

Toxic Talk

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 19 April 2009

[0 : 00] Corrupt communication.

You could use the word foul language.! Toxic talk!! The context there, Paul talks about bitterness, about wrath, anger, clamor, evil, speaking evil of people, gossiping.

! Paul says, put it away from you! With all malice, with all hate, anger, and being kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven you. Have you got that kind of talk? Toxic talk. Bitter and angry words. Evil speaking. Putting people down. Whinging and gossiping, backbiting, backstabbing.

Is what comes out of our mouth good? Is it wholesome? Is it edifying? Is it uplifting? Or is it harmful? Is it harmful? Or is it helpful? We all need to think.

[1 : 04] Think before you speak. As the popular saying goes. And the like verse is Colossians 3, where Paul says similar things from verse 8. He says, but now he also put off all these anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

Now, lie not one to another, seeing that you 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.

Now, according to researchers, on an average day we open our mouth 700 times, using about 18,000 words.

There's another quote here that's got a different figure, but you could think of the certainly thousands of words come out of our mouth. Here's another quote about an astronaut, Michael Collins.

He was speaking at a banquet one day, and he's quoting the estimate that the average man speaks 25,000 words a day. 25,000, that's a lot, isn't it?

[2 : 09] Then he said, the average woman speaks 30,000. And he says, unfortunately, when I come home each day, I've spoken my 25,000, and my wife hasn't started hers.

That's so true, isn't it? And, you know, we've got to think about what are we saying? What are we saying? How do we say it? And the average person, it's been reckoned, speaks a lot of words a day.

And the American spends one-fifth of his or her life talking. That's amazing, isn't it? And if all of our words were put into print, the result would be this.

A single day's worth of words would fill a 50-page book. While in a year's time, the average person's words would fill 132 books of 200 pages each.

And among all those words, perhaps there'd be some that are spoken in anger. Maybe words spoken in hate, or haste, or careless words. Well, think about that, can't we?

[3 : 12] Think about what we speak. Do we think about, as Paul urged the Colossians, put off anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, philipi communication, lie not.

Speak the truth. Speak the truth. We need to be, as Paul says there, there's a difference there. Because, why is there a difference? Because the context of Colossians 3 talks about the new man and the old man.

Now, I've got an old man, he's not my dad. He's the old Andrew Craig. The old Andrew Craig is an old man, he's not a very nice character. You wouldn't want to know him. He's not very nice.

I wouldn't write him a good reference. The old man, Andrew Craig, is intent on evil. He's bent after that which is against God. His heart is deceitful and desperately wicked.

And the old Andrew Craig is certainly a mean dude. He's a nasty character. And he's inclined to speak filthy communication out of his mouth. Corrupt communication.

[4 : 09] Words of anger, of hatred, of wrath, of malice, of bitterness. But, thank God, a time happened in my life when a new man came into being when I was born again.

And that can be true for you if it isn't already. That you can be born again. God gives you a new way of living. You'll become a new creation through faith in Christ Jesus.

And when that happens, God gives you a whole new dimension on life and he helps you by his grace to not follow the ways of the old man, the old nature, the self and sinful carnal man, carnal nature which is inclined to swearing and doing that which is hurtful with our speaking, but to put a new tongue in your mouth, so to speak, and to give you a new way of speaking, to speak kindly, to speak thoughtfully and considerately, and to consider what we say before we say it.

And that can be true of every one of us here today. I pray if you're not born again, this message may not help you much. It might help you think about how you can reform some of the words you say, some of the things you do, but the first point, the first starting point that will help you to understand this message is to be born again.

Because that's when it all starts. That's when God helps us because we have his help to live right, to speak right, to do right. And it's been said there was a man who professed to be a Christian, but his friends never knew.

[5 : 40] And one day a friend of his was told of this man that he belonged to the church. And he said, Why? I've known him intimately for some years, but I never dreamt he was a Christian.

He could not conceive how the mouth that spoke so violently and indecently of his fellow man could be opened in church to praise and bless God.

And it speaks volumes, doesn't it? To speak sometimes can reflect certainly the inner man. We can use our words to destroy, to slander, or to comfort and to encourage.

Our words can be like the gossip that spreads. And people have compared gossip to like feathers in the wind. When you've said it and spoken it, it's hard to collect all those feathers again.

We must think before we speak, as James puts it in James 1, verse 19, to be quick to hear and slow to speak. Ephesians 5, verse 4, it says, Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient, but rather giving of thanks.

[6 : 48] Is your talk filthiness, foolish talking, jesting? Is it blasphemy? Is it lying? Is it careless words? Paul describes impure speech here.

Think of these different words he used. Filthiness, Ephesians 5, verse 4. Filthiness, it means obscenity, profanity. It's from a root word meaning disfigured, twisted, shameful.

When a man uses profanity to support an argument, either the argument or the man is weak, probably both. Now I know people as a person who's prominent, who says he's a Christian, does all kinds of things.

He goes to church every Sunday and he says, I'm a Christian, and yet I've heard him use the name of Jesus as a curse word.

The name of God as a curse word. And all manner of filthy talk coming out of his mouth. And I certainly don't think that man is born again. There's not the evidence of that in his life.

[7 : 50] As much as he might be a faithful Catholic, he's not a born-again Christian. Because the evidence is not there. The fruit is not there. He's not saved. He's doomed and damned and going to hell.

And he's taught, proves it. There's evidence of it. Of that change hasn't happened on the inward.

Because it's not reflected in the outward. And are your words words that discourage, that bite?

Or words that heal, that live? Are you kind, tender-hearted, forgiving one another? As God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you. Think about your words. Do they heal?

Do they bless? Or are they thoughtless words? Are they words that bring life and kindness? Or are you guilty? A toxic talk. With words that sting, that hurt. Words that crush the spirit.

Words that leave people fairly hurt and hopeless. Proverbs 18, 21, it talks about the words. It talks about the tongue. The power of the tongue. And there's many scriptures in Proverbs that talk about the tongue.

[8 : 49] That talk about our talk. Proverbs 18, 21, it says, Death and life are in the power of the tongue. Proverbs 12, 18, it says, There is that speak of light, the piercings of a sword.

But the tongue of the wise is health. It says there that reckless words are like a sword. You know, slash, slash, slash, reckless words. Words that are spoken recklessly and carelessly.

But the tongue of the wise, it brings healing. It brings health. It's a good thing, a wholesome thing.

So let's think about, brothers and sisters here this morning, what are the words that you will choose to speak?

What will you say and how will you say it? James 3 says, in verses 10 onwards, he talks about, he compares the tongue to many things.

He compares the tongue to being like a wildfire that spreads from a little spark. He talks about the tongue as being like a rudder on a ship, a little member that steers the whole vessel.

[9 : 49] And he compares the tongue to being like a fountain. And he says in James 3, verse 10, Out of the same mouth proceeded blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

Do the fountains send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter. We need to be careful. Brother, sister today, I want you to be encouraged today to reflect on how you speak, on what you say, and ask the Lord to help you.

To learn that language of Canaan. To learn that language of no guile, of not lying and not cursing. We know that familiar scripture in Exodus 20, verse 7, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

For the Lord will not hold him guiltless, but taketh his name in vain. You know, we shouldn't blaspheme God's name. Whether it's Lord, Jesus, God, Christ, these are words that are beautiful words to us that are saved.

They're not words to utter in careless talk or in offhanded manner. These are words that are precious and beautiful and should be honored and hallowed. Hallowed be thy name.

[11 : 01] In other words, considered holy. A quote here about what are called euphemisms. I've got a quote from a source here. Euphemisms. What do euphemisms mean?

These are words that are used instead of swear words or instead of like substitutes for the name of God. Now, bear with me because I'll use some of them to illustrate what I'm talking about.

And these are words you can look up in a good dictionary and you'll find the following. Gosh! It's a substitute for God. Used in minstotes or euphemisms.

Golly is another example. Goodness is a word substituted for God. Now, these are words that sometimes we might try to substitute for what the world popularly would use in terms of saying God, you might say goodness.

But in a way, it's a substitute for the word God, isn't it? So, it's what's called a euphemism.

Goodness gracious. Now, people might think, oh, come on. You're pulling my leg. This isn't swearing. Saying goodness gracious.

[12 : 04] But think about it now. These are two key attributes of our almighty God. Goodness and gracious. And two attributes of God that we shouldn't use in a careless and irreverent way.

Also, mercy. Mercy sakes. These are precious attributes of our God. And this is what the world uses. Of course, we could say, too, we talked about communion this morning, about the blood. Now, the world puts an it on the end of it. They're talking about the blood of Christ. That's what it's all about. When people say blood with an it on the end of it. They're talking about the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Shouldn't you be careful before you utter such a word? Before you say such a thing? Because it's the blood of Christ that is being referred to in these things. Holy cow. Holy mackerel.

Holy smoke. These are all expressions that are making fun of the holiness of God. Now, it might seem somewhat unusual for me to use such words.

[13 : 07] But really, it's making fun of the holiness of our God. And Revelation 15, 4, it says, For thou only art holy. Shouldn't we be careful about the thoughtless ways we can use our lips and ask the Holy Spirit to control our lips?

Other examples are, For God's sake, for Christ's sake. The Word of God says such words. But the world uses such phrases as an oath.

And of course, the Bible says swear not at all. Neither by heaven or earth or anything. So, they don't say for Pete's sake, God's sake, Christ's sake, for goodness sake, for the love of Mike, for crying out loud.

All of these things are examples of what the world would use so carelessly. And it's really, it's an oath. The Bible says swear not at all. Another way that people use what's called a euphemism. And bear with me, because I don't like to use such words. But just to make it plain to you today. And I need to say the words to make it plain what is being spoken about here.

[14 : 12] The very name of Christ. The name of our Lord Jesus Christ is abused. It's abused. Gee. It's a euphemism. It's a substitute word for saying Jesus.

Gee. Gee whiz. Gee's. Cheese. Jeepers. Jeepers. Jeepers. Jeepers. Jiminy crickets. They're a substitute for Jesus Christ. All of these words are substitutes.

And, you know, it might seem somewhat overboard for me to say that. But this is what the world is using as a substitute for the precious name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And so we should think before we even say such things as this. Because whilst it's not a curse word or a swear word per se, it's a euphemism. It's a substitute for such things.

Remember, garbage is still garbage even if it's placed in a nice container. These are curse words in effect. And deep in the heart of man they blaspheme and rebel against a God whose right it is to damn all those who reject his beloved son.

[15:20] John 3.18. Damn is another substitute for damn. The Bible says that some people will be damned. They'll be condemned. And we shouldn't... It's not a joke or a word to use carelessly when we say damn or the substitute darn.

And one last one is heck. It's a substitute for hell. It's a euphemism for the word hell. And so think about all of these things. You might think... I say them all the time without thinking.

And there was a time I said many of these things too. Without thinking, without realising. But really the substitute is just as bad really because it's said with the same kind of intent, isn't it?

And people today, your words can bless or they can curse. James says it's impossible that a fountain can bring forth beautiful crystal clear water and polluted water from the same fountain.

And likewise, shouldn't our mouth bring forth blessings and praise and glory to God instead of cursings? It shouldn't come out of that same fountain, the mouth. And avoid these things.

[16:27] Think of other things we can avoid like name calling, like gossip, like complaining, like being insensitive. Matthew 12, it says, The good man bringeth forth out of the good treasure of his heart.

An evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. This is Matthew 12, 35 onwards. But I say unto you that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgement.

For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned. Of course we know that wonderful scripture of Romans 10 where it says, That if thou believe in thy heart that Jesus Christ has died and rose again from the dead, If you confess him with your mouth, the Lord Jesus, thou shalt be saved.

Don't you want to confess him with your mouth? Don't you want to believe in your heart that he has died and rose again for your sins? And don't you want to confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus? Make him Lord. Make him Lord of your life.

Make him Lord of your tongue. Make him Lord of your all. If he's not Lord of all, he's not Lord at all. There was a time when mothers used to wash their children's mouths out with soap for bad language.

[17:45] Or expressing verbal disrespect to their parents or authority. But now you see, it seems commonplace, you know, at times you see children calling police different names.

And there's no respect as there used to be in times gone by. And parents, I've seen how some of the parents are treated. The bus kids. You know, some of the families that we're in contact with, the world around us.

The world around us. Parents, mums and dads are not treated with respect and love and kindness. But there's a carelessness. But likewise too, the parents don't always treat their children with wise words as well.

And we can all take stock and think about what's coming out of my mouth. What are the things that I'm saying? Think about the entertainment media as we tune in to the world's wavelength.

Tune in to the world's frequencies. And we see what's on the movies. And on the TV, on the adverts even. And no wonder people are so glibly using these swear words, these curse words.

[18:51] The Lord Jesus' name is just a gutter word now. It's just treated with contempt and scorn. And this is what the media is doing to us. To our households, to our families, to our own minds.

To our schools, to our workplaces. Where gutter talk is the common thing. And dirty jokes. You know, it seems like...

I just stood next to someone last week and they just started talking on. And now I realise they were going to talk a dirty joke. And I just turned my back and walked away. I didn't stick around.

Don't stick around and listen to them. Don't let it go in to their ear gate. Don't let it go into your mind. Don't be polluted by it. Choose to walk away. Don't laugh, certainly. And this other fellow I was talking about was laughing along with it.

You know, if you're a Christian, you won't laugh to dirty jokes. There's nothing funny about a dirty joke. And John talks about the tongue. He said it's a vicious animal. He said it's something that should be tamed. It's like a lion that should be tamed.

[19 : 54] And yet, who can tame it? He says in James. And it's capable of ultimate destruction. This creature of such monstrous character that no man can tame it.

Let me close by just giving you a few quotes again. Especially from Proverbs. Again, I encourage you. Look up the word tongue in your concordance. In your concordance where you can look at the different Bible verses.

The different references for these things. The word tongue or words. Proverbs 16, 24 it says, Pleasant words are as honeycomb. Sweet to the soul and health to the bones.

Don't you love to have honeycomb? Oh, that nice honey. Sweet words, pleasant words. They're delicious. They're beautiful. You desire them. You want to hear more of them. Proverbs 15, 1 it says, A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger.

Sometimes people fight fire with fire. When they get hateful words, they just respond alike. And no wonder, just escalates and makes things worse. And yet, a soft answer turns away anger.

[20 : 57] God's word gives us such wisdom. Proverbs 21, 23. Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles. Your tongue can get you into trouble.

Who knows that? It can happen, can't it? And the Bible says, Speak the truth in love. Speak the truth in love. James 1, verse 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.

You're just kidding yourself if you can't keep that tongue in check. Ask the Lord to convert your tongue today. Ask the Lord to rid that mouth of yours of those euphemisms, of those careless things spoken, and think before you speak.

Restrain your tongue from doing damage and causing hurt. A wholesome tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit.

Proverbs 15, 4. Perverseness in the tongue, it breaks the spirit. It's hurtful, it's harmful, and it's going to hurt you as well as those you speak about or to.

[22 : 05] And lastly, Psalm 141, verse 3. The psalmist cried out, Let this be your prayer as we close. The psalmist cried out, in Psalm 141, verse 3, Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, keep the door of my lips.

Set a guard, set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, keep the door of my lips. Can that be your prayer today? Ask the Lord to help you.

And people today, of course, as I referred earlier, are you saved? All of this might be all very good morals and values and good ethical behaviour.

You might be a really upstanding person who hardly answers who the person were. And you think that you're saved this morning, and you're not. You're lost. Because you haven't trusted Christ as your Saviour.

You're not saved. You might come to church day in, day out, week in, week out, and you haven't trusted the Lord Jesus as your Saviour. You haven't confessed Him with your mouth.

[23 : 18] You haven't believed in your heart that you died for your sin. And you don't know the Saviour. People today, don't kid yourself. You might think, oh, I don't do any of that kind of talk.

But really, your heart is dirty and foul. It's defiled. And it's deceitful. It's tricking you, thinking that you're saved. It's deceiving you. You're not saved.

And I don't want to leave you with the impression that you're saved here just because you're going to church and you might seem to be a religious person. Don't kid yourself. You need to be personally saved.

You need to make that step of faith, of trusting Christ, of forsaking your sin, and of trusting Him. Of turning your back on that old man, that old life, that old nature, that old self, that old flesh, and putting your trust in Christ, the only one, the only Saviour, the only one who died so you can have life, the only one who shed His blood so you can be eternally saved and helped in His keeping.

I mean, people today, you need to trust Him. And believers today, every one of us needs to think about how we speak, what we say, how we say it, and think about prayerfully how we can restrain from saying that which is hurtful or unwise, that's just careless words, idle words, because one day there'll be an accounting time.

[24 : 44] Let us pray. Lord, we thank you today for your Holy Spirit that fills every heart that trusts you. Lord, that Holy Spirit that helps us to live holy, that helps us to live as you would have us live, that helps us to live and talk and walk and go about our day by day with that new nature, with that saved heart.

Lord, we pray that each one would know that experience of what it means to have sins forgiven, to have that assurance of a Saviour from sin, of an eternal hope, an eternal life within.

Lord, we pray that you'd help each one. If there's any that know you're not today, they'll seek prayer at the close of this meeting, to seek counsel from a trusted Christian that they can pray with and make it sure today.

And Lord, for everyone that believes today, Lord, that each one would be stirred and provoked. To think even of those euphemisms, those careless words that are substitute words for swear words, Lord, even those as well as swearing, as well as cursing, as well as gossiping and evil speaking of others.

Help us, Lord, to be wise and thoughtful about what we say. Lord, as you would give us the help that we need to help us just to stop and think before we speak.

[26 : 06] And to think instead of words that we can use to bless people as we praise you, as we bless our fellow people about us, as we edify and encourage, as we use words that are kind and considerate and loving words, Lord, as you give us help and grace too.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.