

THE BIBLE VIEW

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Control That Tongue!

Bill Brinkworth

There is a part of man, no matter if man or woman, big or small, old or young, that gets them in the most trouble. This appendage, as small as it is (James 3:5), helps send many in the wrong direction (Jam. 3:3, 4) and is responsible for many things that its owner regrets. This difficult to manage part of everyone's anatomy is one's tongue.

Controlled, one's tongue can be a blessing to God and man (Jam. 3:9, 10). Uncontrolled, the tongue can:

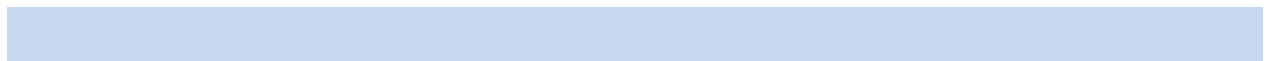
- Make some to desire to govern others' lives (Jam. 3:1). As Matthew Henry has said, "... do not give yourselves the air of teachers, imposers, and judges, but rather speak with the humility and spirit of learners. Do not censure one another, as if all must be brought to your standard."
- Offend others (Jam. 3:2).
- Govern one's whole body into doing wrong things (Jam. 3:3, 4).
- Boast. We are nothing on our own merit. If we have achieved anything more than is achieved by an

another person, it is only because of God's grace, mercy, and blessing. Boasting elevates our successes due to our own merit and disregards God's help and influence (Jam. 3:5).

- Defile one's body (Jam. 3:6). A slip of the tongue can destroy one's testimony, causing others to look at him in a less desirable light. Another slip can utter words that will totally change the direction of one's life. Words spewed in anger can wound relationships and cause one to have a lonely life.
- Unrestrained evil talk (Jam.3: 8) destroys its owner's future and the futures of others. The words uttered from an unbridled mouth have killed many in wars, and changed the courses of nations.

We are blessed to have the ability to speak. It can do so much harm, but it was not given to us for that reason. Our speech was given to bring honor and glory to God (Jam. 9, 10), to encourage others, to give good counsel, to give words that will guide others in the way God has revealed from His Word, and hosts of other positive outcomes.

Unbridled, the tongue will not achieve much of its original intent. Controlled, it can do more good than any of our other appendages. Is your tongue under your control or the Holy Spirit's? Does your lack of controlling what your tongue utters reflect what truly lurks in your heart (Jam. 3:14)?



“Be careful little lips what you say, for the Father up above, is looking down with love. Be careful little lips what you say.” — *Child’s song.*

The Wanderings of a Raging Rumor

Bill Brinkworth

The student was certainly upset. His anger was quite clear. “What seems to be the problem?” I asked.

“He said that I was the one that broke the class globe. I didn’t, and he wasn’t even in class on that day it happened. How could he have even known?”

“Aha,” I thought as I got the scent of a ruinous rumor enroute through my classroom. I had the class sit down as I began to publicly track down the treacherous trail of the elusive gossip.

I approached the accuser, and queried, “Is that true? You are sure he broke the globe? You saw it happen?”

“Well, I didn’t actually see it happen. Keith told me he broke it.”

“Oh, I see. You were just believing the gossip and assumed it was true,” I summarized.

“Yeah, I guess you’re right.”

On I proceeded to Keith and continued the inquisition. “So, Keith, since you passed the story, you must have seen him break the globe?”

“Um, not actually. I got it from Tony.”

Then on to Tony, I went. The whispering in the class was telling me that the class was starting to see a pattern to the scuttlebutt. Tony also admitted he had not seen the deed, but had heard it from another. In the class of less than 20 teenaged boys, I followed the path of the rumor as it traveled through ten lips. Finally, I approached a boy with whom the tale had seemed to originate.

“So, Brian, do you see how much damage your story has done, and how far it has traveled? Did you see happen what you accused him of doing?”

Brian was quite nervous. He was picking at some bit of dirt on his desk and would not make eye contact with me. “Well, not actually,” he murmured in a low voice. “But he broke an airplane model of mine a couple months ago, and never even said he was sorry. So, I just know he broke the globe.”

The truth finally came out. “So you never saw him do it. You just assumed he did it, because you were still mad at him for what he did a long time ago.”

”Um, I guess so.”

The whole class shook their head. They had been misled by someone else’s bitter grudge. Each one had believed hearsay, and each had misjudged an innocent person. Fortunately, although quite embarrassed, each publicly apologized to the accused and hopefully learned that a rumor cannot be trusted as truth. It was from that episode,

that Brian realized that he also lost much of the trust of his classmates.

“The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.” Proverb 26:22

“The best way to halt gossip is not to offer a listening ear!”

A Harsh Word

Author Unknown

*One day a harsh word, harshly said,
Upon an evil journey sped,
And like a sharp and cruel dart
It pierced a fond and loving heart.*

*It turned a friend into a foe
And everywhere brought pain and woe.
A kind word followed it one day,
Sped swiftly on its blessed way.*

*It healed the wound and soothed the pain,
And friends of old were friends again.
It made the hate and anger cease,
And everywhere brought joy and peace.*

*And yet the harsh word left a trace
The kind word could not efface,
And though the heart its love regained
It left a scar that long remained.*

*Friends can forgive but not forget,
Nor lose the sense of keen regret.
Oh, if we would but learn to know
How swift and sure our words can go.*

*How we would weigh with utmost care
Each thought before it reached the air —
And only speak the words that move
Like white-winged messengers of love.*

“To save face, keep the lower part shut!”

The Sinning Tongue

Many sins are committed by the tongue. Here is some of what the Bible says about our tongue:

“But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.” James 3:8

“Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips:” Isa. 6:5

“He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.” Proverbs 30:5

“And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.” Matthew 12:32

“For thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity, and thou chooseth the tongue of the crafty.” Job 15:5

“Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs; like a sharp razor,

working deceitfully.” Psalms 52:2

“Who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words:” Psalms 64:3

“They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth.” Psalms 73:9

“The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.” Proverbs 15:2

“The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death.” Proverbs 21:6

“A lying tongue hateth those that are afflicted by it; and a flattering mouth worketh ruin.” Proverbs 26:28

Also: Psalms 15:3, Proverbs 6:17, Pr. 18:21, Pr. 17:4, James 3:5-6

“Wisdom is having lots to say, but not saying it!”