



OUR SPEECH

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A message originally written for young men several years ago, it is Truly applicable to us all, of any age or gender...

"Pleasant words are like honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body."

- Prov 16:24 RSV

***"The lips of the righteous bring forth what is acceptable,
But the mouth of the wicked what is perverted."***

- Prov 10:32 NAS

We looked last time at knowing that God has a plan for your life. A wonderful, exciting plan full of blessings and adventure that each can walk in if you search to know what that plan is, by asking the Lord and seeking to know Him. Once God begins to show us His will for our lives, we must embrace it by living as He commands us. The Bible contains many charges for the righteous and holy living He desires from us.

I want to talk to you about one of these charges that may bring a little conviction, but if this message is heeded, can bring Freedom, Life and God's blessings to you.

Let me begin by asking you a couple questions...

Do you find yourself using a different vocabulary with your friends than you do when your girlfriend or parents or younger siblings are around? Would you use the same words you use on Facebook or in texts when speaking with your teacher, your boss, or in your youth group at church? For a young man or anyone who has committed their life to Christ can others tell by the way we talk, by the words we use?

The Bible says we are a *"light to the world"* (Matt 5:14). That is true of each and every one of us. And that light can shine brightly as we use words or speech that encourages others, like a floodlight that allows many people to see in the dark. Or we can barely glow, like a dusty tiny Power indicator light on the VCR that no one can see, if our speech contains words that are offensive to others.

May our goal be to have the Light of Christ shining brightly in us, by our behavior and our speech.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." - Matt 5:16

As we grow up from being little boys into teenagers and then into adults (and hopefully into a man of God), we hear and pick up a lot of words from our parents, friends and neighbors, some of which may be inappropriate. Today's movies, TV shows and modern music is often littered with foul talk and coarse joking. It is often portrayed in popular media that those who use rough language are 'tough' or 'cool' or 'in control.' Watching the movies and sitcoms of the last couple decades gives the impression that to be a man one has to use colorful four-letter words or suggestive language, which is often degrading to women and sometimes even to the handicapped.

When we were younger, we may have begun to use some of these words without really knowing what they mean, such as swear words or some slang which you wouldn't use in church. If unchecked they can become part of our everyday language.

Looking back to when I was your age, I cringe now remembering the way I used to talk. Speech that I used to think made me cool and manly really only made me look foolish and uneducated. Swearing and blasphemy were a large portion of my daily vocabulary when I was living in the world, when the world was 'all about me.' When I became a Christian, God clearly showed me in the Scriptures that He will not accept swearing and foul language. Such talk will hinder us from entering into His presence. Paul writes - "***Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth...***" (Eph 4:29 KJV) and that includes several 4 letter words that begin with S and C and especially F.



Paul writes in another place - "***Put to death what is earthly in you: immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. In these you once walked, when you lived in them. But now put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth.***"

- Col 3:5-8 RSV

Obscene language, foul talk, or vulgar jokes aren't acceptable for believers. And honestly, a real man doesn't need to prove he is a man by swearing & cursing, and in fact using such words only shows that a guy is still immature in many ways. The Apostle Paul writes - "***When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.***" (1Cor 13:11 NKJV). And these things we are to put away include using words that make us sound uneducated & immature. Others around you may use bad language all the time, and you may feel like you want to "fit in" with the guys. Let me tell you... it's easy to conform to the world. The real challenge and adventure comes when we venture down the less-trodden path of righteousness, paving a way for those we love to follow us. Our family, our true friends, that one special girl.

As a young man growing up, I'm sure you'd someday soon like to meet a nice girl you'd like to share life with. Good, Christian gals (the kind who are faithful and kind-hearted) are turned off by filthy language and inappropriate jokes. Let me tell you... If I had met my wife 25 years ago, she would never have given me the time of day. The old Mike's behavior and speech was often offensive and unedifying.

Then, when I accepted the call of God on my life and was baptized into Christ the Bible says my ***"old self was crucified with Him, in order that (my) body of sin might be done away with, so that (I) would no longer be a slave to sin."***

- Rom 6:6 NAS (personalized)

As a Christian we are no longer a slave to sin, unless we choose to be. Now do any of us really want to be a slave to sin? Especially when we know that sin ultimately only leads to sorrow and death?

"Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?"

- Rom 6:16 NKJV

Some of you may know girls at school or work who swear a lot. Do you find that attractive? Would you want your Mom to hear some of the words they use? A pretty face using ugly words doesn't go together. Just as blessings and cursing from the same mouth are things that James writes - ***"are things that ought not to be."*** (James 3:10)

The Bible teaches that among sins such as fornication (any sex outside of marriage), adultery, murder and greed, that ***"dirty or foolish or filthy words, or vulgar jokes"*** are behaviors that ***"will not inherit the Kingdom of Christ and of God."*** (see Eph 5:1-14)

It is in His Kingdom that we find the plan of God for our lives here and now, as well as our Eternal dwelling with God and Christ.

So... do we want to inherit all the promises of God? Do you want to partake of all His goodness? Then we must not grieve His Holy Spirit by our words or behavior.

"Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them. And do not bring sorrow to God's Holy Spirit by the way you live."

- Eph 4:29-30 NLT

There is a verse from Psalms that I have turned into a prayer for my life -

***"May the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart,
be acceptable (and pleasing) in Your sight, O LORD,
my Rock, and my Redeemer."***

- Psalm 19:14

Like the Psalmist, I want God to be pleased with all the words that come out of my mouth. And that includes the words I write or text as well.

Young man, you have the power to brighten someone's day, to bring a smile to their face and encouragement to their heart by the words you speak. Much of today's youth are looked down on by the older generations because of their music, the clothes they wear, the words they use, and their behavior. May you be one that others see as a ***"man after God's own heart."***

The respect we all want to have as men is something that must be earned. We gain the respect of others not by cursing & being rude & obnoxious, but by being respectful ourselves in our speech and behavior. Honestly, it sounds to me like so many young men, including some who attend church, aspire to be pimps or gangsters or stoners, by the way they talk. Even if you don't, why would you talk like one? Respect doesn't come by acting tough, but by acting like a real man. A man of God. And that begins now when you are in your teens.

"Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity." - 1Tim 4:12 NIV

You are to set a good example for other Christians, and non-believers as well.

"Be careful to live properly among your unbelieving neighbors" - 1Pet 2:12 NLT

Others will judge us by our behavior and speech. They may know we attend a church, and we may wear a cross on our neck, or a Christian tee-shirt, but do we do our best to "live the life" and let our light shine brightly? Remember that the words we use reveal what is in our heart.

"A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks." - Luke 6:45 NKJV

You may say... Well what if I stub my toe, or someone does me wrong, or someone cuts me off on the freeway? Is it okay to swear then? If I'm having a bad day or my parents irritate me can I express myself by using four letter words or taking God's name in vain?

"You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain." - Ex 20:7 NKJV

For myself, I recall times when I found myself beginning to swear again. Frustrating days or stress from work or some physical pain would cause me to use foul words. But these are not excuses. Foul language has no place in the Kingdom of God. Even if no one around us hears, the spiritual realm is aware. The heavenly host is watching -

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Looking unto Jesus..." - Heb 12:1-2a KJV

Honestly, the key to overcoming sin and bad behavior is "looking unto Jesus", our Rock, our Redeemer. Personally, He has delivered me from many sins and bondage's over the past 12 (now 20) years, including using profanity as a part of my everyday speech. I've been set free. And so, have you if you've received His blood atonement and committed your life to Him. We owe our flesh nothing. Sin can have no power over us unless we allow it to. No longer can we claim 'the devil made me do it.' The responsibility is solely ours. We must choose to be indebted to sin or to righteousness, to our flesh or to the Spirit.



"Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God."

- Rom 8:12-14 NKJV

Personally, I want to be a son of God, a brother of Jesus Christ. I pray each of you feels the same way. Allowing sin to remain in our life stunts our growth into the image of the Son of God, and grieves His Holy Spirit.

If we do struggle, we don't want to beat ourselves up for failing in this area, for indeed we are human, but neither can we ever allow ourselves to use that as an excuse. As Romans 8:12 says, we are no longer a debtor to the flesh sinful nature). There is no excuse for any sin. No sin can be taken lightly. As a Christian, we are to "regard our former way of life as dead, and put off the old man which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires, be renewed in the spirit of our mind, and put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness."
(paraphrasing from Eph 4:21-24)

"Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God."
- Rom 6:12-13 NKJV

No, I know I am far from perfect, but I am to be ***"being transformed into (Christ's) image from glory to glory."*** (1Cor 3:18) And praise God that when I do slip up, I can repent and humbly come before Him, and ask for and receive forgiveness.

If we do catch ourselves swearing, let us be ashamed of what comes out of our mouths. As we grow and mature into sons of God, we realize that the "old man" is not yet totally dead and he sometimes rears his ugly head. It is in these times of human weakness and vulnerability, that we need to turn even more toward our Savior, and make a stand for what is right. Judging sin as sin, renouncing it, and humbly submitting ourselves to Him.



This is my prayer in times when I slip with my tongue and use inappropriate language not fitting for a real man ~

Father God forgive me. Against You have I sinned. I ask not that you remove all trials and problems from me, but that You give me strength to endure them when they come and remain righteous in my speech and behavior. Help me to be a light and blessing to those around me, always mindful of the witness that my life shows forth: to my wife, family, friends, and co-workers; at home, work and play, in church, on errands. Always. For that is pleasing to You.

"Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in Thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer." (Psalm 19:14)

May the words of Solomon be real in my life -

"To fear the LORD is to hate evil; I hate pride and arrogance, evil behavior and perverse speech." (Prov 8:13)

Thank You, Jesus, for Your guiding hand upon my life. Thank You for Your atoning sacrifice. May I never take You or Your salvation for granted.

Amen.

As I stated earlier, if this message is heeded it can bring Freedom, Life and God's blessings to you, and to me as well. The Bible declares -

"For the LORD God is a sun and shield; The LORD will give grace and glory; No good thing will He withhold From those who walk uprightly." - Psalm 84:11 NKJV

His promises are all good things to those who are upright in behavior and speech.

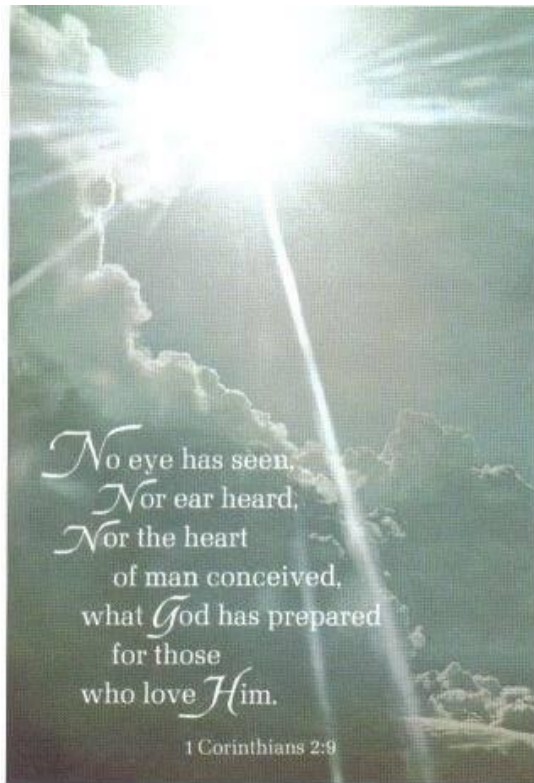
Psalm 15:1 asks the question -

"LORD, who may dwell in your sacred tent? Who may live on your holy mountain?"

God answers -

"Those who obey God in everything and always do what is right, whose words are true and sincere, and who do not slander others. They do no wrong to their friends nor spread rumors about their neighbors." - Psalm 15:1-3 GNT

Oh, such wonderful promises to those who walk & talk in ways that show they love God.



And since I first wrote this article, I became a father. My little boy (now 7) needs to hear words of Life from his Papa, and not that which is corrupt and displeasing to God.

May each of us be truly thankful for Jesus, and His hand upon our lives. And I pray that we would abide in Him always, and bless His Name not only in the good times, but also through the trials and tests that come our way. Let us know and truly believe that He can deliver us from any sin or bondage, if we come humbly to His throne, and confess it before Him with a repentant heart.

God bless you, and guide you always.
Michael

[To Him Who Overcomes](#)

"Let every one who names the Name of the Lord, depart from iniquity."
- 2Tim 2:19