

The Weight of Our Words: Measuring the Impact of What We Say

Conquering Fear With Love: A
Commitment to Sound Speech

Series in Review

- Principle 1: Controlled Speech Is a Measure of Maturity—James 3:2
- Principle 2: The Tongue is Small but Significant—James 3:3-5
- Principle 3: Our Words Are Potentially Combustible—James 3:6
- Principle 4: The Tongue is Like a Wild and Deadly Beast—James 3:7-8
- Principle 5: The Tongue Tends to Promote a Double Standard—James 3:9-12
- In *To Tell the Truth*, we looked at the differences between Beguilement, Deceit, Lying and False Witness
- In *Maliciously Speaking*, we touched on the catastrophic cousins of Gossip and Slander
- In *Cross Words*, we studied the problems of Murmuring and Contentious Words

Series in Review

- In *Out of the Abundance of the Heart*, we addressed the issues of taking God's name in vain, sensuous speech, as well as how what we say reflects the condition of our inner man. In addition we looked at the details of the Proud Heart, Angry Heart, and the Fearful Heart
- In *Speaking Out for Number One*, we confronted Boasting, Flattery, and Exaggeration and how they are related to Pride
- In *Defusing Anger*, we studied how anger in itself is not sin. In addition, we offered three Biblical principals regarding Anger: 1) Be Slow to Wrath, 2) Be Angry and Sin Not, 3) Deal With Anger Before Sundown. Lastly, we offered practical tips for how to redirect our focus and channel our anger in positive ways.

Apples of Gold

- The productive tongue is characterized as:
- Proverbs 10:19-21--wise, like choice silver, a banquet for many,
- Proverbs 12:22--the Lord's delight
- Proverbs 13:3--a guardian of the soul,
- Proverbs 15:1--a vehicle to turn away wrath
- Proverbs 15:4--a tree of life
- Proverbs 17:27--full of knowledge and a reflection of faithfulness.

Commit to developing your own spiritual maturity.

- Fortify your mind and your inner man by studying God's word daily (Ephesians 5:18, Colossians 3:16).
- Remain instant in prayer. If you are struggling with your speech always remember that you can go to God at any time. Prayer unlocks the power of the God's written word in your life (Philippians 4:6-7, I Thessalonians 2:13).
- Speak less and listen more (Psalms 141:3).

Commit to speaking only good things about other people

- After hearing something scandalous about someone else, our natural response is to perpetuate the news in the form of slander, gossip, murmuring, or beguilement. Therefore, we must be committed to saying only good things about others.
- Remember that we are all members of the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:12-26, Galatians 5:15).
- If it's not edifying or doesn't minister grace don't say it (Ephesians 4:29).
- Remember that the way we speak teaches the unsaved about who we are (II Corinthians 3:2, I Corinthians 7:16).

Commit to responding properly whenever you encounter improper speech patterns

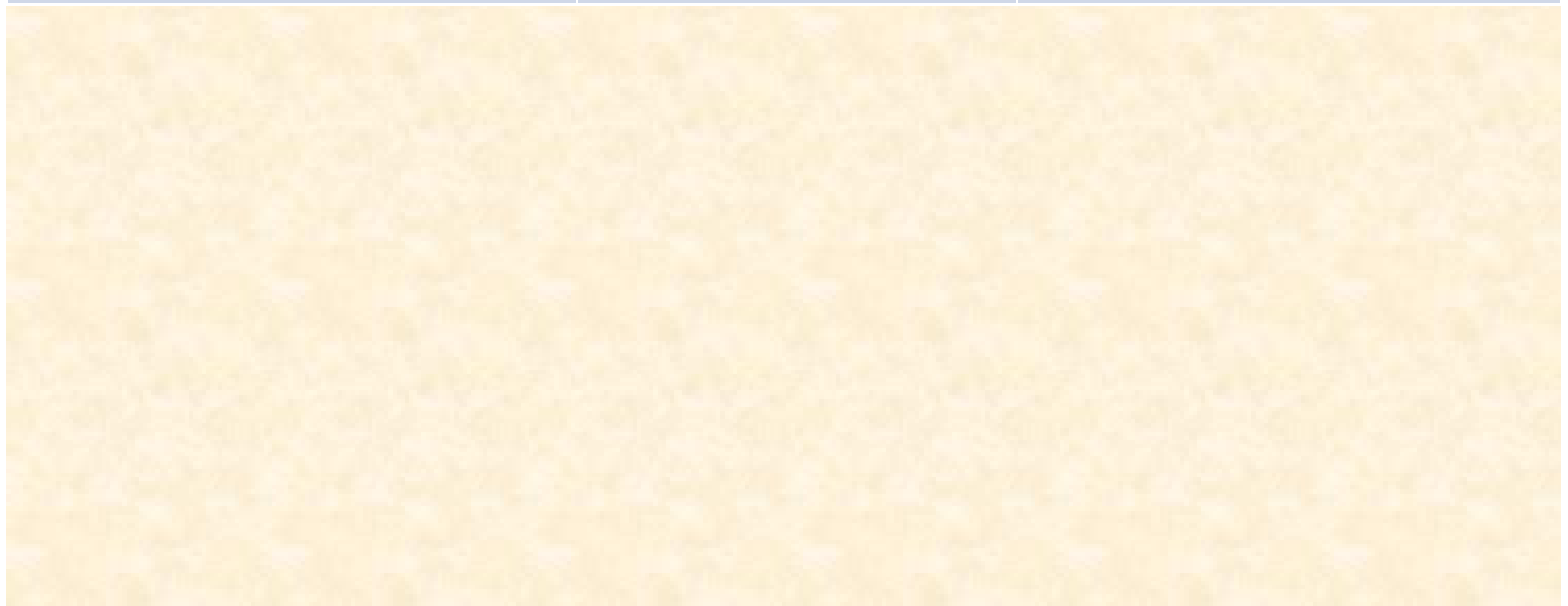
- Our third commitment should be to respond to negative input without making the situation worse. How do we answer those whose speech is not up to God's standards?
- Do not communicate approval of what is being said or encourage additional statements (I Thessalonians 5:15, 22, I Timothy 5:22).
- Pray for wisdom while you are listening.
- Respond within the context of your own convictions. Keep your focus on God's perspective on the matter.
- Be proactive in guarding your heart and mind from hearing gossip, slander, or false reports. Listen for signal words or phrases, "Did you hear" "I probably shouldn't be telling you this"
- Pray about what you do hear (Philippians 4:8), try not to let bad reports prejudice your opinion of others.

FEAR (Self-Centered)	LOVE'S TRANFORMING QUALITY	LOVE (Others-Centered)
Lashes out to protect self; fear of vulnerability and hardship	LONG SUFFERING	Trust's the Word to work in my offender's life while doing good to my offender
Thinks only of myself, being kind to me and expecting others to do the same	KIND	Looks at life from others' points of view and seeks to help them with an understanding spirit.
Fears personal loss; compares and wonders why I don't have others good fortune	ENVIETH NOT (Not Envious)	Rejoices in the prosperity of others and shares in their joy
Draws attention to myself; fears loss of acclaim	VAUNTETH NOT ITSELF (Not Boastful)	Focuses on God's goodness to me and the accomplishments of others

FEAR (Self-Centered)	LOVE'S TRANSFORMING QUALITY	LOVE (Others-Centered)
Fears a loss of status and prestige, does everything to put oneself ahead	NOT PUFFED UP (Humble)	Wants God to be truly first in my life and the lives of others
Looks out for my best interests and advantage with a strong focus on my rights and privileges	SEEKETH NOT HERE OWN	Looks out for the best interests of God and others
Is quick to defend my personal, dreams, and desires	NOT EASILY PROVOKED (Angered)	Hesitates and evaluates each situation from God's (and others') points of view
Uses evil schemes and words to protect and enhance personal position and gain	THINKETH NO EVIL	Recognizes that evil is always harmful to everyone involved; refrains for the others sake

FEAR (Self-Centered)	LOVE'S TRANSFORMING QUALITY	LOVE (Others-Centered)
<p>Recognizes the value of truth only when it is convenient; lies to protect self and gain advantage</p>	<p>REJOICES IN THE TRUTH</p>	<p>Recognizes the value of truth, even if it means admitting to wrongdoing</p>
<p>In order to protect self, one is will to endanger others spiritually and physically</p>	<p>BEARETH ALL THINGS (Protects)</p>	<p>Desires to shelter others from danger at all costs</p>
<p>Is suspicious, doubtful, and skeptical, especially when personal loss is threatened</p>	<p>BELIEVETH ALL THINGS (Trusts)</p>	<p>Willingly trusts others until they are proven untrustworthy; seeks to engender trust</p>
<p>Discourages and belittles others' potential, fears their gain at one's own loss of position or status</p>	<p>HOPETH ALL THINGS</p>	<p>Believes in the potential of others and encourages them to discover their own potential even if personally threatening</p>

FEAR (Self-Centered)	LOVE'S TRANFORMING QUALITY	LOVE (Others-Centered)
Stops loving as soon as it becomes too difficult, undeserved, or inconvenient; fears becoming used or taken advantage of	ENDURTEH ALL THINGS (Perseveres)	Loves regardless of external circumstances or the worthiness of the person.



Conclusion

- When it comes to our speech as we enter into a new year we need to:
- Affirm commitment to righteousness at all costs.
- Give testimony to God's sufficiency.
- Express confidence and loyalty to God regardless of the circumstance.
- Express truth in the face of danger.
- Forgive those who hurt and misuse us.
- Express gratefulness to God and those who provide support as we face difficult times.
- **JUST GRACE IT!!!!**