

## Speaking God's Name In Vain and Swearing

**July 9, 2023**

Good morning CrossWinds. If you are new, my name is Kurt. I am one of the pastors.

At CrossWinds, our mission is to reach people with Jesus. We do that by building relationships with those around us and telling them about Jesus. We tell people how Jesus has forgiven us and changed us. That is why we love Him. In the process of talking about Jesus, we pray that the seeds we plant about the good news of Jesus will take root and grow. People will be born again. When people have trusted in Jesus, following the direction of the Bible, we encourage people to make a public statement of their trust in Jesus through baptism, as we saw with Kaleb and Makenna this morning.

If you have been around CrossWinds and you have trusted in Jesus to save you from your sins, but you haven't had a chance to proclaim your new life in Jesus publicly through baptism, please talk to me after the service. We would love to set up a time for you to do that, just as Kaleb and Makenna did today.

This summer, we are in a series called Taming the Tongue. We are looking at what the Bible says about our speech. Today, we are looking at what the Bible says about swearing. Next week, I will be at the Spencer campus. Pastor Jordan will be here teaching on the importance of listening, not just speaking.

That will finish our series on Taming the Tongue. The week after that, we will begin a new series called *Broken Vessels*. Each week in that series, we will study a different Bible character. We will see how God loves to use ordinary people in extraordinary ways. Some of the Bible characters we will look at are

Barnabas, Gideon, Caleb, and Elijah, just to name a few. If you like stories of how God works in the lives of ordinary people, you will love this series.

Today, we are looking at cursing, swearing, and what the Bible says about it. In preparation for the message, I ran across an article featuring the research of a professor of psychology at a liberal arts college in Massachusetts. He claims to have practiced and studied swearing for more than 40 years. He wants all of us to know there are some amazing benefits of swearing, and he encourages us to curse.<sup>1</sup>

When I read the article, at first, I thought it was satire. It wasn't. It was a real article. One thing it taught me is that some college professors shouldn't be given tenure. This guy is one of them. Here were his benefits of swearing.

1. He claims that those who curse more have higher intelligence. In my experience, the opposite is true. It is those with a limited vocabulary that can only think of four-letter words when they speak.
2. He claims cursing can improve pain tolerance. If you shut your finger in a car door, he suggests swearing a lot. It will help you cope with the pain.
3. He claims cursing can encourage creativity. The creativity he is talking about is those who combine and compound curse words in their speech. Apparently, he views that as a way to recognize creative people.
4. He claims cursing allows us to hurt people without throwing punches. He claims it is much safer to wound people verbally than wound them physically.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cnn.com/2021/01/26/health/swearing-benefits-wellness/index.html>

What do you think of this professor's advice? How do you think it will stand up in real life? To test his teaching, I applied his recommendations in a thought experiment. Imagine a husband coming home after a long day at work. His wife made dinner. It was meatloaf. He doesn't like meatloaf. He remembered his college class dealing with this kind of situation, so he put his college education into action. He began cursing at his wife for her meatloaf. Of course, she would be deeply hurt and wonder why he saying such terrible things. Then he would put his college education to good use. He could tell her that his cursing is a sign of his superior intelligence. His cursing gave him greater pain tolerance for her cooking. His cursing was a sign of his creativity. She should be thankful he was only hurting her with his words instead of his fists. How would that end? Every meal for the next month would be in the backyard with the dog.

Let's move from the tilted wisdom of a crackpot college professor to see what God says about swearing in the Bible. We will look at this topic under two headings. First, we will look at what the Bible says about using God's name in vain, that is, using God's name as a swear word. Second, we will look at cursing in general.

### **What does the Bible say about using the Lord's name in vain?**

When it comes to how we speak God's name on our lips, the third of the Ten Commands is clear.

You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain. Exodus 20:7 (ESV)

Vain means speaking God's name in an empty, meaningless, trivial, or disrespectful way. Whenever God's name is spoken, the weight and authority of

God should be carried with it when we speak it. We should not speak God's name as a swear word or even as a casual word.

**God is committed to His name because it reflects His identity.**

Some of you will remember the name Kristian Saucier. He was a crew member on a U.S. Navy nuclear submarine. He took a few photos of him and his buddies on his cell phone while on duty. That was wrong. It was against Navy regulations. He admits it. It wasn't done maliciously or to sell secrets to the Russians. It was just him and his buddies taking a few pictures for fun and good memories and he was caught. The highest levels of government bore down on him, intending to make an example of him. They planned to give him a five or six-year jail sentence for what was not spying but a foolish and irresponsible choice.

There was only one way out. There was one Hail-Mary hope for a man in his position. It is called a presidential pardon. The president can write a pardon to release anyone from jail. That is what former President Trump did for Kristian Saucier. When he was interviewed after learning President Trump pardoned him, he was in tears. He was overwhelmed with gratitude to President Trump for saving his life and returning him to his family. When he spoke of President Trump, he spoke his name with great reverence. He was filled with respect for the President who saved him from overzealous prosecutors who tried to ruin his life.



There is a lot of negative talk about former President Trump in the media. It is inconceivable that Kristian Saucier will ever speak negatively about

President Trump. I am sure he will never use the Trump name casually or disrespectfully because he owes President Trump so much for what he did.

In a similar fashion, the way we speak the name of God should reflect the greatness of the position God holds and the gratitude we have for what God has done for us. What God did for us through Jesus is far greater than what President Trump did for Kristian Saucier. Kristian Saucier was facing only five or six years in prison when President Trump pardoned him. We were facing an eternity in the lake of fire that we justly deserved when Jesus saved us. The cost President Trump paid to free Kristian Saucier was minimal. It was a piece of paper with the President's signature on it. The cost God paid to free us was sending his beloved son to take on a human body forever. Jesus then died on the cross, experiencing one of the most hideous deaths known to man. He soaked up all of our sins on the cross and, in time, experienced God's just wrath against sin that would normally take an eternity of time. It was an incalculable cost that Jesus paid to forgive us of our sins.

If Kristian Saucier cannot speak the name of President Trump without awe and respect, it is inconceivable that we would speak the name of Jesus thoughtlessly, casually, or disrespectfully. It is inconceivable that we would use the name of God or Jesus as a swear word after all that Jesus has done for us.

**God is committed to protecting His name and expanding His reputation.**

...for you have exalted above all things your name and your word. Psalm 138:2 (ESV)

We often think of making sure we revere the Word of God. We are to honor the Bible. The Psalmist tells us that God is not just committed to making sure His Word is revered, but he is also committed to making sure His name is revered. That is not because God is an egomaniac but because God's name deserves respect for who he is and what he has done. Remember, God the Father willed everything into creation. Jesus carried out making everything in creation. Jesus also sustains everything in the universe at every moment. The reason the sun will rise tomorrow is because of Jesus. Every good thing we have comes from God the Father and Jesus. God has all power, knowledge, and wisdom. Jesus didn't just create everything, but he has completely forgiven us, saved us, and transformed us.

How could we ever speak the name of Jesus or God the Father without great respect and awe on our lips? It is inconceivable that after all God has done for us, we would speak God's name as a curse word.

When God works on this earth, he works in such a way that he plans to increase the reverence associated with his name. An example of this is what the Bible says about how God worked in the Exodus and why God hardened Pharaoh's heart so he would not let the people of Israel go free. Speaking about Pharaoh, God says this.

But for this purpose I have raised you up, to show you my power, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth. Exodus 9:16 (ESV)

God ordained the hardness of Pharaoh's heart so he would not let God's people go. As a result, God would do increasingly greater and greater plagues

against Egypt to build the fame of God's name as far superior to any of the gods of Egypt.

God built the fame of His name through the plagues in Egypt to such an extent that when the ancient Israelites began conquering the Land of Canaan, which was a great distance away from Egypt, and over 40 years after the Israelites came out of Egypt that the Canaanites in the Promised Land were still petrified of the Israelites because they had heard and remembered what the God of Israel had done to the mighty land of Egypt. Look what it says in the book of Joshua.

For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you devoted to destruction. And as soon as we heard it, our hearts melted, and there was no spirit left in any man because of you, for the Lord your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath. Joshua 2:10–11 (ESV)

God is not just committed to protecting his reputation. He is also committed to expanding it so everyone on earth knows the greatness of God's power and the love he has for his people. Since that is the case, it is inconceivable that we would ever use God's name as a swear word or speak God's name casually or disrespectfully when God is so committed to expanding the honor and fame given to his name.

**I am to pray that God's name would be spoken with respect.**

Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name." Matthew 6:9 (ESV)

If you can control language, you can control people's thinking. We see this in the woke agenda and the LGBTQIA+ agenda. If a man wants to be a woman, you must call that person by their preferred pronouns and name, even if it doesn't

match their biological gender. If you don't, it is considered a hate crime. In some states, you can be fined thousands of dollars for not addressing people by their preferred names, pronouns, and gender. Why is wokism controlling language and making sure people speak what is patently false? They know that if you can control the way you speak someone's name, you can control the way you think about that person.

God tells us that the way people speak God's name plays an important part in people understanding who God is and what he has done for us. Just as wokism knows the way we speak about something controls what we think about something. God also knows that. This is why we should pray that God's name is spoken with the honor and respect it deserves. When God's name is honored on the earth, there will be greater honor given to God on earth.

This is why the Lord's prayer begins by asking us to pray that honor would be given to God's name.

**God promises to punish those who speak His name disrespectfully.**

Today, on social media, the name of Jesus and God are constantly used as cuss words. People type OMG as a shorthand for using God's name in vain. If you are part of the younger generation and constantly on social media, it is easy to get sucked into the language of your generation and speak like everyone else on social media. It is easy to start typing OMG, and a host of other shorthands for cursing. It is easy to think this is not a big deal. You are just fitting in and being cool like everybody else.

God doesn't look at it that way. Look what the Bible says.



...for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain. Exodus 20:7 (ESV)

To show you how seriously God takes the way people speak his name, let's look at Leviticus 24.

Now an Israelite woman's son, whose father was an Egyptian, went out among the people of Israel. And the Israelite woman's son and a man of Israel fought in the camp, and the Israelite woman's son blasphemed the Name, and cursed. Then they brought him to Moses. His mother's name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan. And they put him in custody, till the will of the Lord should be clear to them. Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Bring out of the camp the one who cursed, and let all who heard him lay their hands on his head, and let all the congregation stone him. And speak to the people of Israel, saying, Whoever curses his God shall bear his sin. Whoever blasphemes the name of the Lord shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall stone him. The sojourner as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death. Leviticus 24:10–16 (ESV)

Using God's name as a swear word carried the death penalty. Knowing this should cause us to speak the name reverentially, not casually or disrespectfully. As Christians, we know better. Swearing with God's name is not a casual thing that God ignores. It is a serious thing that God promises to punish.

**God's name deserves respect because it contains life-saving power.**

One of the things we easily forget is that there is literally power in the name of Jesus. For example, we are saved by calling on the name of Jesus.

And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. Acts 4:12 (ESV)

For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Romans 10:13 (ESV)

Right now, calling out in your heart to the name of Jesus and asking him to save you from your sins makes a difference. The name of Jesus is so powerful that it will save you from eternal destruction. It doesn't matter who you are. It doesn't matter what you have done. Anyone who calls on the name of Jesus will

be saved. The name of Allah will not do this for you. The name of Buddha will not do this for you. The name of Mohammed will not do this for you. Only the name of Jesus will do this for you. There is literal power in the name of Jesus. This is why we must never speak God's name in a casual, disrespectful, or irreverent way.

...Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour." Acts 16:18 (ESV)

In the New Testament, demons were driven out of people by the name of Jesus. If the name of Jesus sends demons running, we must never speak the name of Jesus in a casual or irreverent way or use the name of Jesus as a cuss word.

A few years ago, my daughter traveled with CrossWinds on a mission trip to Haiti. Haiti has witch doctors and other occult activity on the island. At times, she felt overwhelmed by the whole experience. She talked about times she could feel the darkness of the demonic powers around her. There is only one thing that gave her peace. It was speaking the name of Jesus. Jesus please protect me. Jesus sent the demons fleeing.

**I should be careful when using God's name in humor.**

Sometimes well-meaning Christians, who are looking for ways to try and connect with the culture, use the name of Jesus casually or irreverently. Let me show you what I mean by these T-shirts.

Here is a "Jesus Saves" soccer shirt. Jesus is the goalie. I think he looks cute with the goatee. This is



cute, but the gravity of Jesus' name is lost. The significance of what Jesus has done for us is gone. Jesus is not a cartoon soccer goalie. He is the one who created the universe. He became a man not to be a soccer goalie but to die for us. He died a death far more hideous and agonizing than anyone of us will ever die. Jesus died to make us the most blessed beings in the universe. On this shirt, our great Jesus is reduced to a cute soccer goalie. I am sure that the people who did this shirt meant well, but they have trivialized Jesus. This is not giving the honor and respect that is due to the name of Jesus.

Here is a Bloodweiser T-shirt. Now the king of kings is the king of beers. I know the people who did this shirt were trying to connect with the culture, but this takes Jesus and uses his name in a casual, dishonorable, and disrespectful way. One day, every knee from world history will bow before Jesus because Jesus is the king of the universe, I don't think anyone will be glad on that day if are wearing a Bloodweiser T-shirt. I think they will wish they chose a different T-shirt that morning.



I know the people who create these kinds of humorous T-shirts mean well, but they unwittingly ask people to think less of Jesus, not more of Jesus. They diminish the greatness of Jesus' name.

### **What does the Bible say about curse words?**

**But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or**

who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Ephesians 5:3–6 (ESV)

In the letter of Ephesians, Paul wrote to the church of Ephesus. This was a church Paul planted. Ephesus was a seacoast city. It was a center of trade in the ancient world. Like most cities of trade today, it was a dark place with plenty of sex and prostitution. The city was also known for its black magic. It was a publishing center for most of the books on witchcraft and magic sold in the ancient world. When we think of Ephesus, it was a city of sex, sin, and Satan.

In addition, almost everyone coming to Christ and attending the church came from a dysfunctional background. They came out of life in a sex, sin, and Satan-saturated culture. When Paul wrote to the church, he had to give them with some Christianity 101 about how Christians live and how they speak.

### **Sexual sin should not be part of my life.**

While we are talking about our speech, right before what Paul says to the Ephesians about their speech, he talks about the Christian sex life. Since we live in a sex-saturated culture similar to Ephesus, I want to take the opportunity to show you what Paul says about sex in a Christian's life. Christians are to be different from the world around them.

But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. Ephesians 5:3 (ESV)

1. **Sexual Immorality** — This is the Greek word *porneia*. It refers to any expression of sexuality outside of the exclusive commitment of one man and one woman in marriage. It is pre-marital sex, extra-marital sex, homosexuality, and pornography. You name it. Anything outside of one man

and one woman in the commitment of marriage for life should not be named among Christians. *Porneia* is a junk-drawer term that talks about any expression of our sexuality outside of marriage. That is not to be part of the Christian life. This is not because God hates sex. No, he created it. God knows that for sex to be a blessing instead of a curse, it needs to be kept inside of marriage.

2. **Impurity** — This means dirty or filthy. It typically refers to sexual dirtiness. It is moral uncleanness. It can refer to lewdness. This means dressing inappropriately. It means dressing and acting to seduce. When I was thinking about how to describe it, what came to mind was a dirty magazine. What is in a dirty magazine? People in sexually seductive pictures. As Christians, we are not to conduct ourselves in a sexually impure or dirty way. We are not to dress or act in a way that will make us the sexual center of attention in a room, causing others of the opposite sex to lust. Young ladies, let me talk to you about this. Fashion today typically involves wearing less clothes, not more clothes. Fashion today is typically sexually seductive. The miniskirt looks more like a belt. Paul says dressing in a way that makes you the sexual center of attention and leads others to lust is not the way Christian women are to conduct themselves.
3. **Covetousness** — This means a burning desire to have what is our neighbor's and not being satisfied with what God provided for us. In this context, with the previous two terms referring to our sexuality, I think Paul is talking about sexual covetousness. This term is the opposite direction of the

last term. Just as women are not to dress or act in a way that is sexually enticing to others. Men should not allow themselves to covet someone else's wife that is not their own. It is called lust. Christian men are not to indulge in lust. When a guy allows himself to lust over another woman that is not his wife. He is sexually coveting her. When a woman allows herself to fantasize about another man that is not her husband, that is sexual covetousness. God wants us to get married and in marriage focus our energies on our spouse.

From talking with the Ephesians about Christian sexuality, Paul moves to Christian speaking and how Christians talk differently from the rest of the world. He gives three things Christians do not use in their speech.

**Obscene words should not come from my mouth.**

Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place... Ephesians 5:4 (ESV)

**Filthiness** — This is sometimes translated as obscenities. It means dirty language. It means words and phrases you wouldn't say around Mom. If you can't say it in church, it shouldn't come across our lips when we are outside of church. This covers the "S" word, as well as the "F" word. It covers any language that is degrading to someone else. It covers all putdowns and verbal insults. It covers all the nasty insults people say to one another on Twitter, Facebook, and the rest of social media. It doesn't matter if you are upset. As Christians who have our sins taken away by Jesus, our words shouldn't sound like they come from the pit of hell.

But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and **obscene talk from your mouth.** Colossians 3:8 (ESV)

In Colossians, Paul uses a different word from Ephesians. This is inappropriate sexual talk. Obscene bathroom humor should not flow from our lips.

While discussing obscene talk and filthy words, let's talk about Christian profanity. These are cuss words that are close to the real thing, but they are slightly altered to make them acceptable. For example, instead of saying, "What the hell," people say, "What the heck?" Instead of saying, "God dam' it," people will say, "Dang nab it." I have no idea what a dang nab it is. It is saying, "Oh my gosh," instead of, "Oh my God." It is saying, "C. R. A. P.," instead of the "S" word.

Folks, in my estimate, Christian profanity is still profanity. To the unbeliever's ear who is listening to us speak, we mine as well have said the real thing because most unbelievers don't notice the difference between Christian profanity and the real thing.

#### **Foolish words and actions shouldn't characterize my life.**

Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place... Ephesians 5:4 (ESV)

**Foolish Talk** — This is sometimes translated as silly talk. In Greek, it is *morologia*. It literally means speaking like a moron. It is wasteful words, silly words, useless words. It is not speaking in a way that builds people up. What does it mean to talk like a fool? One example that came to mind is YouTube. Everyone seems to have a YouTube channel. The goal is to get more people to watch your videos. That is how you get paid. One popular YouTube channel is Whistlindiesel. He takes incredibly expensive cars and trucks and destroys them on video. Last month he bought a \$400,000 Ferrari and destroyed it on video. In

an earlier video he drove a \$100,000 F350 in the mud until it was ruined. He also dropped a car through a house to destroy both the car and the house. Yes, he gets lots of views. He is making a lot of money on Youtube, but is what he is doing building anyone up? It is speaking and acting like a fool.



Another YouTuber is named MrBeast. Instead of destroying things, he decided to help people. He paid for 1,000 blind and near-blind people from all over the world to receive cataract surgery so they could see again. Let me show you a video about what he did.

Now I ask you, who would you rather be on YouTube, the person known for buying expensive things and destroying them, or the person known for going out of your way to give sight to a thousand people? Christians are not to be known for their foolish words and acting like a moron but for their good words and good deeds that give life to others.

**Dirty jokes and stories shouldn't be part of our lives.**

Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place... Ephesians 5:4 (ESV)

**Crude Joking** — Crude jokes are dirty jokes. It literally means taking something that is innocent or good and twisting it to be obscene or suggestive. We call this bathroom humor. It is humor with double meanings, dirty meanings, and sexual meanings. Most comics use this kind of humor. The other day, Cindy and I were





watching YouTube before bed, and we ran across Larry the Cable Guy. Have you heard him? He is funny! We started listening to him tell his jokes about Walmart, but before we knew it, his good humor switched to cheap sexual humor. In other videos, he kept using sexual humor. We stopped watching him. As Christians, that is not the way we are to speak. It is also not the kind of thing that we should use as entertainment.

Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Ephesians 5:6 (ESV)

This is important. Do not be deceived. God's wrath is coming. God will judge sin. God judges sexual sin of all the varieties we spoke about. God judges verbal sin, filthy language, dirty jokes, foolish words, and actions. If these are the kind of things Jesus will judge when he returns, these are not the kind of things we should have in our life if Jesus saved us from that kind of life.

As soon as you tell people you are saving yourself for your wedding night, you are not going to dress to distract, you are not going to use cuss words and traffic in dirty jokes, and people will laugh at you. They will tell you to get with the program. They will call us prudes. They will consider us out-of-date. Paul tells us not to be deceived by their empty words. We are sons and daughters of Jesus. We are adopted to be different in our sex lives and the words we use when we speak. Don't let anyone try to shame you back into your old life. Jesus set us free from those things. Let us not go back to those things.

**Rotten words that tear others down should not be part of my life.**

Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. Ephesians 4:29 (ESV)

This is another great verse from Ephesians. The key to understanding this verse is understanding the word *corrupting*. It typically referred to rotten fruit. When you buy a banana, and bring it home from the store, the banana looks good and you want to eat it. Leave a banana out too long, or you beat it up, and it turns black. Fruit flies are all over your house. It looks disgusting. This is the picture Paul wants in our minds. Put aside the swear words and dirty jokes for a moment. The words that come out of our mouth should not resemble rotten fruit. Our words should not be beating people up and chewing people up. Our words should build others up, not tear them down. We are to give grace and love to people who hear our words, not discourage them and beat them down.

Some Christians are tough to be around. They may not be cussing and swearing, but they always complain about something. It may be the traffic. It may be the weather. It might be their neighbor. It may be the meal from the restaurant. Their words are just rotten. We are not drawn to them, but we try to avoid them. As Christians, we are not to be like that. We are to be different. When we have the opportunity, we are to speak good to people, grace to people, and build people up, not tear them down. When we speak corrective words, we are to speak them in a loving way, not a hateful way.

**I am to love my enemies, not curse them.**

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Romans 12:14 (ESV)

“But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.” Luke 6:27–28 (ESV)

When it comes to our enemies, we think that is when we should have the right to curse someone out. Our enemies are the ones about whom we should

speak in a hurtful way and a hateful way. When we look at the Bible, it says something different. We are to love our enemies. We are to pray for our enemies. We are to go out of our way to do good to our enemies.

I keep thinking about Congress. Imagine what would happen if people on both sides of the aisle went out of their way to pray for one another, to do good for one another, and to love one another. Things might actually get done in Washington. It would be amazing if we applied these verses in politics.

**My speech should be filled with thanksgiving, not cursing and complaining.**

Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. Ephesians 5:4 (ESV)

Some people wonder what they should talk about if they cannot curse. They are not to whine. They cannot tell a dirty joke. What is left to talk about? God tells us to fill our mouths with thanksgiving instead of cursing. Thanksgiving, especially when it is genuine, not done in a self-centered flattering way like we talked about last week, builds people up. It encourages them in a tough world. Words of thankfulness in this world are like grease on rusty gears. There are plenty of people we can thank. Today, we can tell our spouse how thankful we are for them. We can tell our children or grandchildren how thankful we are for them. We can tell our employees how thankful we are for them. We are to fill our mouths with thankfulness.

One benefit of thankful words is that we will live a happier life. People who are always speaking grumbling, cursing, and negative words are not happy people. When we learn to give thanks in all circumstances, as the Bible tells us

to, we are happier and better able to cope with tough times in life. Filling our mouths with thankfulness benefits us!

**I will give an answer to God for my careless words.**

I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak,... Matthew 12:36 (ESV)

That is a humbling thought. Careless words are those sarcastic side comments we make, almost without thinking. We think they don't count, but God is listening. On the day of judgment, people will answer for their careless words. Does God forgive us for our quick, sarcastic comments? Yes, he forgives us through Jesus. That doesn't mean we have a "Get out of jail free" card to slice people up with quick sarcastic comments.

**The words of my mouth reveal the true state of my heart.**

Jesus said it this way.

The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks. Luke 6:45 (ESV)

The words that come out of our mouth are a reflection of the state of our heart. Today, don't go home telling yourself you have to try harder to stop saying words of profanity. The words that come out of our mouth are a reflection of what is in our hearts. To change our words, we need to change our hearts.

Today, if you do not have a regular Bible reading plan, start one today. Have a simple goal of reading only four or five a week, one chapter when you read. If we want, we can read more, but keep our goal manageable. God will speak to you from His Word when you read it. When you are driving to work, don't turn on the radio. Use that time to pray. Decide to be a regular part of

church where you can hear the word taught and be around other Christians who know you, love you, and care about you. One day at a time, one step at a time, Jesus will change your heart to be more like Jesus. As he does, he will change the words coming out of our mouths.

## Conclusion

As we close, know that all of us fail to bring honor to God in our words. Yes, Jesus forgives us and changes us from the inside out. It is our prayer that God does that on a daily basis to make us more like Jesus. We close by praying Psalm 19:14.

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer. Psalm 19:14 (ESV)



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