



Put A Filter On That Mouth

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P_{review}

Most of us have heard people use the expression this way: “She doesn’t have a filter on her mouth.” Meaning, there is nothing there keeping all of the impurities from spewing out of that person and polluting the atmosphere of all who hear her “run out at the mouth.”

P_{raise}

Let’s put a filter of praise on our mouth right now and speak some life into the room by sharing something positive that God has done for you this week.

P_{arable}

What is a filter? Laws require filters on certain machines like cars and factories. Some of us prefer filtered water. Our dad might have to go to the store and pick up a filter for the air-conditioning unit. Filters are in our lives, whether we are aware of them or not, and they save us a lot of trouble. A filter can prevent physical illness and even keep us from death.

What kinds of filters can you think of? Medical masks filter the doctors’ and nurses’ breath to protect a surgery patient from airborne bacteria and diseases. Painters wear masks to protect them from breathing in all of the brain-killing chemicals in paint. Gas masks protect soldiers from poisonous gas. Internet filters keep unwanted websites from popping up unexpectedly.

What do all filters have in common? They are there for our protection and purification from harmful in-coming and out-going sources.

P_{resent}

In **Proverbs 18:21**, the Bible says the power of life and death is in our tongue. We can speak life to others, or we can speak death. We can speak life to ourselves, or we can speak death. Words are powerful. Words can build up or words can tear down. Words can be a source of love or a source of abuse. We can build each other up to be strong and confident, or we can harm each other by being vindictive and manipulative.



Matthew 12:36 says that on judgment day we will give account for every word, even the “idle words” that we speak.

Proverbs 26:18-19 says that when we deceive someone and then say, “I was just joking!” it is as if we are throwing fiery arrows of death at that person.

In **James 3:11**, we are asked if both bitter water and sweet water can come from the same source. Imagine going to the water fountain and the person in front of you drinks the water and says it is the best tasting water they’ve ever had. Then when you go to drink the water, it all of a sudden becomes brown and mucky. It doesn’t happen that way. Either the water is pure or the water is dirty.

Going back to **James 3:10**, just like bitter and sweet water can’t come from the same source, neither should a person have both blessing and cursing coming out of his or her mouth.

Practice

What can we do to put a filter or guard on the words we say? First of all, we can go to the source of our words—our hearts. **Luke 6:45** says it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaks. What is the source, your heart, full of? Does your heart need to be cleansed from bitterness, hate, pride, jealousy? You can tell by the words that you use. Are your words hurtful, angry, biting, or shameful? What is in your heart?

Psalms 141:3 is a prayer that David prayed: “Set a guard over my mouth. Keep the door of my lips.”

Pray

God, please open our minds to listen to the words that come out of our mouth, and help us to think about how those words are impacting our world and the world of those around us. Be a guard or filter over our mouths so that we can bring forth pure words, full of life and peace. Purify our hearts so that the words we say and the thoughts we think are acceptable in Your sight (**Psalm 19:14**).

Plus

As Christians, we need to be willing to do whatever it takes to examine our words, our hearts, and our lives. Out of love for Christ and others, and out of concern for your own soul, step out



in faith and ask someone you trust to tell you what they feel when they hear you speak. Do your words build up or tear down? Do you have life inside of you, or death? Tie a rubber band around your arm to help you remember that the words you say matter. Remember that children's rhyme: "I'm rubber, you're glue; whatever you say bounces off of me and sticks on you!" Remember that not only will others' words come back to them, but your own words will come back to you too—on judgment day.