

**Bringing Our Speech Under The Obedience Of Christ – Chris George**

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**Introduction**

- A) In all that we do as Believers, we are called to glorify God. Our speech is one of the primary ways we can glorify God and thus, the way we speak is very important to Him. It's a theme we see throughout Scripture. There are over 80 verses in the Bible dealing directly with the way we should and shouldn't speak. Proverbs contains many of these teachings, along with the Gospel accounts and epistles.
- B) The book of Proverbs is also called the book of wisdom. In this book, written by Solomon, God gives mankind true wisdom and practical teachings on how to live. Godly speech is one of the primary themes throughout the book. Therefore, we as Believers must take this theme seriously because God takes it seriously. It's important to Him and it must be important to us.

**I) Our Reward For Godly Speech And The Consequences Of Ungodly Speech**

- A) Every follower of Christ is commanded to bring their speech under the obedience of Christ. This command is not burdensome, rather it is an invitation from the Lord to experience more of His manifest presence and to produce life in ourselves and others. (*see also 1 John 5:3*)

***John 14:21 Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.***

- B) By living obediently in the way that we speak, according to Gods Word, we will be rewarded in this life by Gods manifest friendship. Speaking in an ungodly way greatly hinders us from experiencing the full effect of what it means to be friends with God.

***Proverbs 22:11 He who loves purity of heart, and whose speech is gracious, will have the King as his friend.***

- C) In the letter of James, we are given a very clear picture of the power and consequences of ungodly speech. In chapter 3, he gives us five main points related to how our tongue is used in an ungodly way. These points are not given to condemn us, but to convict us and produce a godly grief in our soul that leads to repentance. James ends his teaching on speech with a question that we need to ask ourselves. (*see James 3:1-12, 2 Corinthians 7:9*)
  - D) **Point #1:** Our tongue is compared to a small fire that has the power to set a forest ablaze. Fire has power to cause damage in everything it touches. It causes loss, pain, trauma, wounds, scarring, and death. Spiritually speaking, our words have the power to cause emotional pain, trauma, wounding, and death in ourselves and the life of another. In the context of a non-Believer, our speech has the power to turn them away from Christ forever. (*James 3:5-6*)
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- 1) Through the way we speak to one another, we have the power to completely wound and tear another down. Our words can be like a warrior's arrow which pierces the flesh and soul. When we slander someone or attack someone's character, arrows of satan are going forth from our mouth and piercing them.

***Psalm 120:3-4 What shall be given to you, and what more shall be done to you, your deceitful tongue? A warrior's sharp arrows...***

***Psalm 64:2-3 Hide me from the secret plots of the wicked, from the throng of evildoers, who whet their tongues like swords, who aim bitter words like arrows.***

- E) **Point #2:** The tongue is also portrayed as a “world of unrighteousness”. This present earth we live on hosts a world of unrighteousness as sin is reigning on it. At the foundation of this unrighteousness is the sinfulness of man. Our sinfulness springs forth from the depths of our heart through our speech and action. (**James 3:6**)

- 1) Through our speech, all the wickedness of the world is displayed. A question we want to ask ourselves each day is: Do we want to be agents of unrighteousness? As Christians, do we want to spread unrighteousness to others? Is that what God has called us to in Christ?

- F) **Point #3:** The tongue is “set on fire by hell”. Un-godly speech comes straight from the throne of satan. Every genuine follower of Christ wants nothing to do with satan, yet we participate in speech that is evil, potentially daily. Our speech has the power to cause immense suffering in the life of another. In the context of a non-Believer, our speech has the power to turn them away from Christ forever. (**James 3:6**)

- G) **Point #4:** Our tongue is restless in speaking evil. Through our speech, we spread evil and wickedness throughout our own lives and the lives of anyone we talk too. It has the power to kill an entire relationship, ministry, career, etc. (**James 3:8**)

- H) **Point #5:** The tongue is spoken of being full of deadly poison. Poison comes in many forms rather it be a spider, a snake, or a scorpion. The poison that these creatures hold has the power to infect the entire body of a human, resulting in loss of limbs or loss of life. Similarly, our tongue is full of poison that can infect every sphere of life in another person. (**James 3:8**)

***Romans 3:13-14 “Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive. The venom of asps is under their lips. Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness.***

- D) In verse 11-12, James uses various examples to ask a striking question. He says, “Does a spring pour fourth fresh water and salt water? Can a fig tree bear olives or a grapevine produce figs? Neither can a salt pond yield fresh water. Ultimately, his question is this: Can we actively love God and others while engaging in ungodly speech? – The answer is no. (*see 1 John 4:7-8*)
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**II) Fleeing From A Spirit Of Complaint And Slander**

- A) I believe complaining about situations and people, is one of the primary sin expressions of un-godly speech that we walk in almost daily. Living with a complaining spirit produce a life of bitterness and hate in the life of a Believer.
- B) By definition, complaining is the expression of dissatisfaction or annoyance about someone or something. We are commanded in God’s word not to be a people who grumble. Grumbling must be far removed from the life of a Believer. (*see also 1 Peter 4:9*)

***Philippians 2:14-15 Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world...***

- C) Rather than living in a spirit of complaint, Scripture is clear that we are to live in a spirit of contentment and thanksgiving in all things. Paul is one our greatest examples of this lifestyle. He suffered immense pain, torture, lack of food, and much more, yet he continued in a spirit of thankfulness and contentment.

***Ephesians 5:20 Giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.***

- D) The sin of complaining is spoken of much in the book of Proverbs. It has the power to injure relationships and causes people to draw away from one another. (*see Proverbs 14:1, 17:1, 21:9, 25:24*)

***Proverbs 21:19 Better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and angry woman.***

***Proverbs 19:13 A foolish son is ruin to his father, and a wife’s grumbling is a continual dripping of rain.***

- E) In Proverbs, Solomon uses the context of marriage to describe the detriment of complaining in relationships. When complaining has rooted itself in a relationship of any kind, it makes the relationship unenjoyable.
- F) Likewise, slander must be far removed from the life of a Believer. We are called to walk in love towards God and towards people. We are greatly deceived if we believe we are actively loving God while slandering another person behind their back. (*see 1 John 4:7-8*)
- 1) Scripture calls those who slander others fools. They not only judge others, but through their own judgements they will be judged. (*see Proverbs 10:19, Matthew 7:1*)
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**III) Speaking Words Of Life**

- A) Scripture is clear that with our mouth we can tear down or build up. We can cause death, or we can cause life. Throughout Proverbs and all of Scripture, God has given us instruction related to His desire for us to speak life over ourselves, our situations, and others. (*see Proverbs 18:21*)
- B) While ungodly speech brings death towards another, Godly speech has the power to bring healing and life to someone's soul. This is an amazing opportunity for the Believer to partner with God in the healing process of another person.

***Proverbs 16:24 Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body.***

***Proverbs 12:18 ...but the tongue of the wise brings healing.***

**IV) Practical Steps**

- A) Along with understanding what Gods Word says about our speech, we want to bring this area of our speech into our conversational prayer with God. In the FELLOWSHIP prayers found in the back of the Prayer booklet, we find a very simple and straightforward prayer that we can pray daily.
  - 1) For further study, see following list of verses related to our speech: ***Psalms 57:4, 64:3-4, 140:3, Proverbs 4:24, 6:12, 10:11, 14, 18, 19, 20-21, 31, 11:9, 11:11, 12:6, 13, 16:27, 18, 13:3, 14:3, 15:2, 4, 16:24, 17:27, 18:6-7, 21, 21:23, 22:11, 25:12, Ephesians 4:29, Philippians 2:14, Colossians 3:8, 4:6, James 3,***
- B) ***Speech: Father, set a guard over my lips and help me to speak words that are grace giving and pleasing to You. I commit to repent if I speak out in any other way. Free me from defensive, angry, and foolish speech. Help me to speak life, not death in every circumstance. In Jesus name.***