

Speaking Strongly and With Class

Intro: Is it easier for a mute to go to heaven? Probably not, but he has one less stumbling-block than most of us. My little pinky seldom gets me in trouble, but my mouth does regularly. The potential for the whole gamut of effect of our mouths is described in James 3:8-11. It's why I believe we men must learn to speak with "strength and class".

1. Why use the terms "strong" and "class"?

- A. There are many ways that my speech may "come across". I can sound happy, sad, angry, peaceful, comforting, confident, boastful, unsure, glib, flippant, etc.
- B. By "class", I mean "excellence, especially of style and appearance". What do we mean when we say someone is a "classy dresser"? Apply that idea to how we might describe "classy speech".
- C. By "strong", I mean courage and boldness with character. How do Peter and John, as described in Acts 4 & 5, meet this characteristic? God asks us to represent him in our lives. Many people (friends, family co-workers) need our strength. "Whatever" should not be an active part of our vocabulary.

2. When describing Godly speech, our emphasis is often on the "Don'ts".

- A. It starts when we're young. Our parents are dying for us to talk, but it's not long before they are telling us to "put a lid on it".
- B. Matthew 12:33-7 is a treatise on "right talk", but notice v. 36. Idle words can easily get us in trouble. Why?
- C. The Holy Spirit says "Don't Lie" (Ephesians 4:25; Matt. 5:33-37)
- D. Ephesians 5:4 uses terminology that gives us "Don't Cuss" and "Don't Tell Dirty Jokes". Recent Tony Dungy vs. Rex Ryan controversy over appropriate language raises some good issues.
- E. Paul emphasizes to Titus (2:6-8) the importance of teaching younger men the importance of watching out for what they say. There is a lot at stake!

3. We can't please God by simply keeping our mouths shut all the time. What we say is just as important as what we avoid saying.

- A. Consistent truthfulness is a great indicator of your being a "new creature". (Col. 3:9-10)
- B. Joseph's brothers hated him so much that they could not speak "peaceably to him". Genesis 37:4
- C. To practice Jesus' teaching in Matthew 5:44-47, one has to learn to speak differently about his enemies. (See also Romans 12:14)
- D. We *are* different and must learn to think before we speak. Why? 1 Thess. 2:4.
- E. We must try to find those "words of comfort". 1 Thess. 4:18
- F. Thankful words are contrasted with the "dirty stuff" (Eph. 5:4) and "drunk stuff" (Eph. 5:18-19)
- G. We must mature in a way to be able to provide words of "edification". Eph. 4:29
- H. It doesn't mean we must say more, but we must learn to say what is needed.
See Proverbs 3:27-28.

Conclusion: Notice this quote from speechmaster.com. "When speaking privately or publicly is there any good reason for being abusive? Is there sounds logic to degrade anyone or the words we use? Is there any benefit to using improper speech? Standards are relaxing. Words never heard on TV are now common place. Movies and entertainment are filled with what used to be considered profane. It has become a part of many languages around the world. Now you are just as likely to hear the same words uttered from a woman or a child as used to be only from a man." I think we all are aware of how the standards have changed for the world. We must work to not simply fall in line with the latest language trends. We must be strong to speak what is true and we must strive to do so with class.