

# THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

James 1:19  
Lesson #68  
Slow to speak  
04/09/2017

“Sticks and stones may  
break my bones but  
words will never hurt  
me!”

**Is this true?**

only if we are not  
listening or don't care.



1

*James 1:19*

“But everyone must be  
quick to hear,  
slow to speak and  
slow to anger;”

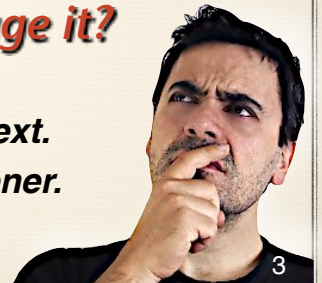
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**Why is the tongue so important?**

1. It is vital to spiritual community.
2. It makes a big difference in lives.
3. It is one of our greatest challenges.

**How can we manage it?**

4. Start with the heart.
5. Be sensitive to context.
6. Become a good listener.



3

*Ecclesiastes 3:7*

“There is . . .  
a time to keep silence,  
and a time to speak;”

1. Speaking is needed to  
connect with others in  
community.

4



5



## 2. Our words have power.

### Proverbs 18:21

“Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits.”



6



Haim Ginott  
(Teacher, writer)

“If you want your children to improve, let them overhear the nice things you say about them to others.”

7



Haim Ginott  
(Teacher, writer)

“Parents often talk about the younger generation as if they didn’t have anything to do with it.”

8

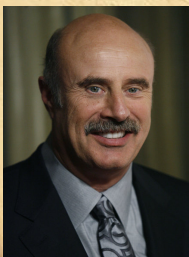
### Proverbs 12:25

“Anxiety in a man’s heart weighs it down, But a good word makes it glad.”

*Our words affect the fear in those around us.*

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Dr. Phil McGraw



“Every suggestion from our staff is a good idea for at least two hours.”

10

**How do you respond to the ideas and feelings of others?**



**Yes if.**



**No because.**

11



### *Proverbs 15:1*

“A gentle answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger.”

*Our words also affect the anger in those around us.*

*The three “G”s of wise speech  
Genuine - Gracious - Gentle.*

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### *James 3:2*

“For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body.”

*3. The use of our tongue is perhaps the hardest ethical challenge we face.*

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*An amazing truth about human speech:  
It takes 3 years to acquire it*



*and a lifetime to learn  
how, when, & where to use it.*

14

### *James 1:26*

“If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person’s religion is worthless.”

*Our words are a sign of  
our spiritual maturity  
or lack thereof.*

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### *Signs of Spiritual Maturity*

- **How we use our tongue**
- How we use money
- How we respond to personal success and failure
- How we respond to personal suffering
- How we respond to the great and least among us

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### *Matthew 12:34*

“For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart.”

*4. Managing the tongue starts with  
giving attention to the heart.*

*When our heart is right,  
we will “generally” say the right thing.*

*When our heart is influenced by  
fear or anger we are likely to say the  
wrong thing.*

17



### *Matthew 12:34*

“For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart.”

**4. Managing the tongue starts with giving attention to the heart.**

“A sharp tongue and an unrenewed mind are usually found in the same head.”

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### *Matthew 15:11*

“It is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but what comes out of the mouth; this defiles a person.”

*Our words can render us defiled before God and destructive before man.*

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### *Proverbs 21:23*

“He who guards his mouth and his tongue, guards his soul from troubles.”

*Our words can not only expose a bad heart, they can also exacerbate it.*

*“When digging yourself in a hole, the first step is to STOP DIGGING.”*

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### *Ephesians 4:29*

“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.”

**5. Managing the tongue demands sensitivity to context.**

*Give attention to timing, occasion, need, & grace.*

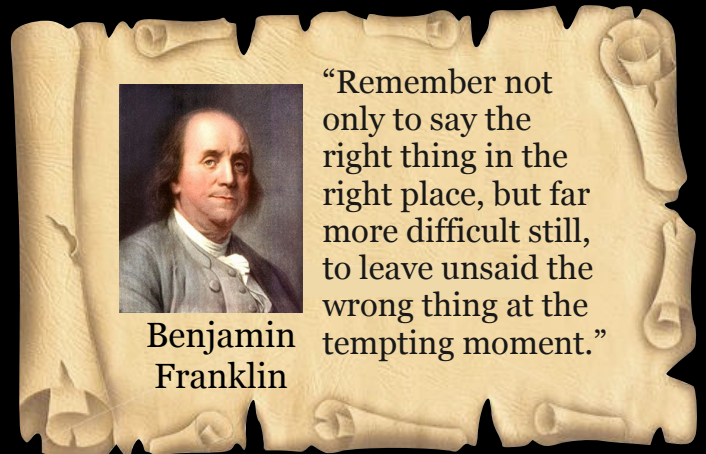
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### *Proverbs 15:23*

“A man has joy in an apt answer, And how delightful is a timely word!”

*Our words must be sensitive to the NEED OF THE MOMENT.*

22



Benjamin Franklin

“Remember not only to say the right thing in the right place, but far more difficult still, to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment.”

23

*Most people recognize different types of  
truth telling.*

### Black lies

*Genesis 3:4*  
"You surely shall  
not die."

*Matthew 26:74*  
"I do not know the  
man."

Lies to cause  
harm to others or  
to protect the liar

### Gray lies

*War*  
*Sport*  
*Grace*

Lies that are  
socially  
expected

### White lies

*Joshua 2:5*  
"I do not know  
where the men  
went."

Lies that serve  
a noble end

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## Proverbs 18:13

"He who gives an answer  
before he hears, it is folly  
and shame to him."

**6. Sensitive listening is vital  
to sound speaking.**

*If we listen so as to understand  
before we respond we will not look  
like a fool nor will we be ashamed.*

25

Before you pray, **forgive**.  
Before you spend, **earn**.  
Before you start, **plan**.  
Before you run, **walk**.  
Before you quit, **try**.

Before you  
critique, **reflect**.

Before you  
speak, **listen**.



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## Be swift to listen



## and slow to speak

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