

How Should You Speak

"But no one can tame the tongue...from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way." James 3:8-10

It is so important that we learn to communicate biblically today. We have become immune to the harshness and rashness of conversation of our culture that we tend to emulate it. This should not be so for the Christian woman. We need to emulate God's ways and put on the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. Here are some guidelines to help us communicate and bring glory to the Lord:

1. OUR WRONG WORDS BEGIN WITH WRONG THOUGHTS AND MOTIVES----we must put off these wrong thoughts and replace them with biblical thoughts. That means time in the Word, having wisdom and discernment to know when we are thinking wrongly, and courage and strength enough to change it. (Matthew 15:19-20)

2. WE ARE ACCOUNTABLE TO GOD FOR EVERY WORD WE SPEAK---we have to be careful not to use 'careless' words. Don't just talk to hear yourself speak. Count the cost of every word coming out of your mouth. (Matthew 12:36-7)

3. WE ARE TO SPEAK THE TRUTH, BUT SPEAK IT IN LOVE--Scriptures teach that "If your brother sins, go and reprove him in private; if he listen to you, you have won your brother." (Matthew 18:15) We need to reprove (or rebuke) in a patient, kind and loving manner.

4. WE MUST PUT OFF ANY WRONG SPEECH--sometimes we are tempted to use angry, abusive or malicious words in our speech. Any kind of wrong speech is sin. Work extra hard to communicate in love. (Colossians 3:8)

5. WE MUST GIVE THE BENEFIT OF DOUBT WHEN IT COME TO JUDGING MOTIVES. We are not to make judgments about the 'motives of men's hearts', only God can judge their motives. (1 Corinthians 4:5)

6. WE ARE MORE LIKELY TO SIN IF OUR WORDS ARE RASH--Words can bring life or death. Proverbs 12:18 states that 'there is one who speaks rashly like the thrusts of a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.'

7. WE ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE HEARD IF OUR SPEECH IS FOREBEARING AND SWEET. Not fake--not using manipulation. "Sweetness of speech increases persuasiveness." Proverbs 16:21

8. WE ARE KIND AND WISE WHEN WE TALK. "She opens her mouth in wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue." Proverbs 31:26 Her words are not rude, tense, harsh or wounding, instead they are edifying and helpful.

9. WE SHOULD PURIFY OUR SPEECH UNTIL IT IS MORE AND MORE FLAWLESS--Purify your speech by practicing over and over until you get what you want to say right. Think through what you should say, then practice it out loud alone. Concentrate on using a 'soothing' tone of voice. (Proverbs 10:20) It may

seem silly but scripture teaches us 'to train ourselves for the purpose of godliness'. So that is exactly what we should do!

Faithful Lord, help us to be an example to all in speech...