

# Sin 101

## Lesson 4

### The Tongue

#### PART I EXPLANATION

**Introduction:** The improper use of the tongue can be one of the most damaging of all sins. It has the most immediate and direct impact upon the lives of others. The tongue is a powerful instrument that can be used to build up and edify others through encouragement, complement, and affirmation. However, it can also be used to defile, discourage, and destroy others through criticism, complaining, and cursing. The Bible refers to it as a deadly poison, a razor, an arrow, a sword, set on fire of hell, and a world of iniquity. The tongue is not only a powerful instrument; it is also something that is a great indicator of the true condition of the heart. Jesus clearly illustrated this principle by telling us that “*out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh.*” The overflow from our hearts comes out of our tongues. There is an old saying that “what is down in the well comes up in the bucket.” The best gauge of our hearts is our speech.

Jesus warned us that we would be judged according to our words at the Judgment Seat; that we would give account for “*every idle word*”. That is likely what caused David to pray that God would place a guard over his mouth and a door upon his lips not to allow anything foolish or sinful to come out. He also prayed that the words of his mouth would be acceptable in the sight of God. We would do well to learn to control our tongues. However, James tells us that man has figured out how to tame wild beasts, snakes, birds, and sea creatures but nobody has discovered how to tame the human tongue. It is a difficult endeavor because it is a primary weapon used of the devil to hinder Christian growth and destroy the unity of the church.

What a great benefit it would be to glorifying God if Christians could learn to control their tongues. For it is with our tongues that we sing praises to God, preach the gospel, and encourage the saints. However, the Bible tells us that you cannot have sweet water and bitter water coming out of the same fountain. The way to attack the improper use of the tongue is to first of all stop all corrupt or destructive communication from coming out of it. However, the long term solution must be to purify the source of our words, namely our minds and our hearts. The best way to get clean water is not just to put a filter on the faucet but to make sure that the well is not contaminated. If the well is contaminated it needs to be treated because no filter is sufficient to cleanse the water sufficiently over the long term.

The way to cleanse our minds and hearts and ultimately our speech is to control what we allow into our minds and our hearts. Wells of water are corrupted by chemicals or hazardous substances entering the water supply. If we allow the filth of this world into our minds via the television, computer, radio, etc. it will contaminate our minds and hearts and corrupt our speech. However, if we are transformed by renewing our minds by reading, memorizing, and studying the Scriptures it will have a purifying effect on our speech. Because the tongue is such a powerful instrument we must be diligent to bridle it and bring it under the control of the Holy Spirit. Imagine what great strides would be made in the church if individuals would learn to yield this member as an instrument of righteousness unto God. The instrument of the tongue when sanctified can be used to minister grace to the hearers. However, if we fail to bring it into subjection it will be used by our enemy to great advantage in the destruction of souls.

**Definitions:** For English use the Webster’s 1828 Dictionary and copy all appropriate definitions for each word. For the Greek and Hebrew use a Strong’s Concordance and copy the definition. The Strong’s number is in parenthesis.

English: Gossip -

**Backbite -**

**Slander -**

Hebrew: (1681) **dibbah** *dib-baw'*

**Quotation:**

“We know metals by their tinkling, and men by their talking.” Thomas Brooks

“He may not be accounted an honest man of life that is an evil man in tongue.” Nicholas Byfield

“An unbridled tongue is the chariot of the devil, wherein he rides in triumph. The course of an unruly tongue is to proceed from evil to worse, to begin with foolishness, and go on with bitterness, and to end in mischief and madness. The Jew’s conference with our Savior began with arguments: “we be Abraham’s seed,” saith they, etc.; but proceeded to blasphemies: “say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and has a devil?” Edward Reyner

“Some care not what they say in their passion; they will censure, slander, and wish evil to others. How can Christ be in the heart, when the Devil has taken possession of the tongue?...Passion disturbs reason, it is brevis insania, a short frenzy.... Let them whose tongues are set on fire, take heed that they do not one day in hell desire a drop of water to cool them.” Thomas Watson

“David upon sad experience, compareth a wicked, reviling tongue to three fatal weapons – a razor, a sword, and an arrow. To a razor, such a one as will take off every little hair: so a reviling tongue will not only take advantage of every gross sin committed by others, but those peccadilloes...secondly, to a sword that wounds: so the tongues of reproaching men cut deeply into the credits and reputations of their brethren, but a sword doth mischief only near at hand, not afar off; and, therefore it is in the third place compared to an arrow, that can hit at a distance: and so revilers do not ill offices to those only in the parish or town where they live, but to others far remote. How much, then, doth it concern every man to walk circumspectly.” Jeremiah Burroughs

**Confessions** (Look up and read these articles)

### **London Baptist Confession of 1689**

Chapter 6: of the Fall of Man, of Sin, and of the punishment - paragraphs 1-5

## **PART II EXPLORATION**

**Key Questions** (*Answer in writing*)

1. What some ways can the tongue be used positively?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What are some ways the tongue can be used negatively?



Psalm 34:11-14 Having a fear of the Lord is illustrated by keeping our \_\_\_\_\_ from evil.

Psalm 140:3 The destructive power of the tongue is likened to the \_\_\_\_\_ of a serpent.

Psalm 141:1-3 David prayed that the Lord would \_\_\_\_\_ and guard his mouth and protect the \_\_\_\_\_ of his \_\_\_\_\_ so that his prayers would be acceptable.

Proverbs 10:19 We are cautioned against the danger of speaking too much because it quickly can turn to \_\_\_\_\_. We are reminded of the value of holding our tongue, which is a sign of a \_\_\_\_\_ person.

Proverbs 12:22 Our lips determine whether we are an \_\_\_\_\_ or whether they are a \_\_\_\_\_ to the Lord.

Proverbs 17:28 Even a \_\_\_\_\_ is counted \_\_\_\_\_ and a man of understanding just because he keeps his mouth shut.

Proverbs 26:23 Burning lips and a \_\_\_\_\_ heart are as worthless as broken pottery covered with dross.

Matthew 12:34-37 The overflow of the \_\_\_\_\_ is what comes out of the mouth. The true condition of the heart is revealed by our words. We are warned that we will give \_\_\_\_\_ for every worthless word in the day of judgment. We will be \_\_\_\_\_ or condemned by our \_\_\_\_\_.

Matthew 15:11,18 We are \_\_\_\_\_ not by what we eat and drink but by what comes out of our mouths, because that comes from our heart.

Colossians 3:8 The sins of our mouth are to be \_\_\_\_\_.

I Timothy 5:11-13 Young widows were expected to remarry instead of being provided for by the church. The reason given is that they will be \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ to others houses stirring up trouble by \_\_\_\_\_ things they shouldn't.

I Peter 3:10 The key to finding a happy life is to \_\_\_\_\_ your tongue from evil and not allow your lips to speak \_\_\_\_\_.

**Key Chapter(s)** (*Read daily and summarize in your own words the meaning of the chapter*):

James 3

### **PART III EXPECTATION**

**Memory verse:** Ephesians 4:29

**Personal Definition:** (*Write a definition in your own words*)

Gossip -

**Personal Application:** Which wrongful use of the tongue do you struggle with the most?

**Meditation question:** (*be prepared for discussion*) Why is the tongue such a good indicator of the heart?

**Extra Credit:** Keep track of the number of times that corrupt communication in any form comes out of your mouth this week.