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Watch Your Mouth

Session 3- Your Mouth Mirrors Your Heart

This emotional response to how great God is ought to be one of the primary uses of our mouths. “I will praise the Lord at all times; His praise will always be on my lips” {Psalm 34:1}. The NASB puts it this way; “All the time. After all, how often does God give you breath? So it makes sense that our praise of Him should comprise the greatest volume of what comes out of our mouths.

God wants to be blessed by your lips. He wants to hear your gratitude and thanksgiving. You bless Him when you remember what he has done for you and express your appreciation to Him and to others.

Video Teaching Notes

As you watch the video, use the space below to take notes. Some key points and quotes are provided here as reminders.

Crystal’s story

Despite growing up in a Christian home, Crystal endured a lot: a difficult divorce, a home foreclosure, a job layoff, and the struggle of being a newly single mother. She felt as if her life in New York was crumbling. She moved to Texas with hopes to start over, and her neighbor spoke a timely, encouraging word to Crystal: “God is going to turn your mourning into joy.” She received it and began to live it out. She started investing in her church and community, she began serving, she remarried, and she is currently experiencing a new level of faith and joy.

Teaching 1: Tony Evans

First Thessalonians 5:18 {NASB} says, “In everything give thanks.” It doesn’t say, “For everything.” In the middle of whatever you’re going through, find the things for which you ought to be grateful.

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Rather than complaining, make a list of all the things in your life for which you ought to be grateful.

Grab a journal or tablet and start making a note every time you complain. See how many times you do it in one day. Try even one hour. If you add thoughts to that list, you can truly gauge your heart.

Quotables

- One of the great sins in the bible is ingratitude.
- “I complained that I had no shoes until I saw a man who had no feet.”

Mikes story

Prior to coming to Christ, Mike has a filthy mouth. He cursed like a sailor, called coworkers stupid, and filled his conversation with sexual innuendos, Inappropriate comments to women at work, and the like. When Mike came to Christ, people immediately noticed a change in his speech. He lifted people up and encouraged them rather than tearing them down, and this led to important conversations about Jesus’s power over the tongue.

Teaching 2: Tony Evans

God can change your speech when he changes your heart.

What is in your heart shows up In your speech. Just as the tongue reveals whether a patient is healthy or sick, our words reveal whether our hearts are spiritually mature or weak.

God has a wiretap on our mouths. He's picking up everything we say, and we will be held accountable for our words.

Ask God to transform your heart and thoughts, and your speech will follow.

Video Group Discussion

1. In the video, we heard how one person's words to Crystal completely changed the outlook of her life. Crystal later used her mouth to speak life into someone else's dismal situation. Did you realize that words can have such an impact on someone else? Has anyone else's words impacted you so greatly? Will you share about this with others in the group?
2. We saw in Mike's story that when his heart changed, his words changed. Not only that, but the way he received other people's words changed as well. He was no longer willing to accept being called stupid because he knew his value before God. Has anyone in your life spoken to you in a manner unworthy of who you are? How did you handle that situation? If you are still in that situation, what can you do to help it?
3. What did Tony mean when he shared the example of his dog growling at him? How can we apply that lesson to our everyday lives?

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4. Have you ever experienced someone being ungrateful to you despite all you have done for them? Did that motivate you to do more for them, or less.

How can knowing that help you in showing God gratitude?

5. Tony spoke of two types of judgment—condemning judgment and congratulatory judgment. What kinds of things can you say to bring about the latter? What should you avoid saying so you won't receive condemning judgment?

In the columns below, write phrases that exemplify the two categories of speech.

Condemning judgment

Congratulatory judgment

6. Toward the end of the video, Tony mentioned the meditations of our heart. Do you spend time intentionally meditating on positive, truth-based themes? Or do you allow into your heart whatever comes at you in life? How can you be more intentional about what you let into your heart. List two ways you can develop the habit of meditating on positive truth more frequently, and then seek to implement.

Group Bible Exploration

Read together 1 Thessalonians 5:18 {NASB}

In everything give thanks: for this is god's will for you in Christ Jesus.

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1. It's a little word- only two letters. But it means a lot. We are told to give thanks "in" everything. That does not mean you have to give thanks "for" everything. Why would you give thanks "in" everything? Because it demonstrates faith in God that He can and will work out all things together for his good to those who love Him and are called according to His purpose {Romans 8:28}.

Can you name a situation in which you initially did not want to give thanks, but you eventually found a way to give thanks? Did the impact your emotions or the way handled the situation?

2. In the video, Tony reminds us that when we are in situations that are not happy or calm, we are to look back and remember times when God has been there for us. How has God provided for you or guided you in time when you really needed him a lot? How has He brought you through things to the point where you are today?
3. When you think on these things and discuss them together, what emotions arise in your spirit?

Go ahead and thank God for all He has done for you and for each other.

Read together 1 Timothy 4:4 {NASB}

For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude.

1. Based on this verse, how important is gratitude? What role does it play in how we receive things from the lord?

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2. In what ways can you show or express gratitude when you receive something?

Aesop, the ancient storyteller, told this fable: Once upon a time, a donkey found a lion's skin. He tried it on, strutted around, and frightened many animals. Soon a fox came along, and the donkey tried to scare him too. But the fox, hearing the donkey's voice, said, "If you want to terrify me, you'll have to disguise your bray." Aesop mortal: Clothes may disguise a fool, but his words will give him away.

Read together Matthew 12:35 {NASB}

The good man brings out of his good treasure what is good; and the evil man brings out of his evil treasure what is evil.

1. How can our words give others a picture of us?
2. Have you ever observed someone whose words did not reflect his or her outer being? Without naming names, describe what this was like.
3. Knowing that our words give us away so easily, how much attention should we pay to what we say?
4. Have you ever posted something on social media that got such a negative response that you took it down? If so, why did you decide to take it down? What did you learn about future posts or things you say?

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Read Together Palms 19:14

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord my rock and my Redeemer.

1. How could this verse change what you say? If you used this verse as a filter for everything you said, wrote, texted, or posted, would it have any effect?
2. Before you speak, text, write, or post, try pausing and asking yourself and God if what you are about to share is pleasing to him. Let this verse guide you into righteous speech and protect you on the day the Lord judges what has come from your mouth.

Quotables

- It would be better to leave people wondering why you didn't talk than why you did.
- When all is said and done, there's a lot more said than done.
- Better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to open your mouth and remove all doubt.

Read Together Luke 6:45

A good man produces good out of the good storeroom of his heart. An evil man produces evil out of evil storeroom, for his mouth speaks from the overflow of the heart.

1. What is produced out of the storeroom of a good man's heart?
2. What comes out of our mouth based on this verse?

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3. The heart overflows into our speech. This truth underlines the importance of pursuing and maintaining a pure heart. What steps can you take to purify your heart at an even greater level than it is now?

4. Share a time when you tried to conceal your true thoughts or feelings about a matter but your speech betrayed you. What could you have done differently to avoid this?

In Closing

As you end the study today, take a moment to quiet yourself and get to the heart level. A better title for **Watch your mouth** might have been **Watch your heart**. Out of our heart flows our speech.

Pray together David's words from Psalm 19: "May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to You, Lord, my rock and my redeemer." Before session 4, complete the "On Your Own Between Sessions" section below. You might want to review that section at the beginning of session 4.

On Your Own Between Series A Grateful Heart

An elderly lady is standing on the beach, watching her grandson play in the shallow water, when suddenly a huge wave sweeps the boy away. The grandmother holds her hands to the sky and screams, "Lord, how could you? Have I not been wonderful mother and grandmother? Have I not given to You throughout my years? Have I not tried my very best to live a life You would be proud of?" A moment later another huge wave brings the boy back, safe and sound. The grandmother responds, "Thank you, God.... But where's his hat?" Sometimes no matter what God does, some people are just not satisfied. It's easy to recognize ungratefulness in other people but more difficult to spot it in ourselves. Take a moment to think of some things you haven't thanked God for because they aren't quite as you wanted or

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expected them to be. List them in the space here and then be sure to thank God for all He has done.

A New Perspective

When asked to list what he was thankful for, one little boy wrote, “My glasses!” “That’s good,” said the teacher, “they help you see better.” “Actually,” responded the child, “I’m thankful for my glasses because they keep the older boys from hitting me and the girls from kissing me.” This little guy clearly understood the meaning of gratitude. Gratitude is seeing beyond what we see. It is seeing the intention behind what God does or does not do. Have you ever prayed for something, only to discover later on that you are grateful God did not give you what you wanted? These times help to build and strengthen our faith and trust in His sovereignty.

1. Read Isaiah 45:9-10 and write a response that incorporates the purpose of gratitude.
2. How does understanding God’s sovereignty help you to trust more and increase your gratitude?
3. List some things in your life for which you do not regularly show gratitude. Ask the Lord to open your eyes to see more clearly (like the boy with his glasses) what you have to be grateful for.

Receiving Good Things from God

Take some quiet time this week to let your trust rest deeply in these truths: you are a child of the King. He desires to give you good things. A complaining and ungrateful heart negates a

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significant amount of the good He does for us. During your meditation time, write down any thoughts that God brings to your mind of things for which you can be grateful. Ask Him to continue to open your heart to see the spiritual perspective behind all He is doing and has done for you. Let God speak truth deep into your heart.

Notes of Gratitude

Sticky notes can be messy sometimes. But this week lets turn sticky notes into a gift. Buy a packet of sticky notes. Challenge yourself to write 30 different gratitude statements on them to surprise people with. You can leave them at the kitchen table, on a coworkers desk, on the mailbox—any number of places. Be sure to use all 30 as you put the gif of gratitude to work for you.

An Exercise of Gratitude

This week, be intentional about being grateful. Whether it is to the other store clerk, a family member, a coworker.... Whoever it is, express gratitude with your words on an ongoing basis. Try to take notes of how that may impact your overall attitude this week.

Each time you feel like complaining this week, write down the occasion and the words “ I feel like complaining.” But don’t write the complaint. At the end of the week, count up how many complaints you were able to stop yourself from making and thank God for giving you self-control to do so.