



**DON'T FORGET  
YOUR FILTER**



## PREVIEW

You might have heard people use expressions like “He’s running his mouth” or “She needs a filter on her mouth.” The Online Free Dictionary says people who run their mouths “talk profusely, especially in an insolent or antagonistic manner.” There’s nothing there to stop impurities from spewing out of their mouths and polluting the atmosphere of all who hear them. Today we’re going to see what God’s Word says about ensuring our mouth filter is in place every day.

## PRAISE


Let’s speak some life into the room by sharing something positive that has happened to you this week. (Allow students to share good things that have happened in their lives this week or since the last club meeting.)

## PARABLE

Whether or not we are aware of it, filters play an important role in our lives. Laws require filters on certain factory machines and in car engines to improve air quality. Air conditioners, furnaces, refrigerators, dishwashers, washing machines, dryers, and vacuum cleaners need filters to run properly and extend the life of the appliances. Some homeowners install water filters to improve the quality of their drinking water; others run air purifiers to filter out dust, odors, and harmful organisms that can cause allergies or even physical illness.

What other kinds of filters can you think of? People in the medical professions wear medical masks to protect their patients from airborne bacteria. Painters and drywall specialists wear masks to protect them from breathing in paint chemicals and drywall dust. 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 incoming and outgoing sources.



# PRESENT

Read Proverbs 18:21.

Spoken words deliver a powerful impact. We can speak life to others, or we can speak death. We can speak life to ourselves, or we can speak death. 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. You've probably heard schoolkids say, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me." This isn't true. Words can cut deeper than the sharpest scalpel.

Read Matthew 12:36.

On Judgment Day we will be required to give account for every word, even the "idle words," we have spoken.

Proverbs 26:18–19 says that when we deceive someone and then say, "Hey, I was just joking," it can have the same effect as shooting flaming arrows at that person. As the saying goes, "There is truth in every jest."

Read James 3:11.

James asked, "Does a spring of water bubble out both fresh water and bitter water?" (NLT). Imagine standing in line at the water fountain and the person in front of you takes a drink and says, "Wow, that's the best water I've ever tasted!" Then when you turn on the spigot, the water comes out all brown and mucky. In reality, that's impossible. Either the water is pure or the water is dirty. James asked this rhetorical question to illustrate his point: Blessing and cursing shouldn't be coming out of the same mouth (James 3:10).

# PRACTICE

How do you put a filter or guard on the words you say? First, go to the source of those words—your heart. Luke 6:45 says the words you speak issue out of your heart, whether good or evil. What is your heart full of? You can tell what's in your heart by the words you use. Are your words hurtful, jealous, prideful, angry, bitter, or shameful? Or are they encouraging, happy, peaceful, sincere, kind, and pure? It would be wise to pray the same prayer David prayed: "Set a guard over my mouth, LORD; keep watch over the door of my lips" (Psalm 141:3, NIV).

## PRAY

God, help us to really listen to the words that come out of our mouth, and help us to think about how those words are impacting the people around us. Be a guard, a filter, over our mouths so 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. In Jesus' name, amen.

## PLUS

As Christians, we need to be willing to do whatever it takes to examine our words, our hearts, and our lives. So, beginning today, because you love Christ and others and because you're concerned 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 the words people speak come back to them, but the words you speak will come back to you too—on Judgment Day.