

Good Monday Morning, to all my family and friends, as we draw close to the Christmas celebrations. This is not a Christmas message. I may share something on that next time. For now, let's let the Word of the God instruct us on the use of our words.

## THE WORDS OF MY MOUTH

Devotional prepared by Dr. Robert L. Morris

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“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.” Psalm 19:14; NKJV

“I will bless the LORD at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.” (Psalm 34:1; NKJV)

The Scripture text for this Devotional is the verse quoted at the close of our Youth service every Sunday night when I was in Junior and Senior High School. We never left the Church not having quoted that powerful verse. It was designed for us by the Lord, and disclosed to us by our Pastor, with the intention of directing our minds and hearts concerning the importance of guarding our language in every context of our lives. Was it hard to learn? Was it hard to put into practice? In some areas of life, it was a little difficult, but the precious Holy Spirit is the One who comes alongside us and helps us in every area of our human weakness. But I carried that challenging verse in my mind and heart through high school days, and through college, seminary, and graduate school days. I carried it into and through our marriage and through parenthood. I carried it through pastoral and teaching ministries. I am carrying it through my retirement. I trust the Lord will keep it alive and vibrant in my life. For many it is one of life's most difficult disciplines. Yet, the Scriptures counsel us clearly, and the Holy Spirit enables us.

Today's Devotional is a fast “run-through” of some of the Scriptural instructions relating to how we are to speak ... or how we are not to speak. The translations of the Bible used in each verse is identified by small capital letters: NKJV = New King James Version, TNIV = Today's New International Version, and HCSB = Holman Christian Standard Bible. Here are just 45 of the hundreds of Scripture verses that instruct us about our speaking. Read them slowly. Give careful thought to each. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you apply them to your life as needed. They are challenging, but God has spoken them to us.

I have taken the liberty to divide these into three categories, and by this, they help me discover the importance of what God says in His word about the use of our language.

### 1. WE ARE TO REFLECT ON GOD AND OUR RELATIONSHIP TO HIM WHEN WE SPEAK, FOR OUR WORDS ARE TO HONOR HIM.

“My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD.” (Psalm 145:21; NKJV)

“O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise.” (Psalm 51:15; NKJV)

“My mouth shall tell of Your righteousness and Your salvation all the day.” (Psalm 71:15; NKJV)

“My tongue shall speak of Your word, for all Your commandments are righteousness.” (Psalm 119:172; NKJV)

“Let my mouth be filled with Your praise and with Your glory all the day.” (Psalm 71:8; NKJV)

“I will sing of the mercies of the LORD forever; with my mouth will

I make known Your faithfulness to all generations.” (Psalm 89:1;

NKJV)

“I will greatly praise the LORD with my mouth; Yes, I will praise Him among the multitude. For He shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save him from those who condemn him.” (Psalm 109:30, 31; NKJV)

“And my tongue shall speak of Your righteousness and of Your praise all the day long.” (Psalm 35:28; NKJV)

“O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise.” (Psalm 51:15; NKJV)

“Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips.” (Psalm 141:3; NKJV)

“He has put a new song in my mouth – praise to our God: many will see it and fear, and will trust in the LORD.” (Psalm 40:3; NKJV)

“Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, but those who deal truthfully are His delight.” (Proverbs 12:22; NKJV)

“For there is not a word on my tongue, but behold, O LORD, You know it altogether.” (Psalm 139:4; NKJV)  
“Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.” (Colossians 3:16; TNIV)  
“Do not be rash with your mouth, and let not your heart utter anything hastily before God.” (Ecclesiastes 5:2; NKJV)

## 2. WE ARE TO REFRAIN FROM USING LANGUAGE THAT DEFAMES OR MALIGNS ANOTHER PERSON.

“Do not speak evil of one another, brethren.” (James 4:11; NKJV)  
“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.” (Ephesians 4:29; TNIV)  
“Therefore, each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body.” (Ephesians 4:25; TNIV)  
“A perverse man sows strife, and a whisperer separates the best of friends.” (Proverbs 17:28; NKJV)  
“I will guard my ways, lest I sin with my tongue; I will restrain my mouth with a muzzle, while the wicked are before me.” (Psalm 39:1; NKJV) (“Bridal” instead of “muzzle” in KJV)  
“A wholesome tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit.” (Proverbs 15:4; NKJV)  
“A gentle answer turns away anger, but a harsh word stirs up wrath.” (Proverbs 15:1; HCSB)  
“But now you must also put away all the following: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and filthy language from your mouth.” (Colossians 3:8; HCSB)  
“Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.” (Colossians 4:6; TNIV)  
“A tongue that heals is a tree of life, but a devious tongue breaks the spirit.” (Proverbs 15:4; HCSB)  
“A lying tongue hates those who are crushed by it, and a flattering mouth works ruin.” (Proverbs 26:28; NKJV)  
“Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.” (Colossians 4:6; TNIV)  
“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.” (Ephesians 4:29; HCSB)  
“Remind the people ... to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and always to be gentle toward everyone.” (Titus 3:2; TNIV)  
“Without wood, fire goes out; without a gossip, conflict dies down.” (Proverbs 26:20; HCSB)

## 3. WE ARE TO REFINE OUR LANGUAGE IN WAYS THAT WILL HELP US DEVELOP OUR CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.

“Whoever guards his mouth and tongue keeps his soul from troubles.” (Proverbs 21:23; NKJV)  
“A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man holds it in check.” (Proverbs 29:11; HCSB)  
“Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit.” (Psalm 34:13; 1 Peter 3:10; NKJV)  
“In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, but he who restrains his lips is wise. The tongue of the righteous is choice silver.” (Proverbs 10:19-20a; NKJV)  
“The words of a wise man’s heart are gracious.” (Ecclesiastes 10:12a; NKJV)  
“The lips of the wise disperse knowledge, but the heart of the fool does not do so.” (Proverbs 15:7; NKJV)  
“He who has knowledge spares his words, and a man of understanding is of a calm spirit.” (Proverbs 17:27; NKJV)  
“A fool’s lips enter into contention, and his mouth calls for blows. A fool’s mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul.” (Proverbs 18:6-7; NKJV)  
“For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.” (Matthew 12:37; NKJV)  
“Whoever guards his mouth and tongue keeps his soul from troubles.” (Proverbs 21:23; NKJV)  
“Do you see a man who speaks too soon? There is more hope for a fool than for him.” (Proverbs 29:20; HCSB)  
“A word spoken at the right time is like golden apples on a silver tray.” (Proverbs 15:11; HCSB)  
“My dearly loved brothers, understand this: everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger, for man’s anger does not accomplish God’s righteousness.” (James 1:19, 20; HCSB)  
“A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man holds it in check.” (Proverbs 29:11; HCSB)

“He who guards his mouth preserves his life, but he who opens wide his lips shall have destruction.”  
(Proverbs 13:3; NKJV)

Here are three vital of life in which our moment-by-moment communicative relationships continue to be checked frequently, and perhaps corrected when needed:

- (1) Our relationship in public and in private with God our Savior;
- (2) Our relationship with and among others;
- (3) Our relationship with and to ourselves.

Only the Holy Spirit can guide us and help us to make the following a constant reality in our lives. It is a powerful, transforming goal that God sets before us in His Word. May the Lord help us in making it true and lasting in our lives.

“All the words of my mouth are righteous; none of them are deceptive or perverse. All of them are clear to the perceptive, and right to those who discover knowledge.” (Proverbs 8:8, 9; HCSB)  
In 1874 Philip P. Bliss wrote the lyrics and music score for a song that used to be sung frequently in the Churches. I have not heard it sung for several years. Is it possible that just perhaps it should be sung again and again? You know it ... so, join me in singing it today.

#### WONDERFUL WORDS OF LIFE

1. Sing them over again to me, wonderful words of life.  
Let me more of their beauty see, wonderful words of life.

#### CHORUS (after each verse)

Wonderful words, Beautiful words;  
Wonderful words of life.  
Wonderful words, Beautiful words;  
Wonderful words of life.

2. Christ, the blessed One, gives to all, wonderful words of life.  
Sinner, list to the loving call, wonderful words of life.

3. Sweetly echo the gospel call, wonderful words of life.  
Offer pardon and peace to all, wonderful words of life.