

Ephesians 4:25-32; 5:4

Our Tongues

Ephesians 4:25-32, “Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. 26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: 27 neither give place to the devil. 28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. 29 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. 30 And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking [slander], be put away from you, with all malice. 32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.” Ephesians 5:4, “Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.” *(i.e. in modern English “Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving.”* First, the capacity to which we experience chapters 1 through 3 of Ephesians is directly related to the way we apply chapters 4 through 6 of this same book. God has given us the power through his Holy Spirit to renew our minds—becoming transformed by the mind of Christ. Now we see in these verses that the new man also equates to having a new mouth. **James 3:2-12, “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. When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. 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. 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. The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell. All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and creatures of the sea are being tamed and have been tamed by**

man, but no man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be. Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? My brothers, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water." In Christ you have the power to control your mind, which controls your tongue. These Scriptures talk about putting off the old man's speech. Put off lying. A lie is a statement which is contrary to the facts. **Revelation 22:14-15, "Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates of the city. But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie."** The lake of fire is reserved for liars. A lying tongue defiles you. Liars are never respected. As a Christian you're never excused for lying. God is truth, therefore we must be truth, honest. Lying is so easy. David's prayer ought to be our prayer. **Psalm 141:3, "Set a guard over my mouth, O Lord; keep watch over the door of my lips."** Paul says we should have God guard our mouths. David says it. Tongue control doesn't come without heart and mind control. The victory is in our spirit coupled to God's Holy Spirit. We can do it in the Spirit. **"Let no corrupt word come out of your mouth"** Paul says. The word *corrupt* comes from the Greek word denoting rotting fruit. Paul is saying that we should stop being **"garbage mouths!"** If there is trash coming out of your mouth that means there's trash inside your mind.

Do We Trash People With Our Tongues, Or Build Them Up?

Verse 29, "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." Instead of speaking trash our words should build up and edify others--building them up. When you see the short-fallings of others you still speak things to build them up, not tear them down. What's your speech like? **Verse 31, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking [slander], be put away from you, with all malice..."** Clamor is an outcry. **Isaiah 58:1-5, "Shout aloud, do**

not hold back. Raise your voice like a trumpet. Declare to my people their rebellion and to the house of Jacob their sins. For day after day they seek me out; they seem eager to know my ways, as if they were a nation that does what is right and has not forsaken the commands of God. They ask me for just decisions and seem eager for God to come to them. 'Why have we fasted,' they say, 'and you have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?' Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please and exploit all your workers. Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife, and in striking each other with wicked fists. You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high. Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, only a day for a man to humble himself? Is it only for bowing one's head like a reed and for lying on sackcloth and ashes? Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord?" They delight in going to temple, fasting--but God says it's in vain. What God highlights is their mouths--quarreling and strife. ***When evil speaking starts in a church the Holy Spirit moves out. It will hinder revival individually and as a church.*** Speaking evil, talking behind others' back, God hates. But we have great hope, as God points out in **verses 9-12 of Isaiah 58**, "Pointing the finger" points to evil speaking. This will be our reward from God for gracious speaking, speech that doesn't tear down others. ***Evil Speaking of others is a revival killer.*** What is God's reward for speaking what is right, not evil? **Isaiah 58:9-12**, "Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday. The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail. Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the age-old foundations; you will be called the Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings." Going further on this subject, Ephesians 5:4 says no foolish talking should come from us. A godly person is usually of few words. Proverbs has many teachings about the tongue and how we should be of few words. Look them up and do a study on them [see <https://unityinchrist.com/Proverbs/Proverbs%201-1-33.html>] Be filled with the Spirit. The last item Paul mentions is coarse jesting. Coarse jesting goes beyond mere wit. Intelligence and wit go together. But the coarse edge and put-down shouldn't be a part of our wit. Speak thankfulness. When you have a guarded mouth,

you have a controlled life. James 1:26-27 gives the plus and minus of this whole subject. **James 1:26-27, "If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless. Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world."**