

Mouth of Fire

Jonathan Landis

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Matthew 12:33-37

"Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit. [34] You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. [35] The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. [36] But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. [37] For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned."

1. I Will Be Judged By My Words

Jesus is clear in saying that we will have to give account... for every careless word spoken. Too often we throw words around as if it will cost us nothing. We just let fly whatever scattered thoughts are pulsing through our mind, or is it our heart? I am guilty of it too at times. These careless words are not forgotten. We will be acquitted, or condemned by our words. Even if we don't see immediate consequences for them, we will pay for what we say.

Proverbs 17:27a

A man of knowledge uses words with restraint...

That means that a wise person finds a way to hold back or bridle their tongue. A tongue by nature is like a wild stallion. A tongue is naturally out of control, but you have a choice to let your tongue run wild, or to do what we must to restrain it. Remember that we will pay for what we say.

ASK: So how can we hold our tongues???

2. I Can't Tame My Tongue Alone

James 3:2-12

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. [3] When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. [4] 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. [5] 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. [6] 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.

[7] All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and creatures of the sea are being tamed and have been tamed by man, [8] but no man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

[9] With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. [10] Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be. [11] Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? [12] My brothers, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.

What does this passage mean??? It's kind of scary to read, because it sounds like there's no hope for us. Our tongues are like a blazing forest fire. Have you ever seen a forest fire on the news or a movie. They're out of control... the heat from an inferno like that destroys everything in it's path, houses, trees, fields, anything in its path can be decimated by the force of a blazing inferno, which began with one small spark... or a carelessly tossed cigarette.

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Is that the kind of power our tongues possess??? YES!!! With our tongues we can either build people up, or destroy them. We can either tear them down, or bring them the opportunity of eternal life. **Such great power God has given us with our tongues!!!!** But what hope is there of using our tongues for good? Vs. 8 says that NO One can tame the tongue. What then, shall we give up hope and just let our wild tongues burn people to the ground? Of course not!!!

God of course can tame our tongue, if only we let Him. Is He not more powerful than our tongues??? Of course HE is. It is God's desire that we would submit our tongues to Him so that He can use them for good instead of evil.

Matt. 12:34b *For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks.*

Our words flow from our hearts... whether our hearts are filled with good or evil decides what will flow from our mouths. God is the one who redeems our tongues, because if we let Him, He goes right to the root of the problem... the heart. God has been changing hearts since the dawn of time. It is one of His specialties, and you are not too great a challenge for His power. God can transform your heart and change your mouth, if only you let Him.

So this is the answer. The person we spoke of earlier (Prov. 17:27a), you remember, the one that had wisdom enough to restrain their words, this is how they do it. Those people that choose to live wisely commit themselves to Jesus Christ, every part of them... the heart, the mind, the body, and yes... the tongue. Those that have tamed their tongues don't have some kind of super powers. They just know that they can't tame their tongue alone. Those that would live wisely know that only God can tame their tongue, but that they are responsible for turning themselves over to Him.

How to Control Your Tongue:

1. **The first step to controlling your tongue is committing yourself totally to Jesus Christ.**
2. **Step two is this: we must consistently check our words.** Even as we speak we need to keep a close eye on our words. We have to compare what we say with the Word of God and with the Holy Spirit. If you are saved the Holy Spirit will convict you of sin. Ask Him to help you watch your words. When you mess up, God will tell you. But are you listening??? If you make a choice to listen carefully to God, He will let you know if your words are off. God will help you to keep your words in check. Checking your words is just one way that you continually commit yourself to Jesus Christ.

Pray:

1. **Salvation: If you need to commit yourself wholly to Christ, then now is your time. Make a choice tonight to give yourself over to Him. Come up here as an act of surrender.**
2. **Help me Lord to check my words and commit myself to you throughout each day. I give you my heart and my mouth. Let my words build people up, and not burn them down. Let my words free me, and not judge me. Amen.**

