

state of our hearts? How does it make you feel that Jesus will know by our words whether we consider him Lord and Savior?

“Love Is More Than a Fe

Day Four: Ephesians 4:29—5:2

- What should we avoid (4:29)? What should we be sure to speak about (29)? Ask God to make you aware of your speech in the moment, that you’d always speak in love so as to build others up.
- Whom should we not grieve (30)? It’s the Holy Spirit living inside each of us who makes it possible to love one another. When we fail to fulfill this command, how do you think God feels?
- What must we get rid of (31)? Which of these sins are a particular struggle for you? Repent and ask the Lord for power to pursue a better way. How should we treat one another (32)? In the last week, when has someone used their words to express kindness or compassion to you? Give thanks for such encounters.
- Whose example should we follow (5:1)? What does this entail (2)? Following God in this way, not because we are coerced but because we are his “dearly loved children,” should be the mark of each Christian. What mark does your speech reveal?

A sober warning regarding the tongue

A. If we could control our tongue, we would every other way

B. Three metaphors regarding the tongue

C. The tongue is a fire

Day Five: James 1:19-27

- What should everyone do (19)? Why (20)? If you took any one of the three commands away, could the remaining two survive? Why or why not? Which one is hardest for you to follow? Invite the Lord into this struggle. How does he want to minister to you today?
- What two actions make it possible for us to practice James’ words in verse 19 (21)? How does exposure to evil negatively impact your ability to practice loving speech? How does “the word planted in you” – Jesus, the truth of the Bible, etc. – foster loving speech?
- Summarize what it looks like to do “what the word says” (22-25). What is your ability to speak with care and love? Do you “forget

A lament regarding the tongue

A. No one can tame the tongue

B. With our tongue, we bless the Lord, and people

IV. Taking control of our tongue

A. Be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger

B. Less is more

C. Interrupt the cycle of sin

D. Take inventory of our words, and of our hearts

E. Reject bitter jealousy and selfish ambition

F. Embrace the wisdom from above

G. Receive the word implanted

Meditate on verse three. Unlike these components of speech, *you* use words. How do you use your words to “declare the glory of God” and “proclaim the work of God”? What are some ways you sense you’re missing the mark?

- What topic does David address next (7)? Assess the impact of God’s law (7-11). If the Bible refreshes the soul, makes it simple and gives joy to the heart, imagine its power in your speech. Ask God for discipline and enthusiasm to read it with regularity. May it produce the good fruit of loving speech.
- Describe David’s reliance on the Lord alone for truth (12-13). Ask God to reveal the “hidden faults” and unconfessed “willful sins” of your speech. Repent. Memorize verse 13. Keep it to mind as you continue to reflect on your words throughout the day.

Day Two: Psalm 141

- In this prayer, how does David approach God (1-2)? How do you think God feels about this petition and hope? How do you feel about him receiving you today as you enter into his presence?
- What help does David need regarding his speech (3-4)? Why does he need this because, as illustrated in verse four, temptation to commit evil with our words is fierce. Bringing a trying temptation to your mind, pray alongside David: ask God to help you with your words.
- What tolerance does David have for the righteous (5-6)? How do the wicked will learn that my words were well spoken.” What does this mean, and what challenge does it pose to you?
- Describe where and how David seeks safety (8-9). What does the wicked does he wish to avoid (10)? What light does this shed on the sort of traps we can fall into regarding our speech?

Day Three: Matthew 12:33-37