The Tongue

The Sins of the Tongue

James 1:26, "If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless.

James 3:2-8, "We all stumble in many ways. If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to keep his whole body in check. When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. Likewise the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell. All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and creatures of the sea are being tamed and have been tamed by man, but no man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison."

What a shock it is when the Holy Spirit reveals to us what God's Word has to say about the deadly, far-reaching effects, of the sin of the tongue. The tongue has the power to make or break a person's spirit, to bring joy or sorrow, to left a person's or cast them down.

A talebearer is as reckless as a drunken driver driving a high-powered automobile. He will wreck lives and the happiness of others by gossip, he is as reckless as a child with a loaded revolver.

Proverbs 11:9 says, "With the mouth one destroyeth his neighbors." Proverbs 18:21 says, "There's death and life in the power of the tongue."

Gossip has assassinated many a good person, and has destroyed, like an atom bomb, many homes, friendships and, even, churches.

Someone has said, "Silence seldom brings mischief" Tales told are like snow balls, the grow by rolling.

God, as a part of His law, commanded in Leviticus 19:16, "Thou shalt not go up and down among the people as a talebearer."

Listen to these Proverbs concerning a "Talebearer." Proverbs 11:13, "A talebearer revealeth secrets, but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter." Proverbs 18:8, "The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the inner parts of the heart. Proverbs 20:19, "He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets, therefore meddle not with him." Proverbs 26:20, "Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out, SO where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth." Proverbs 26:22, "The words of a talebearer are as wounds and they go down into the inner parts of the heart."

Romans 3:13 tells us that "the poison of asps [deadly snakes] are under their lips." And, James 3:5 states, "How great a matter a little fire kindleth!"

Proverbs 6:16-19 tells us that there are seven things which God hates, and three of the
seven are, "a lying tongue, a false witness, and he that soweth discord among the brethren."
Here is a sin which draws wrath of God like steel draws lightening

   The Apostle Paul classifies the sin of the tongue with murder and adultery and says, "They which commit such things are worthy of death."

   Why can't we see the seriousness of this sin? This is not some trivial weakness, but, rather it is a moral collapse. Hell is has a carnival when talebearers are busy!

   In Psalm 16:1, the Psalmist asks, "Lord, who shall abide in Your Tabernacle, who shall dwell in Your holy hill? Then, the Psalmist gives the answer in verse 3, when he says, "He that backbiteth not with his tongue, slanders a neighbors, nor takes up a reproach against his neighbor . . . [defrauds a friend]."

   James says, "If any man seem to be religious [He has given up things for God, and obeys God in many ways, YET, "he bridleth not his tongue [does not compel it, or force it to do the right thing] that man's religion is in vain [or, useless]."

   THE MISUSE OF THE TONGUE IS A DEADLY SIN!

   Only God knows the broken hearts, the blasted hopes, the wrecked homes and the murdered influences which have resulted from man's misuse of his tongue.

   WHAT THIS SIN DOES TO YOU

1. It will sear your conscience and make you hard hearted and cruel

2. It will make you untruthful and insincere

   You may say, "I didn't lie," but you passed on a half truth with a wink, or a suggestive silence. You take a single sentence out of context and make it mean something that was never intended to say. This sin, of talebearing, makes you cease opportunities for self advancement at expense of someone else.

3. This sin will make you a moral coward.

   "99 percent out of 100 would not dare to face the person whom they are maligning."

4. This sin makes you arrogant and careless

   A person who does not bridle his tongue gets into the habit of appointing himself as judge and jury. That person brings in his own evidence, passes his own sentence and proceeds to punish the victim without knowing the facts.

   James 3:1, "Don't try and be a judge over others, knowing that you will receive a greater condemnation."
   Romans 14:10, "Why do you judge your brother? Why do you find fault with him? We will all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.
Romans 14:4 says, "Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is his own master [Jesus Christ] to say whether he stands or falls." There is a day appointed when God will judge the secrets of men. God will investigate every motive, taking every circumstance into account. All the facts will be laid bare.

5. This sin of talebearing brings about a tendency to lose all sense of high honor.

With a talebearer sacred confidences are betrayed. Names are mentioned as matters pass from one to another when there is no possible reason for doing so.

6. A person who indulges in talebearing, will begin to deceive himself.

Under the guise of, "Doing it for the protecting of the work of God," they broadcast what they believe to be the faults, failures, weaknesses, misfortunes, and sins of others. No one ever spread scandal in the interest of holy living or the interest of the church.

God says, "If a man be overtaken in a fault, you which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness" (Galatians 6:1).

You can kill with your tongue. You don't need a gun.

7. The Bible says that one who is a talebearer, is a murderer.

Proverbs 18:21, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue." Proverbs 15:4, "A gentle tongue is a tree of life; but an undisciplined tongue breaks hearts." James 3:8 tells us that the tongues can be "full of deadly poison."

Using the tongue wrongly has death in it! There is nothing that so depresses the mind, and heart, as the wrong use of the tongue. How many have shot poison darts (words) into the spirit of someone whom they profess to love?

I'm not so sure that the reason for some of our sicknesses isn't because the way we use our tongue. It just could be that talebearing is the reason for so much sickness, disease, weakness, and (dare I say it?) even early death. We at least know, that talebearing brings the absence of the abundant life which Jesus can bring.

The remedy: Put a bridle on the tongue!

Proverbs 13:3, "He that keepeth [guards] his mouth keepeth his life; but if his lips are open wide he will have destruction." [Jerusalem Bible: "he who talks too much is lost"].

Listen to a few instructions given to us in the Proverbs: 16:23-28, "A wise man's heart guides his mouth, and his lips promote instruction. Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones. There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death. The laborer's appetite works for him; his hunger drives him on. A scoundrel plots evil, and his speech is like a scorching fire. A perverse man stirs up dissension, and a gossip separates close friends." (17:9), "He who covers over an offense promotes love, but whoever
repeats the matter separates close friends." (18:8), "The words of a gossip are like choice morsels; they go down to a man's inmost parts." (20:19), "A gossip betrays a confidence; so avoid a man who talks too much. (21:23), "He who guards his mouth and his tongue keeps himself from calamity." (26:20), "Without wood a fire goes out; without gossip a quarrel dies down.

1 Peter 3:10 tells us, "He that loves life and desires to see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful words."

**WHAT IS THE ORIGIN OF THIS SIN?**

In Luke 6:45, Jesus says, "...out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." The full verse states, "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good, and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil, for of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

The outward evidence of the mouth, shows an inward condition.

In Matthew 12:37 God says, "For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned." God is not mistaken when He teaches that our "words" tell what we are.

Interestingly in Hebrews 1:3 it says, "God hath spoken unto us by His Son." Jesus Christ was the expressed image of the Father! He was God's Living Word. John 1:2 states, "God's Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." Verse 18 goes on to say, "No man hath seen the Father at any time, the only begotten Son, He hath declared Him." Jesus left us a perfect example. Scripture teaches us that Jesus, "never answered back when He was falsely accused, misrepresented and charged with things contrary to what actually happened." Jesus never once tried to explain, deny, or attempt to correct when He was accused, He never attempted to straighten out, or prove He was not guilty. When He was accused, "He never opened His mouth."

Jesus taught us in Matthew 5:11, "Blessed are you, when men shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake." Jesus also said in verse 37, "Let your communication [your words] be, Yea, yea, Nay, nay, for whatsoever is more than these comes of evil." In the context of this passage of Scripture, Jesus is simply saying, "Don't go into a long discourse, trying to explain. Live such a life that people will know that your, 'Yes,' means 'Yes' and your 'No,' means 'No'."

You say, "Pastor, I really want to change. How do I do that? What is the remedy?" God promises that He will, "Put a new heart within us and we will walk in His statutes, and will keep His judgments and do them." God will bring about the change for us!. It must be a miraculously change that only God can accomplish. When this happens, God's work will no longer be hindered and souls will be saved.

Let's let David's prayer in Psalm 141:3 be our prayer. Here he prays, "Set a guard over my mouth, O Lord; keep watch over the door of my lips."

Paul taught in Ephesians 4:29, "Do not let unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others."
In Colossians 4:6, Paul says, "Let your speech be always full of grace, seasoned with salt."

David prays in Psalm 19:15, "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer."

There isn't anything be more dangerous than our words, used by Satan to destroy the unity and the harmony of God's people. If we only knew the indescribable injuries that has been suffered in churches because of talebearers, we would never be a part of Satan's plan.

The Bible speaks of, "The Law of Kindness," that is in the tongue. When this law is operative within us, it would never allow us to criticize, to condemn others, to speak of the fault of others, to murmur or to pass on bad reports. "The Laws of Kindness," that is in the tongue, gives many quick, strong pulls on the bridle. Just a few of the statements from God's Word: "Let your words be few . . . In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin . . . Study to be quiet . . . Be slow to speak . . . A fool's voice is known by the multitude of words . . . a fool is full of words."

Love is the only answer for the sin of the tongue. Any life can be changed, if it is yielded to God. 1 Corinthians 13, teaches us that: "Love suffereth long, and is kind. Love is never jealous or envious, it is never boastful, nor proud. Love is never haughty, nor selfish, nor rude. Love is not irritable, nor touchy. Love does not hold grudges and will hardly notice when others do it wrong. Love is never glad about injustice, but rejoices whenever truth wins out. Love covereth all things with silence."

You ask, "What Can I do about it, preacher?"

1. Repent! Don't excuse it in your life.
   Stay on your knees before God until He cleans your heart

2. Out of a clean heart, begin to develop clean habits
   Pledge that you will not talk about any one behind their back.

   The Bible way is to, "tell him his fault between him and thee alone!" And, even that, should be for the purpose of edifying him.

   David said in Psalm 17:3, "I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress. In Psalm 39:1 he said, "I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue." We must learn the habit of "weeding" our thinking.

   God's Word tells us, "Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable - if anything is excellent or praiseworthy - think about such things!" Philippians 4:8

Three simple questions to ask of every conversation:

1. Is it true?
2. Is it necessary?
3. Is it kind?

There is victory for you!

Avoid talebearers as you would the Devil, himself. You don't have to live that kind of life. If you gossip (are a talebearer) find yourself talking too much, learn to "weed" your words. God has a life of holiness and power for you!

The moment you decide this is what you want, God will work His miracle within you. Pray with David, "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer."

When you are asked to give expression, on a question in dispute
And you feel that certain errors and mistakes you should refute,
If your mind is rather hazy, on the subject - just be mute

Say nothing!

At times, when your best intentions and desires misunderstood
And your motives branded evil, when you know that they were good
Do not waste your time explaining, even though at times you could

Say nothing!

When it seems that you have trials almost more than you can bear,
And you stagger neath the burden that seems larger than your share,
There is One whose arm is mighty. Go to Him with all your care

Say nothing!

Like the Master who reviled not when so shamefully reviled,
Suffer silently reproaches. Are you not His own dear child?
To your losses and your crosses, troubled heart, be reconciled

Say nothing!

If a brother fails and falters, in the thickest of the fight,
If you know he has departed from the path of Truth and right,
If you cannot speak a word to help him back into the light,

Say nothing!

Can you help the ones around you by the kindly words you say?
Can you speak a word to cheer them on their long and toilsome way?
Can you lift a heavy burden by some gracious word today?

Say something!