Intro: “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me!” That was the little jingle we learned as children when others would say bad things about us. As many times as we said it, we knew it simply was not true. We knew that the tongue had great power. Likewise, James teaches that the tongue is a powerful member of the body (Jam. 3:2-12). He shows that it has both the power to do good, but also the power to do evil. In this lesson, we are to deal with the improper use of the tongue.

I. GOD’S NATURE
   A. God is the Creator.
      1. Gen. 1:1 “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”
      a. God created all things; Gen. 1
      b. The crowning of creation was man; Gen. 1:26-27 “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”
   2. Exo. 20:11 “For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.”
   B. God is holy.
      1. Psa. 111:9 “He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name.”
      2. Isa. 6:1-5 “In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. 2Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. 3And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. 4And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. 5Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.”
      3. Rev. 4:8 “And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.”
   C. Man is made in God’s image.
      1. Gen. 1:26-27 “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”
      2. Jam. 3:9-10 “Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. 10Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.”
   D. When we get the proper view of God and man, it will eliminate much of the problems we see with the tongue.

II. PROFANITY
   A. It is a problem in our society.
      1. Many defend it, others see nothing wrong with it.
      2. Some claim that it is a first amendment right (especially on the public airways).
3. It has become common in our society, even by young children.

B. Profanity
1. Webster defines it: “to treat (something sacred) with abuse, irreverence, or contempt: desecrate.”
2. It originated from the idea of being before the temple and dealt with the idea of something that was not holy because it was not consecrated to God’s service.

C. God and His name are to be held in reverence.
1. Psa. 111:9 “He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name.”
2. Exo. 20:7 “Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.”
   a. Vain means worthless or empty, thus speech that has no value or is worthless.
   b. hen we use God’s name in a worthless or empty way, we are taking His name in vain.
3. The example prayer: Mat. 6:9 “Our Father which art in heaven. Hallowed be thy name.”
4. Today God’s name is used irreverently.
   a. God’s name is attached to just about anything and everything today.
   b. They attach His holy name to that which is common or profane.
   c. Some phrases have become so common that they have become part of our speech (e.g. “O my God”).
5. Euphemisms
   a. Webster defines euphemism as “the substitution of an agreeable or inoffensive expression for one that may offend or suggest something unpleasant.”
   b. Some euphemism’s are good.
      (1) The Bible uses them (one knowing his wife, or one lay’s with another in dealing with the sexual act).
      (2) We use passed away for one who has died.
   c. When we use them for God and sacred things, it is wrong.
      (1) Some of the more common euphemisms for God and spiritual things are: “golly” “gosh,” “gee,” “gee whiz,” “darn,” “jiminy,” “dickens,” “good heavens,” “for goodness sake,” “my Lord,” “Lordy,” “heck,” “shoot,” “gracious,” “my God,” “heavens to Betsy.”
      (2) This is a mild form of cursing.

III. CORRUPT SPEECH
A. This also is a great problem in our society.
1. Many revel in speaking in a sexually suggestive way (not really saying it, but the innuendoes are present).
2. Much of the language of young people today is deplorable.
3. Much of today’s language degrades man to the level of an animal; Jam. 3:9-10 “Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. 10Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.”
B. Christians are to use their tongue for good
1. Eph. 4:29 “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the
use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.”
   a. **Corrupt** means unfit for use or what is of poor quality.
   b. Avoid using language that is unfit for man to be saying.
2. **Col. 3:8** “But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.”
   a. **Filthy** is language that is obscene or foul.
   b. Zodhiates says of **filthy**, “It refers to shameful words coming out of the mouth, implying that the person who has been redeemed by Christ (Col. 3:1) should never utter improper or filthy words which he may have uttered in his life of unbelief. A Christian ought to have a changed vocabulary, and the genuineness of one’s Christianity can be discerned by his vocabulary.”
   c. That type of language should not have been uttered even in one’s life of unbelief.
3. **Pro. 10:31-32** “The mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom: but the froward tongue shall be cut out. The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable: but the mouth of the wicked speaketh frowardness.”
   a. Swanson defines **froward(ness)** as “what is morally crooked from a standard, often with a focus on words that are perverse.”
   b. Those wise will not speak morally perverse words.

IV. L Y I N G
   A. All lies are of the devil.
   1. **John 8:44** “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it”
   2. If we lie, then we are following the says of Satan.
   B. God will never lie.
   1. He is a God of truth.
      a. **Deu. 32:4** “He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.”
      b. **Psa. 31:5** “Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth.”
      c. **Isa. 65:16** “That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he that swareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes.”
   2. His word is truth.
      a. **John 17:17** “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.”
      b. **2 Sam. 7:28** “And now, O Lord GOD, thou art that God, and thy words be true, and thou hast promised this goodness unto thy servant:”
      c. **Psa. 19:9** “The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.”
      d. **Psa. 119:151** “Thou art near, O LORD; and all thy commandments are truth.”
   3. Thus, He will not lie.
      a. **1 Sam. 15:29** “And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man, that he should repent.”
      b. **Tit. 1:2** “In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;”
   C. To be moral, man will not lie.
   1. Lying is a problem in our society.
      a. We often call it something else (fudging the truth, twisting the truth, bending the
truth, little white lies, flattery, etc.).

b. It has also been stated that 91% admit that we lie frequently.

c. Patterson and Kim noted, “Lying has become a cultural trait in America. Lying is embedded in our national character.... The majority of Americans today (two out of three) believe there is nothing wrong with telling a lie.”

d. People lie for no reason and many times will lie when the truth will serve them better.

e. Lying is destroying the very foundations of society.

2. The Bible’s teaching:

a. One of the things God hates; Pro. 6:17 “A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood.”

b. Pro. 12:22 “Lying lips are abomination to the LORD”

c. Pro. 13:5 “A righteous man hateth lying: but a wicked man is loathsome, and cometh to shame”

d. Psa. 101:7 “He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight”

e. Col. 3:9 “Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds”

3. The outcome of liars.

a. Pro. 19:5, 9 “A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape.... A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall perish.”

b. Rev. 21:8 “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”

c. Rev. 21:27 “And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.”

d. Rev. 22:15 “For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.”

4. The first recorded sin in the New Testament was lying.

a. Ananias and Sapphira claimed to sell a property for a certain amount, but lied about it.

b. Acts 5:3 “Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?”

c. Acts 5:5 “And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things”

d. A few hours later his wife also died because of this lie.

V. GOSSIP AND SLANDER

A. Gossip is often joked about.

1. Hee Haw’s The Rumor Song: “Now, we’re not ones to go round spreadin’ rumors, Why really, we’re just not the gossipy kind! Oh, you’ll never hear one of us repeating gossip! So you’d better be sure and listen close the first time.”

2. Yet, it is very destructive.

B. What is gossip?

1. Webster defines gossip as: “a person who habitually reveals personal or sensational facts about others... rumor or report of an intimate nature.”

2. The KJV or ASV neither one uses gossip.
3. The concept is found.
   a. Lev. 19:16 “Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I am the LORD”
   b. 1 Tim. 5:13 “And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not.”

4. A gossip is one who reveals secrets or “reveals personal or sensational facts about others” which is talebearing.
   a. Pro. 11:13 “A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter”
   b. Pro. 20:19 “He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips”
   c. It does not matter if the information is true or not.

C. What Gossip does.
   1. Cuts deep into the heart of those attacked; Pro. 18:8 “The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.”
   2. Causes strife; Pro. 26:20 “Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth.”
   3. Separates close friends; Pro. 16:28 “A froward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends.”

D. Helps in avoiding gossip.
   1. Go to the individual, and not someone else.
      a. Pro. 25:9 “Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself; and discover not a secret to another:”
      b. Mat. 18:15 “Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.”
   2. Simply don’t gossip.
      a. Pro. 25:9 “Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself; and discover not a secret to another:”
      b. Why we should not; Pro. 25:10 “Lest he that heareth it put thee to shame, and thine infamy turn not away.”
   3. Do not be a conduit for the gossip of others.
      a. Pro. 26:20-21 “Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth. As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife.”
      b. If we do not listen, then gossip will cease
      c. We need to stop the mouth’s of those who gossip.

E. Guidelines in monitoring our speech and our hearing.
   1. The information must be true.
   2. Is the information needful.
   3. Is the information kind?

VI. ANGRY SPEECH
A. We live in an angry society.
   1. Anger is “a strong feeling of displeasure of hostility.”
   2. When driving we have the term “Road Rage.”
   3. We live in a world where we are always running and our nerves are frayed and always on edge; we become angry at the drop of a hat.
   4. Angry speech is speech that expresses that strong feeling.
B. Anger itself is not sin.
   1. Eph. 4:26 “Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath.”
   2. God was often angry (“the anger of the Lord” being found 32 times in the Old Testament).
   3. When angry we become more susceptible to sin, especially with our tongue.
      a. Jam. 1:19-20 “Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: 20For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.”
      b. Col. 3:8 “But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.”

C. Be careful with our words.
   1. Pro. 29:20 “Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? there is more hope of a fool than of him.”
   2. Anger causes us to be hasty in our words instead of getting all the facts.
      a. Pro. 18:13 “He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.”
      b. When angry, step back and consider all the facts, then temper our words prior to speaking to give a “soft answer.”
   3. Song: “Angry Words”

Angry words! O let them never from the tongue unbridled slip; May the heart’s best impulse ever check them ere they soil the lip.

Love is much too pure and holy, friendship is too sacred far, For a moment’s reckless folly thus to desolate and mar.

Angry words are lightly spoken, Bitt’rest tho’ts are rashly stirred, Brightest links of life are broken by a single angry word.

D. We often need to say nothing.
   1. There is a time to keep silence; Ecc. 3:7 “A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;”
   2. Pro. 17:28 “Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding.”

E. Remember: Pro. 15:1 “A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.”

VII. BOASTING

A. It is has become a part of our culture.
   1. Webster defines it: “to puff oneself up in speech: speak vaingloriously...to speak of or assert with excessive pride.”
   2. Muhammad Ali changed the way many people act in this area.
      a. He was always telling how great he was and what he would do in the boxing ring to his opponent.
      b. Others began imitating him and now doing whatever is necessary to draw attention to themselves.
   3. Does anyone really like a boaster telling them how great he is?

B. Boasting comes primarily from self-centeredness.
   1. He does not look at others and what they have done but wants all the attention for himself.
   2. There is no humility in the boaster.
      a. Jam. 4:16 “But now ye rejoice in your boastsings: all such rejoicing is evil.”
      b. Pro. 14:3 “In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride: but the lips of the wise shall preserve them.”
C. Why boasting is foolish.
   1. The boaster cannot back it up.
      a. Pro. 25:14 “Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift is like clouds and wind without rain.”
      b. There is great boasting, but no substance to the promise.
      c. No one can even guarantee tomorrow: Pro. 27:1 “Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth”
   2. Boasting brings trouble.
      a. Pro. 21:23 “Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles.”
      b. Boasting of things we cannot produce.
      c. Boasting often makes it more difficult to produce.
   3. Boasting can bring about our destruction; Pro. 13:3 “He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction.”

D. Let another praise you; Pro. 27:2 “Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips.”

Conclusion: Mat. 12:36-37 “But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. 37For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.” Make sure we use out tongue properly so we can be saved.