

How to Protect our Mouths from Danger Psalm 17

Introduction:

1. *"Death and life are in the power of the tongue..." Proverbs 18:21a*
 - This is a huge statement, but very true. **James 3:5** proclaims that *"the tongue is a little member,"* but it boasts *"great things."*
2. The Bible uses the words "mouth," "tongue," and "lips" synonymously. Your tongue has great power. It can both destruct and destroy, or it can build up and bless.
3. Psalm 17 is a Psalm of David, and he makes a very insightful statement in verse 3, *"...I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress."*
 - The word "transgress" carries the idea of going beyond a boundary or a limit.
 - It can be very dangerous to step over established boundaries.
4. Your mouth can do a lot of damage if there aren't some guardrails placed around it. God's Word reveals to us those guardrails.
5. Do you know Who the ultimate example is when it comes to spoken words? The Lord Jesus Christ. *"...neither was guile found in his mouth."* **1 Peter 2:22**
6. We should not be satisfied until our mouths reflect the glory and character of our Savior, Jesus Christ. **Psalm 17:15**
7. How can we reflect the character and life of Christ in our words?

First, establish the guardrail of truth. vs. 1-3

1. Do my words coincide with truth? Do my outward words coincide with who I really am in my heart? Notice verses 1-3. The word "feigned" means "deceptive, hypocritical."
 - *"Feigned lips"* mean that I say one thing, but my heart says something else.
 - **Illustration:** "What a beautiful dress." "Pastor Dan, that was a wonderful message."
2. David is saying in verses 2-3, "God, you know my heart and you know that it matches my words." What is he saying? He is saying, "My words are sincere."
3. In your conscience, you know whether your words are sincere or not.
2 Corinthians 1:12
 - God has no use for *"flattering lips."* **Psalm 12:2-3**
4. But our words should also coincide with God's Word of truth (vs. 4-5). In other words, just because your words may accurately reflect **your** inner being, that doesn't mean it is right to say those words. What you're thinking in your heart **may be** dead wrong.
 - Ask yourself, "Do my thoughts and words correspond with **God's** truth?"
5. Jesus always spoke words that were true because He spoke the words that He received from the Father. His words corresponded with truth. **John 8:26**
6. When you speak words that are true and sincere, you are displaying the character of Christ. When you speak words that are false and hypocritical, you show forth the character of Satan. **John 8:44; Proverbs 12:19, 22**
7. One of the greatest things you can do is to learn God's Word and fill your heart with truth. vs. 4

Second, establish the guardrail of grace.

1. Here is a key question: Do my words minister grace to others? The opposite of this would be to speak words of judgment. This would include things like gossip, a critical tongue, mean and hateful words, harsh and unkind words.
2. The opposite of grace would be when we use our tongues to tear down others in order to try to make ourselves look bigger. This is what David's enemies did. vs. 9-13
3. **James 3:6** teaches that the tongue is a fire. Your tongue can literally burn down your marriage, leave your children in ashes, and scorch those closest to you.
 - Do you know what it means to scorch something with fire? It means you burn it to the point that you change its color and texture.
 - Your tongue is a life-changing member of your body. Your tongue can change your marriage, your friendships, your children, and your relationships. No wonder David cried, "*Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.*" **Psalm 141:3**
4. The tongue is likened to a sharp razor (**Psalm 52:2**), and a sharp sword (**Psalm 57:4**). It can cut and slice apart its victims.
5. But think about it. Can a fire be used for good (for warmth, cooking)? Can a razor be used for good? How about a sword? Sure they can. Your tongue can be such a powerful tool to build up those around you when protected by the guardrail of grace.
6. Every believer should commit to memory **Ephesians 4:29**. It is an absolute key to your relationships in life (edify means to build up). Do your words minister grace?
7. Christ, again, is our example (**Luke 4:22**). What were the two guardrails that we have seen this morning? **Truth** and **grace**. Look what **John 1:14** says about Christ.
 - I love **Psalm 45:2**. Would those around you say that grace is poured into your lips? **Ecclesiastes 10:12**
8. When a fire is under control, it is a beautiful thing! When your tongue is under the control of Christ, it is a beautiful thing that pours forth grace. When pride is in control, it scorches everything around it. Have you ever been singed by somebody's words? Your words can minister grace or wound people. **Proverbs 18:8**

In Conclusion:

1. David said in this psalm, "*I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress.*" I think we all need to purpose the same thing this morning.
2. Death and life are in the power of the tongue. Do the words of your mouth impart life to others? Jesus said, "*The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.*" **John 6:63**
3. Your words can breathe life and energy and vitality to those around you or they can kill all that is good in your life (**James 3:8** - full of deadly poison). It is your choice. **Proverbs 13:3, 15:4, 21:23**