

Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

Colossians 4:6

Guarding My Tongue

David A. Cox

Store In My Heart

Proverbs 12:18

There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

Each of us has probably known someone that caused us to consider if they even thought for a second about what they were saying before they spoke. Rash words often cause more harm than help. The wise one will consider the impact of what they say before letting it slip through the lips.

This also applies to what we 'say' on social media in our digitally connected world. Not only must we consider the impact, but we must also consider the truthfulness of what we pass along to others. Quick responses and first to post often leads to awkward apologies and hurt feelings. A few minutes of reflection and research can help our speech and posts. Sometimes the best action is stillness.

James describes the tongue as *"an unruly evil, full of deadly poison"* (**James 3:18**). Indeed, the tongue can do a great deal of harm and cause much unhappiness. James tells us earlier, *"If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue, but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is useless"* (**James 1:26**). **Proverbs 21:23** tells us that *"Whoever guards his mouth and his tongue keeps his soul from troubles."* Without a doubt, we see that keeping our tongue is imperative if we are to please God. Now, let us notice some ways that we should keep our tongue.

Keep Our Speech from Tattling and Talebearing. Paul told Timothy that the young widows, if they did not marry, would become idle, tattlers and busybodies that speak things which they ought not (**1Timothy 5:13**). Paul, writing to the Thessalonians, described busybodies as walking disorderly (**2Thessalonians 3:11**). Peter stated that a Christian should not *"suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters"* (**1Peter 4:15**). Guarding our tongues will help us not to be guilty of being busybodies and talebearers. In **Proverbs 11:13**, we learn that those of a faithful spirit will not reveal secrets of other men's matters, as a talebearer does.

Keep Our Speech Pure and Uncorrupted. Paul writes to Titus, reminding him to exhort the young men to have sound speech that no one may find a reason to find fault with us due to our speech. (**Titus 2:8**). Paul told the Ephesians to *"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth"* (**Ephesians 4:29**), so here is a must in keeping a guard on our tongue. The Greek word (sapro) translated here "corrupt" is defined by W. E. Vine as "rotten," "unfit for



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For Our Information

David and Paula Laubach are both symptom free. Paula loses energy quickly but has been released by ADH. David is still awaiting his test results and release. They are remaining isolated this week.

Joyce Venable has been feeling better.

Brenda Keisler received neck shots last week.

Classes on Sunday and Wednesday night are halted for now.

Pray for safety, courage & healing.

use," "putrid." From this definition, we learn that our tongues should be kept from using any language that is filthy and useless. Vulgar, profane, and by-words have no place coming from the mouth of the child of God, not even during times of persecution (**Romans 12:14**). James tells us that with the tongue we bless God and with the same tongue, we curse men who are made in the image (likeness) of God (**James 3:9**). In verse 10, he continues, *"out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so."* Profanity is not a mark of toughness or intelligence. Instead, it shows the weakness of those that profane God's name to gain acceptance by those in the world. It actually shows ignorance rather than intelligence by the lacking of an adequate vocabulary. There is just nothing good about profanity, it is sinful, and as Christians, we should hate it! May we join David as he said, *"Let the words of my mouth, and the mediation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer"* (**Psalms 19:14**).

Keep Our Tongue from Contentious Speech. There is corrective speech, and we must understand that this is not the kind of speech that is under consideration here. There are times that corrections need to be made, but we do not want our words and speech to be contentious in those times. It would help if everyone remembered the admonition to *"be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath"* (**James 1:19**). The key to this is to think before you speak. If one thinks before he speaks, it will help them to give an answer that is tender and not to provoke and stir up anger. Solomon said, *"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver"* (**Proverbs 25:11**). So, in our lives may our speech will *"always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one"* (**Colossians 4:6**).

The tongue can cause misery, ruin influence, cause strife, division, and many other hurtful circumstances in life. As we guard our tongues, may we have the conviction that David had as he said, *"I will guard my ways, Lest I sin with my tongue; I will restrain my mouth with a muzzle, while the wicked are before me"* (**Psalms 39:1**).

(We would do well to remember that our hands on the keyboard can be just as destructive as our tongue. We must keep our words under control. We have an obligation to shine the light of God, not the darkness of the world around us. DLH)



We seek only to serve God according to His Will!