

Tongue

The tongue is a relatively small part of our bodies, but it can be used so many ways to spread kindness or harm. Our tongues can deliver kind words when someone needs them. It can be used to spread the Word of God. Our tongues can spread rumors, lies, and hateful words. Our tongues can teach people error and lead people away from God. Do we watch what comes out of our mouths and care about the impact it may have on others? Do we just say whatever we want to not caring about the consequences? We can use our tongues for good, or as a destructive weapon. In this lesson, we will look at what the scriptures have to say about the tongue and how God wants us to use it. The Bible has quite a lot to say on the topic of the tongue, so we will not cover everything, but hopefully gain a better understanding about how God wants us to use our tongues.

The Tongue in Scripture

Job 27:4 “My lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit.” This should be the goal of every Christian. Christians should strive to not speak lies. Christians should not be in the business of deceiving others, which is simply put, another way of lying. Christians should be striving to control their tongues to not let filthy or mean language pour out of their mouths. No Christian will be perfect at controlling their tongue, but all should be trying to do better at controlling it.

Psalms 35:28 “And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long.” Do we use our tongue in praise to God? Do we use our tongue to mock God or take His name in vain? Do we use our tongue to be a false teacher leading others away from God? A Christian should be spreading God’s Word to try and help lead others to Him, not discouraging them or teaching false doctrine. A Christian should use God’s name in reverence and respect, never in vain. Are we in the habit of reverently praying to God, or do we use disrespectful terms to refer to our Creator?

Psalms 39:1 “I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me.” It is hard to bridle our tongue, and it does take effort to keep it under control. We will all slip up and make mistakes from time to time and strive to do better. Honestly ask yourself if you sin with your tongue was it a mistake or a habit? A habit of using sinful language, off color jokes, lying, etc. means you are not trying to bridle your tongue. We must be trying to bridle our tongues to be pleasing to God. Christians can certainly repent of mistakes, and try hard to not to repeat them. If we are not trying to bridle our tongues then we must ask ourselves, why do we not care that we are displeasing God?

Psalms 66:17 “I cried unto him with my mouth, and he was extolled with my tongue.” Do we pray to God reverently? We can not be a faithful Christian if we do not use our tongues in reverent prayers to God regularly.

Psalms 119:172 “My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness.” Do we use our tongues to talk to others about God and teach them about His Word? If not, doesn’t that mean we don’t care? We do not necessarily have to be a preacher, or a

Bible school teacher, to teach others about God. Christians can talk to others one on one, or perhaps an opportunity to use our tongues to talk to someone about the Word of God will happen when we are not expecting it at all. Certainly, it would be shameful for a child of God to teach contrary to the Word of God in the Bible, we need to be about teaching the TRUTH and not error.

Proverbs 12:17 “He that speaketh truth sheweth forth righteousness: but a false witness deceit.” Should lies and deceit be on the tongue of a Christian or truth? Clearly truth is linked with righteousness and deceit can spread so much that is bad.

Proverbs 17:20 “He that hath a froward heart findeth no good: and he that hath a perverse tongue falleth into mischief.” Speaking perverse language is not becoming of a Christian and is certainly going out of ones way to be the opposite of what God wants to hear coming out of our lips.

Proverbs 18:21 “Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.” The tongue can be a powerful weapon of destruction, or a powerful tool for healing. What we say matters and thought should go into controlling what we say with our tongue. Learning to bridle the tongue can keep one from saying terrible things that are hurtful to others, and can damage even long-standing relationships.

Matthew 12:33-37 “Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit. O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.” The things in one’s mind will eventually come out of one’s mouth. If curse words or some form of nasty language is coming out of one’s mouth then it must be in one’s mind. If false or corrupt teachings are in one’s mind then that will eventually come out of one’s mouth. However, if one fills their minds with Christ’s teachings and clean thoughts what do you think will eventually come out of one’s mouth? A Christian’s mind should be filled with the Word of God and clean and wholesome things making it very difficult for worldly filth to come out of their mouth. What we put in our minds and fill our thinking with will come out of our mouth and be seen in our lives.

Acts 2:25-26 “For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope” Our speech can help spread joy and further the Word of God. Our own positive speech can help build up ourselves, and those that are around us. The tongue can be a strong tool for righteousness just as much as it can be a mighty weapon for destruction.

Romans 14:11 “For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.” While we are living, or after we have died and gone to the next

realm, everyone will bow before the Almighty and confess to God. There will be no exceptions to this. It is far better to do it in this life before your eternal fate is sealed.

James 3:5-8 “Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.” We can start huge fires with just a few nasty or mean and hurtful words. Our tiny little tongues can start fights and destroy relationships. A Christian must be working to engage their minds before their mouths, to think before they speak. Not speaking in anger and not wanting to harm others with mean words is not always easy and sometimes we all fail. A Christian should be learning to rarely let their own tongue get out of hand.

1 Peter 4:11 “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.” When we talk to others about Jesus and His teachings do we know what we are talking about? Are we teaching others what the Bible says, or what mankind wants to hear? My opinion and your opinion don’t matter, it only matters what the Bible actually teaches. However, teaching error to others can help guide them to Hell, that is a truly evil use of the tongue. Sadly, this happens all over the world every week.

Revelation 14:6 “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people” The Gospel is for everyone, regardless of nationality, language spoken, skin color, etc. Jesus died for all of us so that if we are obedient to the Gospel we can be saved.

Ungodly use of the tongue

Ephesians 4:25 “Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.” Lying is clearly not acceptable to God and is a sinful use of our tongue. We must push habits like dishonesty out of our lives and strive to speak truthfully with each other in order to be pleasing to God.

Ephesians 4:29 “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.” While no one, even a long-time solid Christian, is perfect. A Christian’s speech should be truthful, clean, and doing one’s best to communicate God’s Word to other people. A Christian’s mouth will not be filled with lies, nasty language, or teaching error to others.

Ephesians 4:31-32 “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.” Angry, hurtful, harmful speech is not approved by God. It is harmful not just for the people we might direct it at, but it hurts the speaker too. Holding onto anger over long periods of time can really be harmful and destroy your life. Jesus wants us to be kind to each other and caring in the way we talk to each other. Does my

speech please Jesus? If not work on changing it, even though it can be hard. As humans we will not always agree and we will not always speak kindly to each other but if we work on controlling the tongue, we can limit how much anger and negativity comes out of it.

Colossians 3:9-10 “Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him” The New Testament teaches us that lying is part of the sinful world, and not part of a Christian’s life. When one lies, they are not expressing Christian values but rather sinful ones.

2 Thessalonians 3:11 “For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.” and **1 Timothy 5:13** “And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not.” Being a busybody and spreading rumors is not a Christian use of the tongue but a sinful one. This type of speech often winds up hurting someone and is sometimes not even the truth. Christians use their speech in ways to build others up not tear them down.

James 1:26 “If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.” Believe it or not we can learn to control our tongues and we do not have to flippantly pop off and say the first thing that comes to mind. A Christian should be striving to control their tongue so that most of the time it is bridled.

James 3:10 “Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh. Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.” A Christian’s speech should not include false teaching, curse words, nasty jokes or other types of sinful language. If it does, it is time to get to work on controlling the tongue, and get back in God standing with God. God will not accept this type of speech.

James 4:11 “Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.” We have probably all been guilty of talking about someone behind their back, but God does not want that. If we have a problem with someone, kindly take it up with them, not everyone but them. Perhaps, with communication the issue can be resolved. They might not even know you have an issue with them.

1 Peter 4:15 “But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.” One might note that God puts busybodies in the same category as murders. WOW! God does not approve of our using the tongue in this way.

Godly use of the tongue

Psalms 19:14 “Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.” This is the attitude a Christian should have, making sure what is in their mind, and what they say are acceptable to God.

Psalm 119:172 “My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness.” Our tongues should have the Word of God coming out of them. This use of the tongue is backed up by studying the Word to be sure we only speak the truth, and not error. God wants us to know His Word and teach it to others.

Romans 10:9-10 “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” One step on the road to salvation is using our tongue to confess that we believe in Jesus. Also, as Christians our speech should show what we believe and not keep it hidden.

2 Corinthians 4:13 “We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak” As Christians, when we have the opportunity, we should be speaking to others, attempting to teach them about Jesus. We want others to be saved too. God wants us to spread His Word.

Philippians 2:10-11 “That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Every tongue will confess that Christ is Lord. As Christians we can use our tongue to teach others about Christ now, because tomorrow may be too late.

Colossians 4:6 “Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.” A Christian does not know everything and they do not have all the answers to all Bible questions. However, they should know why they are a Christian and be able to share that with others, as well as be able to help others learn how to become Christians. A Christian teaching others should be doing so with love not arrogance.

Hebrews 13:15 “By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.” In both prayer and songs of praise we can use our tongues in praise of God, and honor Him for all He has done for us.

Conclusion

The Bible teaches us that God expects us to control our tongues, and use it to try and help other people learn more about Him. The Bible teaches us that it is difficult to control our tongues, and that we will have to put some effort into learning to control it. While a Christian is certainly not perfect lies, curse words, and false teachings about the Bible should not be proceeding out of our mouths. God does care what we say. Most of the time what we have in our minds will eventually come out of our mouths. We can all do better at making sure what comes out of our mouths is pleasing to God, if we are willing to work on it.