



Life Group Study Notes

"Shhh!!!"

Sr. Ps. James Lowe - November 13, 2016

Warm Up (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer, or ask another. No right or wrong answers.

- How many siblings do you have? Who are you closest to among them?
- How did your parents discipline you if you fought with your siblings?
- What brought peace to your home if there had been contention?

Word (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at www.bethelworld.org

Matthew 12:34-37 ESV *You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil. I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.*"

- The condition of our hearts will be revealed by the words that come out of our mouths.
- Our words are such an accurate reflection of our hearts, that they are an adequate basis for determining whether we shall be justified or condemned before God.

Proverbs 12:18 ESV *There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.*

- We can use our words to seriously harm others or to bring healing and restoration to them. They can either exacerbate a situation, or they can potentially calm a situation.

James 1:26-27 ESV *If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.*

- Hypocrisy learns and speaks religious language in religious contexts, but then resorts to uncontrolled speech and conduct in other social settings. This is unacceptable to God.
- True religion that pleases God is exhibited by good words and good deeds.

James 3:2-6, 8-10 ESV *For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body. If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among*

our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell... (N)o human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so.

- Words must be directed. They must be monitored and controlled, because they determine the direction of our entire lives.
- We belong to God who purchased our redemption with his own blood. Our words belong to God. We do not have a right to spew forth whatever comes to mind. We must be bridled and allow the Holy Spirit to work change in our hearts, so that what naturally comes forth is godly and good.

Psalms 141:3 ESV Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips!

James 1:19-21 ESV Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

Psalms 119:11 ESV I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

- How do we guard our mouth so that only good comes out? We must store God's word up in our hearts, so that it corrects, adjusts, and aligns our hearts with God's. We need his perspective, his thoughts, his wisdom.

Discussion (10-15 minutes)

Choose an item below to discuss, or introduce another related point for discussion.

- Evaluate your speech in light of the lesson. How well are you doing from God's perspective?
- How can we practically better control and direct our tongues?
- What can you do to be an agent of peace in these turbulent times we are living in?

Prayer (10-15 minutes)

Pray for any of the following, as well as any other requests you may have.

- Ask God to reveal to us and convict us of any speech (or conduct) that displeases him.
- Pray prayers of repentance for such sins and ask God for help to make a lasting change.
- Ask God for opportunities to speak words of life, healing, and wisdom to those who are hurting or angry or fearful. Ask for God's grace to do this well.