

# PROVERBS – Lesson 12

## The Tongue

By Beverly McKey

### I. INTRODUCTION

- A. There is no telling how many millions of people over the years have been strengthened and edified through the book of Proverbs.
  - 1. The majority of life's difficulties are addressed in the book of Proverbs by the wisest man the world has ever known.
  - 2. The most interesting thing to remember is that while Solomon was so very wise, he was not always a faithful man.
  - 3. On many occasions he ignored the very teachings he recorded during much of his life.
  - 4. He was enticed by all manner of temptations which he did not have the strength to overcome.
- B. Knowledge of God's will, without a commitment to God, profits nothing.
  - 1. We need to determine in our own minds that we are not only seeking the truth, but are committed to the keeping of it, no matter what.
  - 2. Serious Bible study, like our Ladies Class offers, helps us to keep our commitment to that goal.
  - 3. Today's topic from the book of Proverbs is "The Tongue".

### II. PROPER USES OF THE TONGUE

- A. Choose Good Words
  - 1. The Bible places a premium on the value of good words.
  - 2. We need to stress the difference between good words and smooth words.
  - 3. In this day of political correctness, smooth words are much more prevalent than good words.
  - 4. Smooth words would be saying that which is never offensive.
  - 5. But, in truth, good words are sometimes offensive.
  - 6. Jesus was constantly getting into trouble for what He said to the religious elite of His day.
  - 7. We all must agree that Jesus always spoke good words, yet these words were often scathing and challenged those to whom He was speaking.
  - 8. He sometimes spoke of men being:
    - a. Wolves in sheep's clothing: **Matthew 7:15** – "*Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.*"
    - b. Hypocrites: **Matthew 23:13** – "*But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.*"

- c. Blind guides: **Matthew 23:16** – *"Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'Whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obliged to perform it.'"*
  - d. Fools: **Matthew 23:17** – *"Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that sanctifies the gold?"*
  - e. Serpents: **Matthew 23:33** – *"Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell?"*
  - f. Children of Satan: **John 8:43-44** – <sup>43</sup>*Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. <sup>44</sup>You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it."*
  - g. These words were hard, but they were good, because they were true.
- B. There is a distinction between good words and flattering words.
- 1. One of the reasons that good words (words of truth) are so valuable is that eternal life is tied to our hearing, believing, and employing them.
    - a. **John 8:32** – *"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."*
    - b. In **Proverbs 10:11** we read, *"The mouth of the righteous is a well of life, but violence covers the mouth of the wicked."*
    - c. **Proverbs 13:2** – *"A man shall eat well by the fruit of his mouth, but the soul of the unfaithful feeds on violence."*
    - d. The words of truth are life-giving, and sustaining and refreshing:
      - 1) **Proverbs 16:24** – *"Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the bones."*
      - 2) **Proverbs 18:4** – *"The words of a man's mouth are deep waters; the wellspring of wisdom is a flowing brook."*
    - e. Solomon recognized the value of good (true) words and he wanted the rest of us to know it as well.
 

**Proverbs 10:20** – *"The tongue of the just is as choice silver: the heart of the wicked is little worth."*

      - 1) Many people need to be instructed about discerning good words from evil words, especially our youth.
      - 2) All words are not of the same worth, and all views are not equally valid.
      - 3) Many become angry at the mere suggestion that their opinion is not as valuable as another, but it is certainly the case.
    - f. Only truth gives value to a man's speech.
      - 1) **Proverbs 15:4**, *"A wholesome tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit."*
      - 2) Discovering what is truly valuable is one of the greatest adventures in life.

- 3) Christ discussed this in His first recorded sermon.
- 4) **Matthew 6:19-21** – “<sup>19</sup>*Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal;* <sup>20</sup>*but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.* <sup>21</sup>*For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*”
- 5) Solomon puts it this way: **Proverbs 20:15** – “*There is gold and a multitude of rubies, but the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel.*”
  - a) He is actually saying that truth in speech is rarer than gold and a multitude of jewels.
  - b) In fact, lips of knowledge are more rare and therefore more valuable than any precious treasure.
- 6) Finally, in **Proverbs 25:11** – “*A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.*”
  - a) Brother Leroy Brownlow has written a book entitled Apples Of Gold from this very passage.
  - b) One of the greatest challenges set before Christians is learning what to say and how to say it.
  - c) Oftentimes in Bible studies or in sermons, we struggle in the attempt to speak the truth in a fashion that will assist the hearer in grasping the point.
  - d) At funerals and in hospitals, the words of comfort sometimes seem to ring hollow, and we then realize the truthfulness of this passage.
  - e) We all want the ability to speak words that are fit for the occasion. And when we do, this passage helps us realize the value of it from heaven’s point of view.

#### B. The Tongue Delivers The Just From Problems

1. Our speech also has a direct impact on the number of difficulties we have in this life.
2. While, truly, many things just happen to us in life, it is equally true that we bring many problems on ourselves, sometimes because of our words.
3. On the other hand, our words can be a solution to a problem about to happen
  - a. **Proverbs 12:6:** “*The words of the wicked are, ‘Lie in wait for blood,’ but the mouth of the upright will deliver them.*”
  - b. **Proverbs 12:13** – “*The wicked is ensnared by the transgression of his lips, but the righteous will come through trouble.*”
  - c. **Proverbs 15:1** – “*A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.*”

4. Truth, fitly spoken, can deliver us from difficult situations.
  - a. On more than one occasion, the apostle Paul was able to talk himself out of trouble.
  - b. He certainly did not compromise nor alter the truth, but he did use wisdom in his speech to turn bad situations into better ones.
    - 1) **Acts 22**– Verses 1-24 of this chapter recounts Paul defending himself in Jerusalem against the powerful Jewish leadership.
      - a) They arrested him in the Temple because of his teaching and they accused him of bringing a “Greek” into the Temple, defiling their holy place.
      - b) Paul’s Ephesian friend, Trophimus, had come to Jerusalem with him, but Paul did not take him into the Temple.
      - c) The whole city was stirred up against Paul and they wanted to kill Paul and began beating him in the street.
      - d) The commander of the garrison heard the uproar and took soldiers and centurions to handle the riot.
      - e) When the soldiers arrived they stopped beating Paul and the commander bound Paul in chains.
      - f) The commander asked what Paul had done, the crowd started shouting different things, so since he could not determine the truth he ordered Paul to be taken away.
      - g) On the steps of the building, Paul begged the commander to allow him to speak to the people to defend himself.
      - h) The commander allowed him to speak to the Jews.
      - i) Then Paul recounted all that happened to him on the road to Damascus and how he had spoken with the Lord personally.
      - j) He explained how he was baptized and was assigned to teach the Gentiles.
      - k) When the crowd heard this they said, “*He is not fit to live.*” The commander then commanded them to take Paul into custody and question him under scourging in order to get the truth.
      - l) In **Vs. 25**, Paul used his rights as a Roman citizen to get out of this predicament. He said: “*Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman, and uncondemned?*”
      - m) This got the attention of his captors and one went to tell the Commander saying, “*Take care what you do, for this man is a Roman.*”
      - n) The commander questioned Paul about this saying, “*With a large sum I obtained this citizenship.*” And Paul replied, “*But I was born a citizen.*”
      - o) Paul’s fitly spoken truthful words helped save his life and free him from jail.

2. This is where learning self-control is a true advantage:
  - a. We don't always have to have the last word.
  - b. We don't always have to put people in their place.
  - c. Jerry Clower (a deceased country comic) used to say, "*You better keep your words soft and sweet because you never know when you will be forced to eat them.*"
  - d. That's not bad advice.

### III. THE TONGUE BRINGS HEALTH AND HAPPINESS

A. Have you ever considered that your speech may be affecting your health?

1. **Proverbs 12:18** – "*There is one who speaks like the piercings of a sword, but the tongue of the wise promotes health.*"
  - a. Can it be true that we can harm our own health by using speech that is unkind, thoughtless or rude.
  - B. In this verse we actually find the prohibition against cutting people down.
  - C. One-up-man-ship is not an essential for happy living.
  - D. In fact, it will go a long way in preventing contentment and joy in our lives.
2. **Proverbs 12:25** – "*Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, but a good word makes it glad.*"
  - A. Solomon is not affirming that the wise man will never have any health trouble.
  - B. However, our emotional and spiritual health is tied to the words contained in our heart.
    - 1) The old saying, "*You can't unring a bell*" means once we have spoken harsh, damaging words – we can never get them back or undo the damage.
    - 2) Apologies can soothe hurt feels but those harsh words linger in the memory long after, no matter how hard we try to dismiss them.
  - C. Solomon's father, King David, also had to face stress from an early age when King Saul was seeking to kill him for years. Here is what he had to say about facing that situation.
    - 1) **Psalm 119:28** – "*My soul melts from heaviness; strengthen me according to Your word.*"
      - a) David knew his only help would come from the words of the Lord. Oh, that we all would learn that lesson.
      - b) Today the book stores are flooded with "experts" who give us worldly advice on how to handle problems that David describes as "soul melting".
    - 2) While I am not given to depression normally, I know that there are situations that can bring you to that condition.
      - a) It is then that we must already have the word of God planted so firmly in our hearts that we look for help there first.

- b) Do you have a few encouraging verses memorized?
  - c) If memorizing is hard, post them on your refrigerator and on your bathroom mirror and on your front door as you go out, even in your car.
  - d) Get some great verses that remind you to:
    - i. rejoice in the Lord
    - ii. to be thankful
    - iii. to be kind
    - iv. make a list of some nice things you can do for someone else.
  - e) Self-pity is an easy habit to get into. This is what you say to yourself when you are in the midst of self-pity:
    - i. My problems are worse than everyone else's.
    - ii. Nobody cares about my problems.
    - iii. No one calls me, or sends me cards, or brings food when I am sick.
    - iv. No one speaks to me at church.
    - v. They ought to be ashamed of themselves.
  - f) Concentrating on others helps get you out of yourself.
    - i. Stop making excuses why you "can't" when there are real solutions for your problems that you aren't using.
    - ii. Find some way to reach out to others; ways that you can accomplish even with the handicaps you may really have.
- 3) The anxiety spoken of by David as "soul melting" also has a remedy offered by Paul in **Philippians 4:4-7** – "<sup>4</sup> *Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!* <sup>5</sup> *Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand.* <sup>6</sup> *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;* <sup>7</sup> *and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*"
- a) There are a few steps to this remedy:
    - i. If you don't live "rejoicing in the Lord", learn to immediately!
    - ii. Let go of anxiety, which is evidence of trust in God.
    - iii. Make your requests to God with thanksgiving in your heart. It is hard not to rejoice in the Lord when we are in a "thankful" frame of mind
    - iv. Accept the peace of God which surpasses all understanding by faith.
    - v. These steps will result in "guarding your hearts and minds" which is the source of our words.

#### IV. GOD'S VIEW OF THE TONGUE

- A. One principle that needs never to be overlooked is that God sees things differently than we do.
1. **Psalm 55:8-9** – <sup>8</sup> *For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,* says the LORD. <sup>9</sup> *For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts."*
  2. The major difference is that we are limited in the scope of things our minds can comprehend – God is not.
    - a. God knows our thoughts:
      - 1) **Proverbs 12:5** – *"The thoughts of the righteous are right, but the counsels of the wicked are deceitful."*
      - 2) **Proverbs 15:26** – *"The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the LORD, but the words of the pure are pleasant."*
      - 3) **Proverbs 16:3** – *"Commit your works to the Lord, and your thoughts will be established."*
        - a) Making a commitment to the Lord means a change of the thought process.
        - b) If your thoughts are not trained to be pure, then your words may reveal a lack of commitment.
    - b. Words that come from a pure heart will decide if we are a person who illuminates a room by our presence, or a person others hate to see coming, because our speech is negative, critical and self-centered.

#### V. HOW WE MUST NOT USE OUR TONGUES

- A. Children of God must not lie.
1. **Proverbs 26:28** – *"A lying tongue hates those who are crushed by it, and a flattering mouth works ruin."*
  2. Lying is a serious problem that plagues the world today.
    - a. In today's society, people have broken the LIE down into different kinds in order to make some lies acceptable. They call it:
      - 1) Twisting the truth (causing the meaning of the truth to be slanted in a different way)
      - 2) A white lie (a means of flattery that is not sincere)
      - 3) Fudging or Bending the Truth (telling only part of the truth with some alterations)
      - 4) Call it what you may, but lying is still called an ugly sin in the scriptures. **Revelation 2:10**, tells us that *"ALL liars will have their place in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."*
  3. Lying is not a product of modern society, it was born in the Garden of Eden when Satan first lied to Eve.

- a. When Cain killed his brother, Abel, because of envy, Cain lied to God by providing a vague response in an attempt to deceive God, when He asked, "*Where is Abel your brother?*" (**Genesis 4:8**).
- b. Cain responded, in **vs. 9** "*I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?*" when in fact he did know that Abel was dead.
- c. The murder of his brother, coupled with his lying, brought stern punishment upon him.
4. Solomon makes a strong declaration regarding Jehovah and the act of lying.
  - a. "A lying tongue" is listed among the "seven things God hates."
  - b. **Proverbs 6:17** – "*Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, but those who deal truthfully are His delight.*"
  - c. Remember in an earlier lesson we talked about the meaning of the word "abomination" -- that which is exceptionally loathsome, hateful, sinful, wicked, or vile.
  - d. We do not often associate God with hatred or such strong emotions, yet lying is an act man commits that actually stirs up these emotions in the heart of God.
  - e. Such a strong response is necessary, due to the fact that lying is contrary to the nature of God
    - a. **Titus 1:2** and **Hebrews 6:18** both confirm that God cannot lie so He cannot tolerate lying.
5. The pursuit of truth is contrary to the "wisdom of the world."
  - a. The world promotes lying as a "fix-all" for man's problems.
  - b. However, in contrast, God teaches us to rely upon truth at every turn in life.
  - c. In **Proverbs 23:23**, Solomon's counsel was to "*Buy the truth and do not sell it.*"
  - d. Liars tend to minimize any possibility of consequences for lying, yet these consequences are suffered time and time again.
6. One problem with liars is that they tend to believe the Devil's lie that falsehood offers a permanent fix to the problems that trouble them.
  - a. However, lying is at best only a temporary solution.
 

**Proverbs 12:19** – "*The truthful lip shall be established forever, but a lying tongue is but for a moment.*"
  - b. Thus, one who practices lying demonstrates foolishness.
 

**Proverbs 18:7** – "*A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul.*"
7. Lying is foolish for a number of reasons.
  - a. It is foolish because it puts off the inevitable.
    - 1) It discounts the fact that there will be a day of reckoning.
 

**Proverbs 19:5** – "*A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who speaks lies will not escape.*"



- 2) The first century church learned this lesson quite graphically:
    - a) In **Acts 5**, Sapphira and her husband, Ananias, conspired to give money to the apostles which Ananias indicated was the entire sum of money they received for the sale of their property.
    - b) In fact, it was only a portion of the sale, which would have been a commendable amount to give.
    - c) When Ananias was struck dead for “*lying to the Holy Spirit*”, Sapphira came looking for him.
    - d) She had an opportunity to tell the truth but chose to continue the lie her husband had first told.
    - e) She was also struck dead immediately.
  - 3) Solomon offers this observation:
 

**Proverbs 19:1** – “*Better is the poor who walks in his integrity than one who is perverse in his lips, and is a fool.*”
  - b. Second, lying is foolish because the pursuit of lies will often lead to the commission of other sins.
    - 1) Rarely will one only commit a single sin in lying.
    - 2) **Proverbs 17:20** – “*He who has a deceitful heart finds no good, and he who has a perverse tongue falls into evil.*”
- B. The wise will not use the tongue in boasting.
1. Boasting is a sin because it originates from a heart of pride as we found in an earlier lesson on Pride Vs. Humility.
 

**Proverbs 14:3** – “*In the mouth of a fool is a rod of pride,*”
  2. It is foolish to boast because the one who boasts often makes assertions that he cannot back up.
    - a. Within a boast, there is the assumption that we have complete control over the matter under consideration.
    - b. However, we are never totally in charge of anything.
      - 1) **Proverbs 27:1** – “*Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth.*”
      - 2) James repeats this same teaching: **James 4:13-16** – “<sup>13</sup> *Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit”; <sup>14</sup> whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. <sup>15</sup> Instead you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.” <sup>16</sup> But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.”*
    - 3) Notice that James not only condemns boasting, he calls it evil.
- C. A wise person will not use his tongue for angry speech.
1. Though anger is not a sin by itself, it can certainly lead us into sin if it is not controlled.
  2. Solomon offers good advice for channeling our tongue when angry.

- a. Before you speak, study the situation carefully.  
**Proverbs 15:28** – *“The heart of the righteous studies how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil.”*
  - b. James and Solomon both confirm that the principles of righteous behavior that God set out in the beginning do not change, even though centuries may pass and societies change.  
**James 1:19-20** – *“So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; <sup>20</sup> for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.”*
3. After we have studied the situation, what is the proper response we want to deliver?
- a. We would increase our success rate enormously if we just remember this rule: **Proverbs 15:1** – *“A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.”*
    - 1) Failing to remember this rule often results in letting our anger get the best of us.
    - 2) In those cases, we may say or do something that we later regret.
  - b. We must also consider that it is sometimes appropriate to speak through other means than with our tongue.
    - 1) The Proverbs writer encouraged us in times such as these to rely upon our facial expression more than our vocabulary
      - a) **Proverbs 25:23** – *“The north wind brings forth rain, and a backbiting tongue an angry countenance.”*
      - b) Even if we are exposed to someone else’s hateful rant, it is a great time to practice the art of “self-control” and keep your attitude and your facial expressions calm.
    - 2) We should all remember this advice from Solomon: The fewer words the better:
      - a) **Proverbs 17:27** – *“He who has knowledge spares his words, and a man of understanding is of a calm spirit.”*
      - b) **Proverbs 12:23** – *“A prudent (wise) man conceals knowledge, but the heart of fools proclaims foolishness.”*
    - 3) In times of extreme emotional or physical distress, it can be good not to say anything at that particular moment, due to our weakened condition.
      - a) **Proverbs 17:28** – *“Even a fool is counted wise when he holds his peace; when he shuts his lips, he is considered perceptive.”*
      - b) This does not mean that there would never be a time when an important matter could be addressed in the future.
      - c) Certainly, if it is an important matter, it must be addressed, but we must remember the words that Solomon also wrote in **Ecclesiastes 3:7b** – *“...a time to keep silence, and a time to speak.”*

- D. A wise person will not use the tongue for gossip.
1. One who engages in gossip demonstrates foolishness and a lack of wisdom.
  2. Gossip is a destructive activity of the tongue that is hurtful to the body of Christ.
    - a. **Proverbs 26:20** – *“Where there is no wood, the fire goes out; and where there is no talebearer, strife ceases.”*
      - 1) Unverified negative information, whether about an individual or a congregation can be devastating.
      - 2) We must guard against the temptation to repeat such information.
    - b. Legitimate offenses or concerns about an individual or a congregation must be handled in the method described by Jesus for the resolution of conflict.
 

**Matthew 18:15-17** – <sup>15</sup> *Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. <sup>16</sup> But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that <sup>17</sup> by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. <sup>17</sup> And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.”*
    - c. Perhaps few of these situations will arise if we remember some important verses about how to treat our brothers and sisters in Christ at all times.
      - 1) **I Timothy 5:19** – *“Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two or three witnesses.”*
      - 2) **I Timothy 5:1-2** – *“Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father, younger men as brothers, <sup>2</sup> older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, with all purity.”*
      - 3) **James 4:11** – *“Do not speak evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. <sup>12</sup> There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. Who are you to judge another?”*
  2. The gossip is referred to as a hypocrite who professes to be a follower of Jehovah, yet his actions prove otherwise
    - a. **Proverbs 11:9** – *“The hypocrite with his mouth destroys his neighbor, but through knowledge the righteous will be delivered.”*
    - b. We must learn to avoid conversations that involve gossip.
 

**Proverbs 20:19** – *“He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets; therefore do not associate with one who flatters with his lips.”*
    - c. The gossip must not be considered a “confidante” to whom you would tell your innermost thoughts and secrets.

**Proverbs 11:13** – “*A talebearer reveals secrets, but he who is of a faithful spirit conceals a matter.*”

3. Do not allow yourself to be a conduit through whom gossip flows.
  - a. **Proverbs 26:20** – “*Where there is no wood, the fire goes out; and where there is no talebearer, strife ceases.*”
  - b. Gossip would not exist if it were not for those who listen to the gossiper.
  - c. Do not feel that you must be polite and listen to gossip. Have the courage to stop gossip in its tracks.
  - d. Passive participation will only fuel the gossiper’s raging fire.
  - e. Once you have walked away from such conversations or suggested that it is an inappropriate discussion, you will soon notice that you are not included in other gossiping sessions, which is all the better for you.

## VI. CONCLUSION

- A. The Proverbs offer us excellent instruction and Divine guidance in the use of our tongues.
- B. One who pursues God’s wisdom will refrain from using his tongue for ungodly purposes.
- C. He will trust in the Lord and pursue the paths of righteousness as revealed in the Word of God.
- D. A wise person will not use his tongue to:
  1. Lie
  2. Boast
  3. Release anger
  4. Gossip.
- E. Wise men and women will heed instruction of God’s word and avoid the improper use of the tongue.
  1. **James 3:1-12** is a lengthy discussion of the difficulty in taming the tongue. James describes the tongue this way:
    - a. It is as powerful as a bit in the horse’s mouth or a rudder that steers a ship. **Vs. 3-4**
    - b. It can do as much damage as a forest fire. **Vs. 5-6**
    - c. Even though it is a very small part of the body, it can defile (corrupt) the whole body. **Vs. 6**
    - d. It is wilder than any kind of beast, bird, reptile or creature of the sea and it cannot be tamed. **Vs. 7**
    - e. It is an unruly evil. **Vs. 8**
    - f. It is very inconsistent in that we use it to bless God and then we curse men who were also made in the image of God. **Vs. 9**
    - g. James asks “*How can opposite things come forth from the same mouth – both blessing and cursing?*” **Vs. 10-12**
      - 1) After all, it is not possible for a spring to flow with both fresh water and bitter water at the same time.

- 2) Nor does a fig tree bear olives or a grapevine bear figs.
  - 3) How then does one tongue (which is supposed to be devoted to God) speak blessing and cursing OR hatred and love? It should never be so.
2. It is a big job to conquer the tongue; one that will take working on it the rest of your life.
  3. In your effort to control your speech, remember, Winston Churchill said: "Never, never, never, never give up!"