

Refrain [Keep] Your Tongue From Evil

I. Introduction:

- A. The word of God says to control our tongues (**James 1:26**).
 - 1. Self-control is a part of growth (**II Peter 1:5-6**) that eventually should be mastered (**Titus 2:2**).
 - 2. Temperance is fruit that comes from being spiritually minded (**Galatians 5:22-23**).
- B. Understanding that words are brought into judgment (**Proverbs 13:2-3** and **Matthew 12:36-37**).
 - 1. What type of person is snared by their words (**Proverbs 12:13**)?
 - 2. Think before you speak (**Proverbs 15:28**, **Proverbs 29:11**, and **Proverbs 29:20**).
 - 3. Much talking equals many opportunities to say the wrong thing (**Proverbs 10:19**).
 - 4. Death and life are in the power of the tongue (**Proverbs 18:21**).

II. Body: **Psalms 34:12-15** and **I Peter 3:8-12**

- A. The word of God broadly tells us to let no corrupt communication come out of our mouths (**Ephesians 4:29**). Consider a few specifics we know clearly...
 - 1. Don't lie, speak the truth (**Ephesians 4:25**).
 - 2. Don't use the Lord's name in vain (**Deuteronomy 5:11**).
 - 3. Don't blaspheme [slander; railing; reproach] (**Colossians 3:8**, **Titus 3:2**, and **James 3:9-10**).
 - 4. Don't bear false witness (**Romans 13:9**).
 - 5. Don't swear or take oaths (**Matthew 5:33-37** and **James 5:12**).
 - 6. Don't strive not about words to no profit (**II Timothy 2:14**).
 - 7. Don't be a constant murmurer [complainer] (**Philippians 2:14-16**).
 - 8. Don't be a talebearer (**Proverbs 11:13**).
 - 9. Jestng [witticism], foolish talking, filthiness [obscenity] (**Ephesians 5:3-4**).
- B. A clear a concise guide of what to say is the word of God (**I Peter 4:11**).
 - 1. Whatsoever... in word or deed (**Colossians 3:16-17**).
 - 2. Jesus left us a great example to follow (**I Peter 2:21-23**).
- C. Thinking about what people hear us say (**Colossians 4:5-6** and **Titus 2:7-8**).
 - 1. To return to an earlier point, speech that is edifying to the hearer (**Ephesians 4:29**; cf. **Romans 14:19**, **Romans 15:2**, etc.).
 - 2. Whether it is lawful or not, is it expedient and edifying (**I Corinthians 10:23**).

3. Think about how some might be waiting for you to say something that they could use to discredit you (**Mark 12:13**; cf. **Psalms 37:30-32** and **Psalms 39:1-2**).

D. There are things which people often think are evil words, that are not so. We have to be careful not to condemn someone wrongly (**John 7:24** and **James 4:11-12**).

1. We cannot condemn sexual talk (**Proverbs 5:18-20** and **Song of Solomon 7:1-10**).

2. We cannot condemn euphemisms (**Genesis 4:1**, **Genesis 38:9**, **Deuteronomy 23:1**, **Deuteronomy 25:11**, **I Corinthians 7:3**, and **Philippians 3:8**).

3. Some so-called “bad words” as seen in the world actually have appropriate meanings (**I Samuel 25:22**, **Isaiah 36:12**, **Jeremiah 2:23-24**, **Mark 16:16**, **Hebrews 12:8**, and **Revelation 1:18**). *Not a complete list by any means.

4. There is also a time to call people things that may easily be perceived as offensive (**Proverbs 12:1**, **Ezekiel 16:28**, **Matthew 7:1-6**, **Matthew 17:17**, **Mark 8:33**, **Matthew 23:33**, **Galatians 3:1-3**, etc.).

III. Conclusion: Remember to think before you speak (**Ecclesiastes 5:2**) and to use self-control (**I Corinthians 9:24-27**).