

Illusions of Our Speech

What is an illusion?

- Definition: something that is likely to be **wrongly** perceived or interpreted by the senses

One of the first things I think of when I hear the word illusion is the movie “The Illusionist” – about a magician.

- A magician builds his career around creating illusions.
- Creating believable illusions requires skill, planning and practice.
- An illusionist would not be very good if his illusions were easily seen through, would he?
 - For us to believe that the illusions of our culture are completely transparent is foolish.

The only way to properly expose an illusion is to closely observe it and find the truth of what is really happening.

- Truth and truth alone can bring to light the true nature of an illusion!

If our desire is to see the illusions of our culture, then we must rely on the truth to expose them. (Eph. 5:11-14a)

- Vs 11 – it is *our* responsibility to expose the darkness. Therefore, we must know the truth in order to properly expose it!

The Seriousness of Our Tongues:

James 1:26; Prov. 8:13; Matt. 12:36; Prov 21:23

- James 1:26 – Imagine everything you have done counted worthless because you fail to bridle your tongue. This is serious!
- Prov. 8:13 – God hates perverted speech!
- Matt. 12:36-37 – How many times have you spoken carelessly? These things we will give account of on the day of judgment.

It is vital that we recognize the seriousness of our speech. God takes it seriously, so should we!

“Freedom of Speech”:

- Our culture has led us to believe that “freedom of speech” means we can practice it without concern for others or the consequences of it.

Prov. 21:23 – “Whoever keeps his mouth and his tongue keeps himself out of trouble.”

- We see a lot of people today saying a lot of things that they know very little about under the name of “Freedom of Speech” and getting themselves into a lot of trouble....

May 5th, 2015 – In Garland, TX there was an art contest to see who could draw the craziest pictures of the Islamic “prophet” Mohammed. (It is a sin in their religion to draw pictures of Mohammed.) These people did this in the name of “Freedom of Speech.”

- Bill O'Reilly, host of the O'Reilly Factor said this about their actions: “Did they have a right? Of course. But it was stupid.”
- Similarly, Fox News Analyst Laura Ingram stated, “There are a lot of things we can say and have a right to say but we shouldn't say.”

Prov. 10:19 – “In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, but he who restrains his lips is wise.”

Prov. 29:20 – “Do you see a man hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.”

Freedom of speech is not an excuse to say whatever we want whenever we want.

- “People demand freedom of speech as a compensation for the freedom of thought which they seldom use.” Soren Kierkegaard

When we put our right of “Freedom of Speech” above our *responsibility of control*, we are in serious trouble. (Prov 18:13; James 1:19-21)

- It is vital that we learn to open our ears and close our mouths!

Creation Power:

There is something peculiar about words. Words have the power to create. They can create feelings, emotions, false beliefs, etc.

It is no wonder that God has endowed us with this creation power since He Himself created the world with His words.

- It is interesting that God didn't decide to leave us a movie or pictures or an instagram account of how He brought about salvation for man. He didn't use images to document His power displayed in times past, but He used words!
- It is these words that have hopefully brought you here today. If words didn't have power, none of us would be here today.

The Problem:

How do we use this power? Many times, we abuse it. (Prov. 18:21 – “Death and life are in the power of the tongue...”; James 3:8 – “...It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.”)

Did you realize that you have such power? The power to create? The power to poison? The power to kill?

- For us to say that we don't struggle with this is a lie (James 3:2 – “For we all stumble in many ways, And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also the bridle his whole body.”).

What are some of the poisonous tendencies of our tongues? – course jesting, lying, gossip, flattery (Prov 26:28 – “a lying tongue hates its victims, and a flattering mouth works ruin.”), blasphemy, disrespect, hatefulness, etc.

- All of these poisons have been portrayed by the illusions of our culture to be acceptable.

How do we become people with poisonous speech? Matt 15:11, 17-20 – what fills our hearts is what defiles our speech!

- If we allow ourselves to believe the illusions of our day concerning our speech, then our speech will reflect that.

The Solution:

How do we become people with pure speech? Ps 19:14; Ps 49:3

- If we meditate on the truth, we will be able to unmask the poisonous illusions concerning our speech!
- If our hearts are pure, our speech will be pure as well.

What does a pure heart produce in its fruit of speech?

Edification – Eph. 4:29 – If our hearts are focused on others when we speak, we will be more careful to build up rather than tear down with our words.

Purity – Col 3:8-9, 12-17; Eph. 4:29; James 3:9-10; Prov 15:4; Prov 16:24

- Col 3:8-9, 12-17 -- In order to remove the earthly, we must focus on implanting the spiritual. Let the WORD OF CHRIST (vs. 15) change YOUR WORDS.
- James 3:9-12 – A pure heart purifies the waters of our speech.
- Prov. 15:4 – a pure heart produces fruit of life!
- Prov. 16:24 – A pure heart produces sweetness and health to those who hear its words.

Eph. 5:4 – This is a common illusion of our day.

- Movies, tv, songs, comedians, etc. fill our minds with crude jokes and immoral humor.
- People foolishly speak about things they don't understand.
- **It is NOT okay to do these things brethren!**
- Paul is appealing to these Ephesians to *think* before they speak.

Thanksgiving:

Eph 5:4; Col 3:17 – One of Christ's set solutions to changing our speech is this – recognize that you have something to be thankful for, so use your tongues for

thanksgiving!

- Note: How will we be thankful if we don't acknowledge what He has done for us?

A heart that has come face to face with Christ is so busy with speaking of and thanking Him that the thought of evil speech doesn't cross his mind!

Appealing to God:

Ps 141:3-5; Ps 19:14

- Ps 141:3-5 – prays for 3 things: help to think before he speaks (vs 3), help to keep his heart pure (vs 4), and help to accept rebuke when it is needed! (vs 5)
- Ps 19:14 – may the words of our mouth reflect the meditation of our hearts in all its purity.

May we find strength in God to use our words to empower others with life!