

## INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Ephesians 4:28-32**.
- B. What we say is very powerful. Words can be very uplifting and can also be very destructive.
- C. The old saying, "Sticks and stones can break my bones, but names will never hurt me," is not true. Reputation and careers can be ruined by lies, slander and other harmful words.
- D. As we talk with others let me suggest three rules or gates that our speech needs to pass in order to be spoken. The three gates of the tongue:
  - 1. Is it truthful?
  - 2. Is it kind?
  - 3. Is it needful?

## I. IS IT TRUTHFUL?

- A. The Bible has much to say about being truthful. Lying is a sin. Some world religions allow lies in certain circumstances; the Bible does not.
- B. It is impossible to God to lie. We can always trust in what He says (Heb. 6:18).  
*in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have strong encouragement, we who have fled for refuge in laying hold of the hope set before us.*
- C. On the reverse of that Satan is the father of lies, and always lies (Jn. 8:44).  
*"You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature; for he is a liar, and the father of lies."*
- D. Jesus (speaking on behalf of the Father) said that He Himself is the truth (Jn. 14:6).  
*Jesus said^ to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me."*
- E. Some examples of lying are found in the Bible:
  - 1. Satan told the biggest lie ever in Gen. 3:4.  
*And the serpent said to the woman, "You surely shall not die!"*
  - 2. Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead because of their lies (Ac. 5:1-11).  
*But a certain man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, 2 and kept back some of the price for himself, with his wife's full knowledge, and bringing a portion of it, he laid it at the apostles' feet. 3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back some of the price of the land? ...9 Then Peter said to her, "Why is it that you have agreed together to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they shall carry you out as well."*
- F. There is no such thing as a half-truth or white lie. Truth is truth and a lie is a lie. Sometimes to cover up the truth people will not answer the questions given them. This is a form of lying.
- G. Remember that the book of Revelation makes it perfectly clear when it says that if we lie, we will fry (Rev. 21:8)!  
*"But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."*

## II. IS IT KIND?

- A. Even if a person tells the truth, it can hurt if not said correctly. We need to learn to be kind with our words.
- B. Some one as said, "I'm going give them a piece of my mind!" to which I reply, "Not too much you don't have a lot to spare."
- C. We are not to return evil for evil. If we are sinned against, this does not give me the right to be ugly in return as I speak the truth to them.

- D. Three things are needed when we speak:
  - 1. It is done for edification.
  - 2. It is done for the need of the moment.
  - 3. It is done to give grace to those who hear (Eph. 4:29).  
 Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear.
- E. Xians should not be guilty of speaking with a “forked tongue” (Jas. 3:9-13).  
 With it we bless our Lord and Father; and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; **10** from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way. **11** Does a fountain send out from the same opening both fresh and bitter water? **12** Can a fig tree, my brethren, produce olives, or a vine produce figs? Neither can salt water produce fresh. **13** Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom.
- F. Paul lists some 23 sins in Rom. 1, and some of these have to do with the tongue. Three are malice, gossip, and slander (Rom. 1:29-30).  
 being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, **30** slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents,
- G. When a person is dealing with another and trying to help them out of their sin, it is best to always be kind. Being fault-finding may be blunt and truthful, but it is not always kind (Gal. 6:1).  
 Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted.
- H. Remember the words of Solomon who wrote in Proverbs that a soft or gently answer turns away wrath. May we learn to be kind with our words (Prov. 15:1).  
 A gentle answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger.

### III. IS IT NEEDFUL?

- A. It is very important that we learn to always tell the truth. It is also important that we learn to be kind with our words. But one of the most important questions to ask ourselves before we speak is, “is it needful?”
- B. Choosing what to say, and to whom, at the appropriate time is most important.
- C. There is a time for yelling and a time for speaking softly; ...a time for being angry with words and a time not to; “...a time to be flippant, humorous and kidding and a time not to; the question is, “is it needful for the moment?”
- D. Please no horror stories. After a purchase of something another goes into a horror story, about how bad the one he had was. That kind of thing is not needful.

### CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. What we say is so powerful. We can build up or tear down so quickly and sometimes permanently by what we say, how we say it, and when we say it.
- B. Let your words pass through all three gates of the tongue before you say anything; is it the truth, is it kind and is it needful?
- C. Jesus is not only the truth, but is the way and the life (Jn. 14:6).  
 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.