holy Ghost gets hold of your heart—He gets hold of your **mouth**.

**"Create in me a clean heart, O God;  
and renew a right spirit within me."** (*Psalms 51:10, KJV*)

A clean heart leads to a clean tongue.

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### The Holy Ghost Gives You a New Language

Is it any surprise that when the Holy Ghost filled believers in the Book of Acts, the first evidence was **the tongue**?

**“And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”** (*Acts 2:4, KJV*)

Why tongues? Because the tongue is the most **untamable** part of the body.

James said:

**“But the tongue can no man tame...”** (*James 3:8*)

That’s the key: **no man** can tame it.

But **God can**. And the initial sign that He’s taken full control is when He takes hold of your **speech**.

When you receive the Holy Ghost, God sanctifies your tongue. And He doesn’t stop there. He doesn’t just give you a heavenly language—He begins to **train your natural one**.

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### **Speak With Grace, Not Corruption**

**“Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.”** (*Colossians 4:6, KJV*)

**“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, KJV*)

Your words should:

- **Build up**, not tear down
- **Minister grace**, not spread gossip
- Be **seasoned**, not sour
- **Answer wisely**, not impulsively

Even your correction should carry the **tone of heaven**.

Even your rebuke should carry the **compassion of Christ**.

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### **A Sanctified Tongue is Slow to Speak, Quick to Listen**

**“Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.”** (*James 1:19, KJV*)

Sometimes the most spiritual thing you can do is **stay silent**.

Not every offense needs a response. Not every argument deserves your breath. The Spirit-led believer learns that **self-control** in speech is a mark of maturity.

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### **Speak With Boldness and Authority**

While the sanctified tongue is gracious and pure, it is not silent in the face of darkness. It speaks truth with **boldness**.

**“And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost,  
and they spake the word of God with boldness.”** (*Acts 4:31, KJV*)

When your tongue is aligned with heaven, your words carry **power**:

- To **bind and loose** (Matthew 18:18)
  - To **rebuke the enemy**
  - To **declare promises** over your family
  - To **lift up** the weary and **cast down** imaginations
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The tongue doesn't just preach sermons—it lives one.

It doesn't just express your faith—it steers it.

It doesn't just reveal your walk—it shapes it.

### **Section IV – A Call to Guard Your Mouth and Sanctify Your Walk**

We've heard it said:

“Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.”

But the Bible says the exact opposite.

Words can:

- Curse or bless
- Divide or unite
- Discourage or strengthen
- Condemn or edify
- Kill or give life

And if your **walk with God** is going to be fruitful, your **mouth must be faithful**.

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### **Guarding the Gate**

**“Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth;  
keep the door of my lips.”** (*Psalms 141:3, KJV*)

David didn’t just ask God to touch his mouth—he asked God to **guard it**.  
Because what you allow to come out of your mouth will either build your walk with God—or slowly erode it.

#### **Who is guarding the gate of your lips?**

Is it anger? Is it emotion? Is it pride?  
Or is it the Holy Ghost?

If your heart belongs to God, your mouth must follow.

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### **Words Are Part of Worship**

**“Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me...”** (*Psalms 50:23, KJV*)

You praise with your mouth. You testify with your mouth.  
You encourage with your mouth. You pray with your mouth.

So if your mouth is busy speaking **death, slander, gossip, criticism, sarcasm, or filth**—  
don’t be surprised when **your worship feels weak**.  
A bitter fountain cannot produce sweet water.

**“Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?”**  
(*James 3:11, KJV*)

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### **Practical Commitments for a Sanctified Tongue**

If you want your walk with God to go to the next level—commit to sanctifying your speech.  
Here are some **practical, scriptural commitments**:

#### **1. I will speak life.**

**“Let the redeemed of the Lord say so...”** (*Psalms 107:2*)  
Speak hope. Speak faith. Speak Scripture over yourself and others.



**2. I will not gossip.**

*“Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people...” (Leviticus 19:16)*

Refuse to spread or entertain drama.

**3. I will use my mouth to glorify God.**

*“My lips shall utter praise...” (Psalm 119:171)*

Let praise—not complaining—be your daily language.

**4. I will speak with grace and wisdom.**

*“Let your speech be always with grace...” (Colossians 4:6)*

Season your words. Think before you speak. Ask God for tone, timing, and truth.

**5. I will stay silent when necessary.**

*“Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise...” (Proverbs 17:28)*

Silence is sometimes more anointed than speech.

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**Prayer of Surrender and Sanctification**

Lead the class in this if you'd like, or encourage personal prayer.

**“Lord, I give You my tongue. I surrender my mouth to You.**

**Let every word that I speak be led by Your Spirit.**

**Forgive me for the times I've used my mouth to hurt, to criticize, to gossip, to tear down.**

**Create in me a clean heart—and give me a clean tongue.**

**Let my mouth be a vessel of praise, truth, encouragement, and righteousness.**

**May every word I speak bring glory to You and life to those around me.**

**In Jesus' name, amen.”**

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Your mouth is a mirror of your heart.

A sanctified tongue is a sign of a sanctified walk.

If your speech is pure, your heart is in alignment.

And when your words are full of the Spirit, your life becomes a fountain of blessing.