

CHAPTER 6

The Words Of Our Mouth

That which comes out of the mouth is an expression of what is **really** in the heart. In Matthew 12:34 the Lord Jesus clearly stated that it is not **really** a MOUTH PROBLEM, but it is a HEART PROBLEM: "for out of the abundance of the _____ the _____ speaketh." See also Matthew 12:35. Words are like FRUIT ("the fruit of our lips"). If the **fruit** is bad, something must be wrong with the **root** (MAN'S HEART). Remember, when wrong or filthy words flow out of a person's mouth, he is showing everyone a picture of his heart. The words that a person speaks reveal much about the state of that person's heart.

The book of James has a great deal to say about the tongue and especially how important it is to "bridle" that little member (James 1:26; 3:1-12). A bridle is used to control a horse and hold him back and keep him in check. A man's tongue is like a wild horse that must be controlled and held in check and restrained. We must not let it run loose! God is the One who can help us control the tongue as we trust Him and seek to please Him in all that we say.

Like James, the book of Proverbs is a very practical book and has much to say about the use and abuse of the tongue. The first thing we want to do is to look at some of the wrong and sinful ways that words are used.

Wrong And Wicked Words

Words are important. How much can you say in a three-minute phone call? Much can be said! In three short minutes slow talkers can get in about 450 words. It is possible to whiz through 750 words in three minutes. How many words do you think come out of your mouth during an average day? _____

Words are powerful. Words can create close friendships or destroy friendships. They can prompt laughter or motivate tears. Words can hurt and harm and words can heal and help. Let us now consider how words can be used in the wrong way.

False Words

What does the Lord think of a lying tongue (Proverbs 6:16-17; 12:22)?

_____ This sin caused Ananias and Sapphira to be hurried away into eternity (Acts 5:1-10). Who is the liar's parent (John 8:44)? _____ Will the liar be punished (Proverbs 19:5,9)? How will he be punished (Revelation 21:8)?

_____ Those who love lies are showing that they do not love the God of truth. If liars will turn to Christ they too can be saved. The Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to save _____, including liars (1 Timothy 1:15). Are you a *practicing* liar today or are you a *former* liar who is now saved?

Liars and deceivers hide the truth, twist the truth, misrepresent the truth and lead others away from the truth. How truthful are you? What *always* came out of the Saviour's mouth (John 8:45-46)? _____

Perverse (Filthy) Words

The person who is P _____ in his lips is described as a _____ (Proverbs 19:1). What kind of words flow out of your mouth? corrupt words? improper words? swear words? rotten words? Do you swear and use filthy language in public? in private? Do you copy the language of your unsaved friends or are you a testimony to them by the words which you use and which you do not use?

In the New Testament God tells us that no C _____ (Ephesians 4:29) or F _____ (Colossians 3:8) communication should come out of the believer's mouth! Don't let the garbage and filth fly all over the place! Remember, our language reveals our heart! Filthy words come out of a filthy heart. Have you ever allowed God to do a "heart-cleansing" job within you (compare Isaiah 1:18 and 1 John 1:7)?

Harsh and Angry Words

Have you ever seen a person EXPLODE like a volcano in a fit of anger? When the human volcano blows, it usually explodes through the mouth! Usually the angrier the person gets the louder the words get and the louder the words get the angrier the person gets! Have you ever heard an argument get louder and louder until the two people begin talking with their fists?

"A _____ answer turneth away _____" (Proverbs 15:1). Next time try using the weapon of soft words! Soft words quench anger's fire! Have you ever tried the soft answer approach when talking to your parents (especially during those times when there is a difference of opinion over something)? Loud, angry words only stir up wrath.

Gossipy Words

Gossip is a terrible weapon of destruction. The person who uses this weapon loves to reveal very personal or sensational facts about a person (and of course this person is never present when the gossiper spreads these rumors). The gossiper loves to do anything except mind his own business!

According to Proverbs 11:13, a talebearer _____ secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit _____ the matter. There are some things that we are told or that we know about that are not meant to be repeated. There are some things that if said would only hurt and harm. Have you ever heard someone say to you, "Don't tell anyone that I said this..."? If it is not worth repeating then it is probably not worth saying in the first place! In spreading gossip, sometimes the gossiper pretends that it is with great reluctance that he speaks--that he is "grieved to even repeat this, but...!" If he were really grieved, then he would keep his mouth shut!

Are there some things that we should not repeat (Proverbs 17:9)? _____ Have you ever bitten someone in the back (see Proverbs 25:23)? Of course when the Bible speaks of a "backbiter" it does not mean this in a literal sense. It means that you talk about a person in a bad way when his (or her) back is turned (when the person is not present). Would the backbiter dare say those things if the person were present? _____ Can words of gossip hurt someone (Proverbs 26:22)? _____ In this case a wound is inflicted even though no blood is drawn and no outward hurt is seen.

There is a simple way to kill gossip. Gossip can never survive unless there is someone to listen to it. The problem is that most people *enjoy* hearing the latest rumor and they eagerly devour the latest gossip. They are as guilty as the one who gossips. Here's a suggestion the next time someone begins to share gossip with you. You can say, "My friend, let's go to this person that you are talking about and let's share this with him (her), and then after we share it all three of us can get down on our knees and pray about it!" Do you think this person would make it a habit to share gossip with you?

We must be careful never to gossip and never to receive gossip from others. Don't give it out and don't take it in!

Boastful Words

Boasting is telling how great someone is. There is nothing wrong with boasting in and of itself. For example, we can boast in the Lord and tell how great He is! The problem comes when we use words to praise ourselves and tell others how great we are! This is sinful pride!

Some very helpful advice about boasting is found in Proverbs 27:2--"Let another man _____ thee, and not thine own _____." Praise is a beautiful garment, but though you may wear it, ANOTHER MUST PUT IT ON! Here is an example from the New Testament. Humble John the Baptist called himself "UNWORTHY" (Matthew 3:11) but Jesus called him the "GREATEST" (Matthew 11:11). John wore the garment of greatness, but he did not put this garment on himself. The Lord Jesus put this garment on him!

Flattering Words

What is better and more needful, rebuke or flattery (Proverbs 28:23)? _____ The person who flatters always says nice things. He says things that a person *wants* to hear and he is unwilling to say things that a person *needs* to hear. He would rather speak smooth things than rough things (he does not want to cause any waves or create any problems). Often a flatterer praises another person too much (and often the praise is untrue or exaggerated).

Suppose you had cancer. What do you think the doctor should say?

- a. "You are in excellent physical condition. Everything seems fine."
- b. "You have a deadly cancer growing in you that must be removed immediately!"

The nice things and the pleasant things are not always the things we need to hear! In His Word God always tells us what we need to hear even if it is not what we would want to hear. A good friend is someone who tells us what we need to hear even though the truth sometimes hurts.

Slanderous Words

A person who slanders is one who makes false charges or false statements (or half-true statements) about another person, and these statements are meant to do harm! See Proverbs 16:28. In the New American Standard Bible this verse is translated as follows: ". . . and a SLANDERER separates intimate friends." Did Joseph and Potiphar enjoy a good friendship (Genesis 39:1-6)? _____ Did a slanderous woman ruin this relationship (Genesis 39:7-20)? _____ May we be careful to never accuse someone falsely. Would you want someone to attack you with words? If not, then don't do this to others (see Matthew 7:12)!

Excessive Words

There is a real danger in the use of too many words: "In the _____ of words there wanteth (lacketh) not _____ but he that refraineth his lips is _____" (Proverbs 10:19). The wise man learns to S _____ his words (Proverbs 17:27). The wise man learns to close his mouth (see Proverbs 17:28). **HE IS A FOOL, NOT WHO HAS UNWISE THOUGHTS, BUT WHO UTTERS THEM.** If you close your mouth they might think you are a fool but if you open your mouth you prove it!

Before we answer with our mouth we should _____ with our ears (Proverbs 18:13)! In James 1:19 we are told to be _____ (quick) to hear, _____ to speak. God has given each person two ears and only one mouth. This seems to indicate that God wants us to do more listening than talking! It is very easy to interrupt someone and answer someone before we have really listened and thought carefully about something. Better to be a fool than to be a person who is _____ in his words (Proverbs 29:20). Some people are quick to open their mouth and let it all spill out (like when you turn over a garbage can!). How much better to close the mouth and guard very carefully that which comes out!

When it comes to talk, a good rule to follow is this: **WEIGH IT BEFORE YOU SAY IT!** (Think before you speak!) If after weighing your words, you determine that what you are about to say is true, kind, necessary and helpful, then say it. Remember, once the words go forth, you can never bring them back!

The Power Of Words To Hurt And To Heal

Have you ever heard the expression: "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me." Is this really true? Of course words will not break your bones or hurt you in a physical way, but can words really harm and hurt a person? Let's see what the book of Proverbs says.

What damage can words do according to Proverbs 11:9?

_____ According to Proverbs 11:11?

Do you think you would be hurt if someone pierced you with a sword? _____ Can the wrong kind of words hurt a person (Proverbs 12:18)? _____ (It's possible for a person to speak daggers!) According to Proverbs 16:27, in the lips of the ungodly man there is as a _____ (scorching) fire. A fire brings destruction everywhere it goes (think of a forest fire). So also the words of the ungodly bring destruction and ruin wherever they go! Who is the person who has destruction and comes to ruin (Proverbs 13:3)? _____ What causes a fool to be destroyed and trapped (Proverbs 18:7)? _____

Not only can words harm and hurt, but they can also help and heal. "The tongue of the wise is _____ (healing)" (Proverbs 12:18). "A wholesome tongue is a _____ of _____" (Proverbs 15:4), and this tree brings forth good and healthy fruit! "Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, _____ to the soul, and _____ to the bones" (Proverbs 16:24)! As honey is to the taste, so good words are to the ears and to the soul! "The lips of the righteous _____ many" (Proverbs 10:21). The lips of the unrighteous constantly bring forth GARBAGE, and who would want to feed on garbage? But the words that come forth from righteous lips are healthy and wholesome and good for the soul!

Can you think of any time in your life when you have been helped and strengthened by someone's words? Have you ever been encouraged or cheered up by someone's words? Have the words of concerned people ever kept you out of trouble?

How can a person keep his life according to Proverbs 13:3? _____ How can a person keep his soul from troubles (Proverbs 21:23)? _____ Every believer needs to guard his mouth. It is like the gates of a city. If the gates are well guarded, the city is safe!

What should the believer's prayer be (Psalm 141:3)? _____

What is another good prayer that the believer can pray (Psalm 19:14)? _____

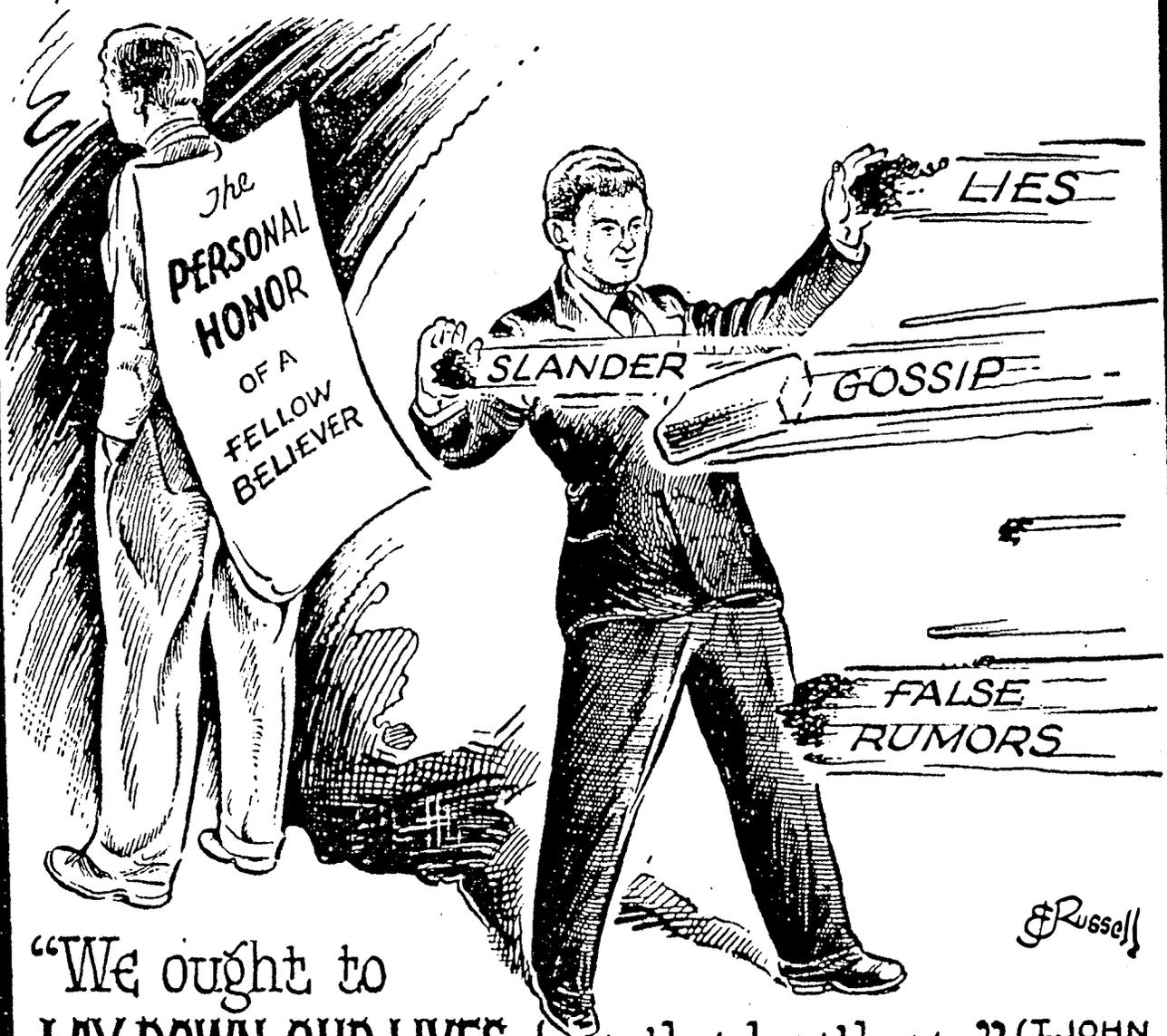
Words are very powerful, whether for good or for evil. May God help us to use the powerful weapon of words for Him!

*Take my voice, and let me sing
Always, only for my King.
Take my lips, and let them be
Filled with messages from Thee.*

-FRANCIS RIDLEY HAVERGAL

ANOTHER NOBLE MINISTRY OF SAINTS.

"Priscilla and Aquila have for my life LAID DOWN THEIR OWN NECKS." (ROM. 16:3,4)



Russell

"We ought to LAY DOWN OUR LIVES for the brethren." (I JOHN 3:16.)