

## **“Watch Your Mouth”**

For the last two weeks, the **NEWSLETTER** articles have had as their source the letter of James. James offers a great deal of practical information concerning how we are to live as children of God. Today’s article will be no different. In a world where people, without thought, say anything they want to say, it is the practical letter of James that tells us how to control our tongues.

In **James 1:26**, James says this:

**“If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless.”**

In order to be considered a religious person (that is, a person who believes in and worships God) James says we must control the things we say. Otherwise, we show others that the God we claim to worship has not changed our lives at all. He picks up the same thought in **James 3:1-12**. There James says the tongue is like a bit in the horse’s mouth that controls a large horse. It is like a small rudder that controls a large ship. It is a small spark that has the ability to destroy a large forest because of the fire that spark began.

There is a great deal of power in the tongue. It can be used to proclaim God’s word to a lost and dying world. It can be used to sing praises to the God of all creation. It can be used to talk to the God that has the power to grant our requests. All of these are the uses of a tongue that has been “controlled.”

The uncontrolled tongue is a different matter. When your tongue hasn’t been trained to speak truth, you lie with it. Lying is one of the serious sins of the tongue that is condemned by God in the harshest terms. Jesus, in **John 8:44**, says that the people who questioned His authority and message were liars. They were, He said, the devil’s offspring:

**“You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”**

Jesus puts those who lie into a pretty sordid bunch in **Revelation 21:8** when He says:

**But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—they will be consigned to the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.”**

Lying never has been, nor will it ever be, acceptable to God. We are to only speak truth, Paul says in Colossians 3:9-10:

**“Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.”**

We, who are being transformed daily to be more and more like God, cannot lie, because God cannot lie. Paul says as much in **Titus 1:2**. The Hebrew writer says so, too, in **Hebrews 6:18** when he says “it is impossible for God to lie.” Our aim is to make it as “impossible” for us to lie as we can.

Other things about our tongue we need to control? Check out next week’s ***NEWSLETTER***.