

Outline_A Restless Evil_Part Two

Wednesday, July 10, 2013
1:30 PM

Key Words: Sins of the tongue, conflict, anger, corrupting talk, careless words

Scripture: Eph. 4:22-32 (Key-Eph. 4:29), James 3:2-12, various

Sermon Audio Blurb: James says we all stumble in many ways and one way we stumble that is common to man is by sinning with our tongues. The application of the gospel to our tongues provides the solution to the besetting sins of the tongue. Eph. 4:22-24, 29 helps understand how we can put off the bad habits of the tongue and put on grace filled speech.

Introduction

- “Do two walk together, unless they have agreed to meet? (Amos 3:3 ESV)

I. Review of James 3:2-12

- Circuit jammers are all the varieties of sinful speech
- A. If we are able to control our mouths we are maturing Christians.
- B. If we are not able to control our mouths we are responsible for a great deal of destruction.
- C. If we are honest we realize that we worship God and curse others with the same mouth.
- D. James says with an attitude of grief that "these things ought not be."
- E. Transition to Ephesians 4:22-32 (Emphasis on v. 29 and following)

II. Put off, Put on (Eph. 4:22-24)

- A. Put off (v 22)
 1. The old self refers to you before you received Christ.
 - a. Before Christ we were like the pagans referred to in Eph. 4:17-18
 - b. We were hard-hearted before God miraculously caused the new birth.

(John. 3:5-8)

- c. The result of the new birth is what we call conversion. To be converted means to repent from sin and then submit to God.
- d. The elements of regeneration:
 - 1) And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.” And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, “Save yourselves from this crooked generation.” So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. (Acts 2:38-41 ESV)
 - 2. Putting off your old self means to strip off.
 - a. Truck farm illustration
 - 3. Technically, the old self no longer exists.
 - a. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (2 Corinthians 5:17 ESV)
 - b. Corrupted nature has to do with unbelievers
 - 1) Literally means rotten and foul smelling
 - c. Made corrupt through deceitful desires
 - 1) The heart is deceitful above all things,
and desperately sick;
who can understand it? (Jeremiah 17:9 ESV)
 - 2) The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks. (Luke 6:45 ESV)
 - 4. The need for complete inner transformation that the new birth provides!

B. Renewed (vs 23)

- 1. Be renewed in the spirit of your minds
 - a. Contrast with the pagan futility of their minds (Eph. 4:17).

1) No distinction between head and heart

a) The mind is the center of thought, understanding, belief, motive and action.

b) In the New Testament, mind usually means the control center or heart.

2) Inner man being transformed, learning Christ (v 20)

2. A new capability

a. At conversion a Christian's mind\heart is renewed

b. The renewal is continuous as the person submits to God's revealed will and obeys.

c. The role of the Holy Spirit...

1) he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, (Titus 3:5-6 ESV)

d. Spiritual resources are

1) Taking in the Word of God

2) Meditating on the Word, thinking about it, seeking to apply personally

3) Prayer

C. Put on (v 24)

1. Grace is not simply leniency when we have sinned. Grace is the enabling gift of God not to sin. Grace is power, not just pardon. Therefore, the effort we make to obey God is not an effort done in our own strength, but in the strength which God supplies. John Piper

2. Heart change by the grace of God is actively seeking to change for the glory of God.

3. "Pleasing God" means to reveal Christ in us to others and introducing them to the character and Person of Christ through us

a. Maturing in Christ

b. Becoming a person of influence!

D. Specific examples of maturing in Christ

1. Put off false hood, put on truth (vs 25)
2. Put on righteous anger (anger at what God's is angry at, put off sinful, self-centered anger that gives the devil a foothold in your life. (vs26-27)
3. Put off stealing, put on honest work (and be generous, vs28)
4. Put off corrupting talk, out on gracious speech (vs29)
5. Put off all kinds of hate, including hateful speech, put on Christ-like attributes (vss31-32).

III. Putting off Corrupting speech, Put on Edifying speech(v29)

A. Don't be a Johnny or Jenny Rotten

1. Corrupting talk (ESV), unwholesome talk (NASB) means rotten talk, useless talk, unprofitable.
 - a. “For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit, for each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush. (Luke 6:43-44 ESV)
 - 1) Bad fruit=rotten fruit (and it stinks)
 - 2) Rotten speech comes from something rotten on the inside of a person
 - b. “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and gathered fish of every kind. When it was full, men drew it ashore and sat down and sorted the good into containers but threw away the bad. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Matthew 13:47-50 ESV)
 - 1) Bad fish=rotting fish
 - c. “Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad, for the tree is known by its fruit. You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil. I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, for by your words you will be justified, and by

your words you will be condemned.” (Matthew 12:33-37 ESV)

2. Rotten talk will make you sick, it nourishes no one and it contaminates anyone that comes near it.
3. Anything that injures others (explicitly or implicitly) or causes dissension is rotten or defiling.

B. Like what?

1. Name calling, trading insult for insult (1 Pe. 3:9)
 - a. ...but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so. (Ja. 3:8-10)
 - 1) Blessing God in worship and then cursing a person made in God's image is hypocritical and folly
 - 2) Instead: Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.
(Romans 12:14 ESV)
 - b. But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 5:44 ESV)
 - 1) Jesus goes beyond the law and speaks to the heart attitude.
 - 2) Personal illustration
 - c. Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. (Romans 12:17 ESV)
 - 1) We are often given over to "pay back" or "wanting a pound of flesh" or "getting even." Jesus speaks powerfully on this in Matthew 18:21-35 in the parable of the wicked servant who was forgiven much but sought revenge instead. Jesus equates a vengeful heart with hell.
 - d. But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. (Matthew 5:39 ESV)
 - 1) But I say to you is authoritative and again goes beyond the externals of the law as Jesus speaks to the heart attitude in interpersonal relationships.

- 2) Violence usually begets further violence as anyone who likes to argue knows. How we choose to respond to another's evil reflects our heart.
2. Sarcasm, ridicule, mockery
 - a. The use of sarcasm is in the Bible (Elijah, Jesus, Paul)
 - b. But like righteous anger, it must be controlled or it becomes sin.
 - 1) Never use as a couple nor with your children
 - a) Sometimes we think we are being funny when the reality is we are being hurtful
 - 2) Never mock something that cannot be changed like a physical feature or a family background issue.
 - c. Whoever belittles his neighbor lacks sense, but a man of understanding remains silent. (Proverbs 11:12 ESV)
 - 1) It's better to just shut up, than to belittle another.
3. Blame-shifting, exaggerated attacks (Gen. 3:12-13)
 - a. Do not blame others for your words and attitudes. Remember that out of the heart, the mouth speaks.
 - b. Avoid "you never", "you always" absolute kind of statements. Absolute statements generally pour gas on a fire and are laced with self-righteousness.
4. Gripping, complaining (Phil. 2:14)
 - a. Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, (Philippians 2:14-15 ESV)
 - 1) Grumbling and complaining is what marked Israel in the wilderness. Life is hard, it's even harder when all you do is grumble and complain and fail to count God's blessings!
 - 2) The Greek word for grumbling is a term that sounds like what it means (MacArthur). Another word is "murmuring" used of Israel in the desert. Murmuring and grumbling is dissatisfaction with God and his providence. How we react to the desert heat reveals the heart.

- 3) Crooked and twisted generation refers to the generation of Israelites in the wilderness (Deut. 32:5) Paul's counsel is "don't be like them" but instead shine as a bright light in a twisted world. The new nature in Christ gives us the ability to respond to the heat in new surprising ways!

5. Destructive criticism (Pro.12:18)

- a. There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing. (Proverbs 12:18 ESV)
 - 1) Have you ever been around someone whose speech felt like sword thrusts? Vicious, condemning, mocking, insulting, manipulating, words that hurt coming from a critical spirit.
 - 2) It is very difficult for a person of chronic rash words to overcome their reputation. This is because it is hard to trust them. Forgiveness is one thing but restoring trust takes time.

b. The wise has something helpful to say (Eph. 4:29)

- 1) 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. (Ephesians 4:29 ESV)
- 2) The way to restore trust is to change a rash pattern of response into an edifying, useful pattern of response.
- 3) Loose cannons, angry people need to take this to heart. An angry household is a household filled with fear and intimidation-a forest fire of destruction with serious consequences.

6. Reactive speech-Angry words, threats, venting (Eph. 4:31)

- a. Bitterness is the root of many sins in Eph. 4:31. Paul makes a list. I think it does it to close "loopholes" because we like to minimize our sin.
 - 1) Bitterness is the biblical opposite of forgiveness and is anti-Christ in the sense that it is anti-gospel application.
- b. The vexation of a fool is known at once, but the prudent ignores an insult. (Proverbs 12:16 ESV)
 - 1) The "fool" has to be right or to dominate. This is accomplished through fear and intimidation. The heart issue is power or control (idolatry).
 - 2) The wise or prudent ignores the insult while a "fellow fool"

retaliates in kind.

- c. A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. The tongue of the wise commends knowledge, but the mouths of fools pour out folly. (Proverbs 15:1-2 ESV)
 - 1) Harshness usually reaps harshness
 - a) As charcoal to hot embers and wood to fire, so is a quarrelsome man for kindling strife. (Proverbs 26:21 ESV)
 - 2) One fool or two fools is the question.
- d. Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense. (Proverbs 19:11 ESV)
 - a. James says that a person that can bridle their tongue is mature, thus having good sense. Furthermore, it's a person's glory to overlook that which can be overlooked.
 - b. Remember that being quick to anger are the characteristics of the biblical fool.
 - 1) Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city. (Proverbs 16:32 ESV)
 - 2) Psychology says it's good to vent your anger. The Bible says exactly the opposite and equates the mature person who can hold their tongue with the mighty and as a person who can rule their spirit.
- e. "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.' But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire. (Matthew 5:21-22 ESV)
 - 1) You fool means "empty-headed". It is verbal abuse that comes from sinful motives. MacArthur
 - 2) Jesus makes it abundantly clear the connection between hatred in the heart and the words that flow from a heart filled with hatred.
 - 3) Chronic abusive speech makes one liable to the hell of fire. (scary and it's meant to be)
- f. Love is what?

- 1) [Love is not} rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; (1 Corinthians 13:5 ESV)
 - a. To stay bitter and angry and reactive, keep a list of wrongs, seek your own rights above all else and insist on getting your own way
 - b. Many couples use 1 Cor. 13:4-8a as their wedding verses yet do not understand the verses as love in action. Instead their home smells as if a skunk has crawled under the fridge and died such is their words and attitudes toward one another.
- 2) Put off your rights, forgive the wrongs (Eph. 4:32) and get it through your head you don't have to get your own way.
 - a. Stop feeding your idols.
 - b. Repent of demanding control, demanding power, demanding affirmation, demanding pleasure (life free of hassle)
- 3) But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble." Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you. (James 4:6-10 ESV)

7. Arguments when winning is your objective

a. Pro. 15:1-2

- 1) Winning an argument is not the same thing as solving a problem biblically. Solving problems biblically gives glory to God, winning an argument only brings glory to oneself.
- 2) The desire "to always be right" and win the argument has more to do with pride than loving one's neighbor.

8. Deceptive speech, lying, manipulative speech

a. A lying tongue hates its victims, and a flattering mouth works ruin. (Proverbs 26:28 ESV)

- 1) There is a difference between a genuine compliment and flattery. Flattery is a type of manipulation designed to obtain something or to ingratiate oneself.

2) Some of the more interesting synonyms are bootlicking, puffery, hokum, and toadyism.

b. A manipulative tongue can sound so sweet!

1) Flattery is not truly others centered, it is me centered!

9. Gossip, slander

a. Whoever goes about slandering reveals secrets, but he who is trustworthy in spirit keeps a thing covered. (Proverbs 11:13 ESV)

1) Gossip is disparaging talk about others that may or may not be true but usually based on rumors.

2) Slanderous words are words that besmirch, defame, denigrate, smear or sully another's reputation. It's probably what James meant when he said we curse others with the same tongue we worship God with.

10. Profanity

a. Any foul, rotten language. Our culture abounds with it!

11. Filthy talk, coarse joking (Eph. 5:3-4)

a. Words that express lust

1) My son, be attentive to my wisdom;
incline your ear to my understanding,
that you may keep discretion,
and your lips may guard knowledge.
For the lips of a forbidden woman drip honey,
and her speech is smoother than oil,
but in the end she is bitter as wormwood,
sharp as a two-edged sword. (Proverbs 5:1-4 ESV)

2) Vs 2-guarded speech has the best interest of both the speaker and listener in mind. In other words helpful, graceful and at the very least not harmful.

12. Me-centered talk

a. Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; a stranger, and not your own lips. (Proverbs 27:2 ESV)

1) This does not mean you never talk about yourself. What it does mean is to avoid self-promotion, bragging, puffing yourself up or

otherwise insisting on being the center of attention.

- 2) Me centered talk reveals pride and the opposite of a humble spirit.
- b. Often related to identity issues (how a person perceives themselves)
 - 1) Their past (biker, army vet, or victim of something or someone)
 - 2) Their job (doctor, lawyer, candlestick maker)
 - 3) Their role (father, mother, wife, husband)
 - c. An over emphasis on "I" or "me" and either a positive self-centeredness in the sense of self-promotion, bragging or negative in the sense of being a victim
 - d. Fully grasping our new identity in Christ results in an "others" orientation because Christ was others oriented.
 - 1) And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. (Mark 10:42-45 ESV)

Questions for the CGs

1. How committed have you been to edifying talk? What does "your talk" look like everyday? What it looks like is your barometer of commitment.
2. Do you consider the process in a stress situation, that is consider how to answer in such a way that may give grace to the listener? This too is a barometer of your commitment to edifying talk because it is the area most likely to cause stumbling.
3. Eph. 4:30 speaks of hindering the Holy Spirit's work. What do you think that means in the context of Romans 8:28-30?
4. Do you really understand the gravity of Ephesians 4:32-5:2)as it applies to judicial forgiveness and relational forgiveness? If you do not seek out wise counsel or study the subject with these recommended books:
 - a. The Peacemaker by Ken Sande
 - b. Forgiveness by John MacArthur
 - c. Unpacking Forgiveness: Biblical Answers for Complex Questions and Deep Wounds by Chris Brauns

- d. Forgiveness: I Just Can't Forgive Myself (Resources for Changing Lives) by Robert D. Jones
- e. When You've Been Wronged: Moving From Bitterness to Forgiveness by Erwin W. Lutzer