

What Is Your Tongue Hooked Up To?

Scripture: Proverbs 4:23; John 7:37-38; Psalm 19:14

Everything in the Christian life begins with the heart. Solomon tells us to guard it diligently because it is the source from which life flows. The Hebrew word translated “issues” carries the idea of the outgoings or springs of life. Whatever is planted in the heart will eventually find expression in our attitudes, decisions, actions, and words. Before Jesus ever addressed the tongue, Scripture first addresses the heart. If the source is healthy, what flows from it will be healthy. If the source becomes polluted, everything flowing from it will eventually be affected.

Jesus builds upon this truth by declaring that those who believe in Him will have rivers of living water flowing from within through the Holy Spirit. God desires not only that our hearts be guarded, but continually filled with His presence so that life flows out of us. David also prayed, “Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD,” showing the close connection between our hearts and our words.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think God places such an emphasis on guarding the heart?

2. Jesus said rivers of living water would flow from those who believe. What does that look like in a believer’s daily life?

3. What are some things that strengthen your heart, and what are some things that pollute it?

Scripture: Matthew 12:33-37; Luke 6:45

Jesus compares our lives to a tree that is known by its fruit. He then reveals that our words are the fruit of our hearts, saying, “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.” Luke records the same teaching by emphasizing that a good person brings forth good from the good treasure of his heart, while an evil person brings forth evil from the evil treasure of his heart. Rather than simply correcting our speech, Jesus points us to the source. Our words reveal what has been stored within.

What Is Your Tongue Hooked Up To?

Discussion Questions:

1. If your words reveal the condition of your heart, what have your conversations been revealing lately?

2. Jesus said we will give an account for every idle word. How should that shape the way we speak?

Scripture: James 3:1-12; Hebrews 12:14-15; Ephesians 4:29; Colossians 4:6

James compares the tongue to a horse's bit and a ship's rudder. Though small, it directs the course of a person's life. He also teaches that a spring cannot produce both fresh and bitter water from the same source. Hebrews warns believers to guard against any root of bitterness springing up and defiling many. The answer is not merely trying harder to control our speech, but allowing Christ to continually transform our hearts.

Paul gives us the positive picture of what a heart filled with Christ produces. He tells believers to let no corrupt word proceed from their mouths, but only words that build others up and minister grace to those who hear. He also says, "Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt." A heart continually filled with God's Spirit and His Word will produce speech that brings life, encouragement, wisdom, and grace to others.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think James compares the tongue to a rudder that directs an entire ship?

2. Hebrews warns about a root of bitterness. How can hidden roots eventually affect our speech and influence those around us?

3. Paul tells us to speak words that build others up and minister grace. What are some practical ways we can do that each day?