

## How We Should Use Our Tongues

A woman told a judge she wanted a divorce. The judge asked, "Does he beat you up?" The woman answered, "No, I get up before he does every day." Does he still pick you flowers? Judge I do not bake! Do you have grounds for a divorce? Judge we live in a small apartment! "Then why do you want a divorce?" the judge asked. The woman said, "Because we don't seem to ever properly communicate." What we communicate and how we communicate with our tongue is of great importance!

The tongue--what a study in contrasts! To the physician it's merely a two-ounce slab of mucous membrane enclosing a complex array of muscles and nerves that enable our bodies to chew, taste, and swallow. How helpful! Equally significant, it is the major organ of communication that enables us to articulate distinct sounds so we can understand each other. How essential! I can vividly remember as a child going to the doctor with a sore throat or with allergies. The first thing the doctor would say: "Let me see your tongue." Then the doctor would take a tongue depressor, which always tasted terrible, and nearly choke me to death peering down my throat. The doctor would always say, "It was important to examine the tongue." The tongue was a great help to determine our physical health and illnesses. The writer James in chapter three declares the same principle is at work in our spiritual life and maturity as a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.

James states that the tongue is small yet it has great influence and power over the rest of the body. James compares the tongue to a bit in the mouth of a horse, a rudder on a large ship and a spark can set the whole forest burning. Perhaps the greatest insight that James shares is that without the constraining and controlling power of the Holy Spirit it is impossible to tame the tongue from its natural tendency to hurt and harm. Only when the "tongue is under the power of the Holy Spirit--can it be used to heal not hurt."

We must remember the Apostle Paul gave a great insight when he declared: "Even though I can speak in the tongues of men and angels, if I have not loved I have gained nothing." Remember - The good Lord gave us two ears - -but only one tongue. We should try to listen twice as much as we speak.

I want to share three ways we can use our tongues that will empower us to be authentic witnesses for our Lord Jesus Christ.

First, All of the Words From Our Tongues Should Bless Others ALL!

Proverbs 12:18 says, *"Thoughtless words can wound as deeply as any sword--but wisely spoken words can heal."*

A young lady named Sally and her mother had a violent shouting match about the dent she put in her mother's car. After the confrontation, the father tried to console her. "What did your mother say about the dent in the car?" he asked. "Dad, do you want me to leave out the swear words?" "Please," he replied. Sally said, "Then she didn't say anything." The mother failed to realize that words also can leave "dents" in people--but more than that they can poison the soil of a relationship. Dents can be hammered out of a car--they are much more difficult in human beings.

Second, We Are To Use Our Tongues To Praise God --Rather Than Poison Life and Curse His Creation!

The decade of the 1660s in England was filled with disaster. The plague in 1665 made its way through the City of London leaving 70,000 dead. A year later a fire destroyed much of that city. The prophets of doom and gloom predicted that London and England would never recover. During all of this a godly Christian man--Bishop Thomas Ken--kept encouraging the people that he could still see the Light of God's purpose and presence even in tough times. He felt inspired one night to write a song to testify to his convictions, that God was still sovereign and worthy of praise.

*Have You Heard It? Praise God from whom all blessings flow, Praise Him all creatures here below, Praise him above ye Heavenly Host. Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.*

3<sup>rd</sup> May Our Words Be A Voice Through Which Christ Can Speak Words Of Encouragement!

It is living the simple prayer - "Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of all our hearts be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer." Our words need to be dedicated to God. I think we can all agree that from the moment we awake to the moment our heads touch the pillow again we talk a lot--words are used frequently. God is concerned about every word we speak and desires us to consecrate it to Him.

Two kinds of birds fly over our deserts: the Hummingbird and the Vulture. The vulture sees nothing but rotting meat because that is what the vulture looks for. They thrive on a diet of dead and decaying things. The hummingbird flies over the same desert and sees instead the tiny blossoms of the cactus flower. They buzz around until *they find the colorful blooms hidden from view by the rocks*. Each bird finds what it is looking for. We all do. The same can be said for our words and the destination and purpose we have for them. Don't let your tongue bite you--or anyone else. Use it for the Glory of God.