

Bad Language

Text: And coarse and foolish talking or crude joking are not suitable, but rather giving thanks.
- Ephesians 5:4 HCSB



There was recently a show where a bunch of potential mixed martial arts fighters all lived in the same house for a while and competed with each other for a chance at fighting in the big leagues.

The owner of the big league, not a fighter himself but a shrewd business man, came onto the show to deal with a problem. You know how they bleep out the cuss words on TV? His conversation sounded like a telegraphic message!

I thought that it was interesting that the guys who actually were tough warriors didn't feel as much a need to swear as the guy who wasn't. Can you say overcompensation? Needless to say, no one was really impressed by his toughness.

Our language says more about us than we realize. There is more communication going on than just the meanings of the words we speak. The tone of our voice, the level of vocabulary, the speed at which we speak – all these things tell even an untrained ear much about us.

What we say reveals not only the state of our minds but the condition of our hearts. Our emotional and spiritual state is revealed in our language. Since God is primarily concerned with our spiritual health, this means our words leave us subject to judgment and one day, we will give an account for every careless word we speak.

- **Luke 6:45 HCSB** A good man produces good out of the good storeroom of his heart. An evil man produces evil out of the evil storeroom, for his mouth speaks from the overflow of the heart.
- **Matthew 12:34-37 HCSB** Brood of vipers! How can you speak good things when you are evil? For the mouth speaks from the overflow of the heart. (35) A good man produces good things from his storeroom of good, and an evil man produces evil things from his storeroom of evil. (36) I tell you that on the day of judgment people will have to account for every careless word they speak. (37) For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned."

Our manner of speech is influencing others one way or the other, and a wise person will guard his mouth lest he fall into ruin.

- **Proverbs 13:3 HCSB** The one who guards his mouth protects his life; the one who opens his lips invites his own ruin.
- **Colossians 3:8-9 HCSB** But now you must also put away all the following:
 - anger, (*orge*: anger, the natural disposition, temper, character)
 - wrath (*thumos*: passion, angry, heat, anger forthwith boiling up and soon subsiding again),
 - malice, (*kakia*: malignity, ill-will, desire to injure; wickedness, depravity that is not ashamed to break laws)
 - slander, (*Blasphemia*: slandering either God or man; detraction, speech injurious, to another's good name; impious and reproachful speech injurious to divine majesty; blasphemy)
 - and filthy language from your mouth. (*aischrologia*: foul speaking, low and obscene speech)
 - Do not lie to one another, (*pseudomai*)

since you have put off the old man with his practices

When our conversation is crude, coarse and rude we are in very real sense misusing God's name. I don't mean that we are using Hashem's name as a cuss word (though that too is a possibility when talking foolishly), but that when we claim His name as His children and misbehave, we are committing the sin of *ch'illul Hashem* – desecration of the Name. This word means the desecration of the name of the Lord. It is identifying oneself as a righteous person but living an unethical, immoral, unworthy life and thus, bringing shame to Hashem's name and His people. You can be sure that the Lord will not tolerate that.

Like most other bad habits, we cannot simply quit doing the negative. The bad habit must be replaced by a positive one; otherwise the old habit will resurface in the vacuum we have left. Paul says that instead of trash talk our language should be characterized by gratitude. If we allow coarse and foolish talking or crude joking to dominate our conversations, it won't be long until we sin in other ways with our tongues.

So what should we replace anger, wrath, malice, slander and filthy language with? We should replace those things with...

- [Colossians 4:6 HCSB](#) Your speech should always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you should answer each person.

Let us set aside unsuitable language and instead, be examples to others in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and purity.

- [1 Timothy 4:12 HCSB](#) No one should despise your youth; instead, you should be an example to the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.