

Watch your tongue

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Preacher: Gordon Thomson

[0 : 00] Good morning and welcome to our service this morning.

It's good to come together and worship God. And we pray that you will indeed be blessed wherever you are this morning. And we pray that you will indeed be blessed in what Gordon has to say.

This morning. We're going to sing together. And our singing this morning is taken from Psalm 19. Psalm 19 and from verse 9.

And we'll sing to the end of the psalm. And down to the end.

The words which from my mouth proceed. The thoughts sent from my heart. Accept, O Lord, for thou my strength and my Redeemer art. Unspotted is the fear of God, and does endure forever.

[1 : 46] The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

They more than gold, yea, much fine gold, to be desired are.

Than honey, honey from the comb that drop a sweeter far.

Moreover, they thy servant warn, how he his life should frame.

A great reward provided is for them that keep the same.

[2 : 53] Who can his errors understand? O cleanse thou me within.

From secret faults thy servant keep. From all presumptuous sin.

And do not suffer them to have dominion over me.

Then righteous and innocent I from much sin shall be.

The words which from my mouth proceed. The thoughts sent from my heart.

[4 : 03] Accept, O Lord, for thou my strength and my Redeemer art.

Let us now bow before God in prayer. Let us pray. Our gracious and our ever-blessed Lord, we do indeed thank you that you are our Redeemer.

And that, Heavenly Father, that we can come into your presence this morning. And that, Heavenly Father, you pour out your blessings upon us. We thank you, Heavenly Father, that your blessings upon us are indeed like the honey.

Sweeter than the honey. And, Heavenly Father, each one of us, if we come and we trust in you, and if we come with a repentant heart, we can indeed rejoice in knowing the blessing of being in your presence.

So, as we gather here this morning, as we come before you, Heavenly Father, to learn from your word once again. We pray indeed that you would still our hearts.

[5 : 12] That each one of us would know what it is to be still and know that thou art God. That, Heavenly Father, that we would indeed trust in you. That we would not, Heavenly Father, let our minds wander to the things of this world.

The things that worry us, the things that concern us. That we would not fret over them, Heavenly Father, but we would bring them before you. That we would bring them before you in prayer. And that we would lay them at your feet.

And that we would leave them with you. Knowing that you care for us. Your word encourages us each and every day to bring our prayers and our petitions before you. So, as we come this morning, Heavenly Father, may we indeed know what it is to be still.

To trust in you. And to walk close with you each and every day. So, as we pray, Heavenly Father, we pray for those that are laid low through sickness and suffering. Low through sickness at this time.

We pray for Neil Lachey, Heavenly Father, and Reg Moore at this time. And we pray that your hand would be upon him. That you would guide him. That, Heavenly Father, you would be with those that minister to his needs at this time.

[6 : 19] At this time of sickness for him. And that, Heavenly Father, that you would indeed restore him to health and to strength. We pray for his family. We pray, Heavenly Father, that their cares would indeed be taken care of by you.

That, as they trust in you, Heavenly Father, as they pour out their hearts to you at this time. That you would indeed uphold them. And that, Heavenly Father, that you would take them through this valley that they go through at this time.

And we pray for many others, Heavenly Father, that are going through illness and being treated for illness at this time. That they would know your hand being stayed upon them. Your hand upon them for good.

And that, Heavenly Father, as we pray, we pray in all situations that your will would be done. We have a desire, Heavenly Father, ourselves to see things happen.

But we know that we must come before you and bow to your presence, Heavenly Father, and bow to your will. Knowing that you have a good and a perfect plan. A plan to prosper and a plan not to harm.

[7 : 23] We put our trust in you. And, Heavenly Father, that you will take us. That you will mold us. That you will shape us into the people that you want us to be. And sometimes that takes us through dark valleys.

That you have promised that you will never leave us. That you will never forsake us. That we have to be strong and courageous in you. So we will watch over each one of us, Heavenly Father, irrespective of our circumstances, our situations at this time.

That we would indeed, each one of us, trust in you. We pray for those, Heavenly Father, that still mourn the loss of loved ones. Those that have been bereaved in these past days.

That you, Heavenly Father, would draw close to them. That they would indeed know you as a God of refuge and a God of strength. A very present aid in times of trouble. That even though their earth may have been removed at this time.

That, Heavenly Father, that you would indeed be close to them. And that they would know you as their sure anchor. Keeping them safe, Heavenly Father, in the storms of life. And that you would indeed, Heavenly Father, have your hands stayed upon them.

[8 : 28] You stilled the waters when you walked in the storms here. And we know, Heavenly Father, that if we walk close with you. What would indeed shake others will indeed keep us close to you.

If we trust, Heavenly Father, in all that you have for us. So guide us this morning. We pray for the message that Gordon Thompson will bring to us. We thank you for his willingness to share with us. And for the friendship that we have through you. So we pray for Gordon and his family. Asking that your hand would be upon them at this time. In the ministry that you have called them to, Heavenly Father, as an evangelist.

That you would indeed guide them. That you would direct them and that you would use them. We thank you for the opportunities that he has had to prepare messages for Lomas prison.

And we pray, Heavenly Father, that the words that he has spoken there would indeed reach into the hearts of those, Heavenly Father, that are unable to go out and hear your word in a place of worship.

[9 : 29] That, Heavenly Father, that each one of us recognizes that because of our sin, we are in need of a savior. Irrespective of where we are on this day. That, Heavenly Father, that we must know that Jesus came and died for our sins.

And through his death and through his resurrection, we have the opportunity to come into your presence. And that we, Heavenly Father, do not carry the burden of our guilt, of our sin anymore. Because that burden has been put on your son. The price has been paid for each one of us. And we pray, Heavenly Father, that as we listen to the message today. And, Heavenly Father, that we would focus on our need of a savior.

That each one of us, Heavenly Father, would search our own hearts. That we would apply the word that we hear, not to the person on our left or on our right, or a person that we come into contact with through our work.

But, Heavenly Father, that we would recognize that your word is indeed the double-edged sword that speaks to each one of us. So guide us as we come this morning. Be with the children as they listen to the children's talk.

[10 : 35] And may they indeed be blessed as they then go on to listen to the Sunday school message. We thank you for the means that we have at this time to be able to come together through these videos and through the video chats that we can do.

And through Zoom for the prayer meeting, Heavenly Father, we thank you that we can indeed have these opportunities. But most of all, our desire is to worship you. So guide us at this time.

Be with us and watch over us. And forgive us for our many sins and our many shortcomings. In Jesus' precious name. Amen. Well, thank you boys and girls for giving us this opportunity to come and share with you.

I'd just like to show you a wee birthday card my wife bought for a friend of ours, whose daughter is only one. She's celebrating her first birthday.

Absolutely lovely wee girl. And she's only one years of age. And this is a birthday card for her. We'll be signing it up later on and giving it to her.

[11 : 38] And hopefully they'll have a wee present in it for her. And then I'd like to tell you about someone else who's celebrating another birthday. And look at the difference. This lady is 90.

She's going to be 90. And it's my wife's auntie, her auntie Marion, who lives in Northern Ireland. And she's a lovely person. And she's, even though she's 90, she's got a sparkle in her eye and the joy of the Lord in her soul.

And there's a spring in her step. And she's just a wonderful person. And I've known her for many, many years. And she's just very balanced, very stable.

And just a lovely character. And here she is, 90 years of age. But you know what's more important in her 90th birthday? There was another day in her life when she realized that she had to give her life to the Lord Jesus Christ.

And the Bible speaks about being born again. 90 years ago, Marion came into this world. But there's another day in her life when she came into the family of God.

[12 : 50] When she gave her life to God and asked God to come into her life. And when she asked God to come into life, do you know what happened? She had two birthdays.

She's got the birthday when she's 90. Now she's 90. 90 years ago, she came into this world. She's 90 years old.

But then she had another birthday when she became a Christian. When she asked God to come into her life. Then she had another birthday because she came to God and asked God to come in. And God came into her life. And gave her a brand new relationship with Him. But why am I telling you that? Well, you stop.

And let us think. How old are you? What is your date of birth? What is your date of birth? If you're not too sure, ask your mum and dad round about you.

[13 : 49] What's your date of birth? When were you born into this world? Right? And then ask yourself, have I got a second birthday?

I'm 56 years of age. I came into this world, I was 23rd of the first, 1964.

But then when I was 18, I had another birthday. I became a Christian when I was 18. You can work that back for yourself how long ago it was.

I became a Christian. And that was the birthday when I became a born again Christian. When I became a child of God. So, you ask yourself, when were you born into this world?

And somebody round about you will help you. Then ask yourself another question. Am I a Christian? Am I a Christian?

[14 : 52] Have I got another birthday? And you can have two birthdays. And it's so important that you get two birthdays. And that second birthday comes when you just simply come and say, God, I want you to come into my life.

I want to become a Christian. I want to give my life to you. And live for you. So, it doesn't matter what age you are.

You can become a Christian by asking God to come into your life. Now, you speak to someone round about you who is a Christian. And they'll tell you what I'm talking about.

They'll explain it even clearer what I'm saying. But remember boys and girls, it's important that you've got two birthdays. You've got your birthday when you come into this world.

And then you've got your second birth is when you became a Christian. And that second birth isn't when you get baptised. It isn't when you start to go to church.

[15 : 55] It isn't because your mum and dad may be a Christian or people round about you are Christians. It's when you come and you say, God, God, here I am. I want to become a Christian.

You go and ask somebody round about you. How do I know that I've got a second birthday? And come and give your life to God. And you'll have that second birthday.

Which the Bible speaks about being born again. Amen. Amen. Well, it's my privilege to share with you in video today.

Lord, it would have been lovely to be up with you. The Harris, Janice and the farmers, myself and the farmers are supposed to come up. But because of the situation, we can't.

So anyway, maybe another time. I hope you're all doing well. I hope you're all rejoicing in the Lord and knowing the Lord's help and strength in these difficult, awkward days.

[16 : 57] We're just going to have a wee word of prayer before we look at some verses in the book of James. Father, we want to thank you and praise you for the way that you take care of us and look after us. We thank you that the will of God is good, perfect and pleasing.

We want to thank you that your word is sharper than a double-edged sword. And we know that we're, there are many miles between each one of us. But we pray, Lord, that we know the blessing and the presence and the power of God wherever we are just now.

We pray you come and speak into our hearts through the power of the Holy Spirit. You administer into our lives through your word. Because we know man cannot create an anxious thought.

But we're praying for the Holy Spirit to speak into our lives. So that we may walk closer with you. In Jesus name. Amen. We're going to be looking at James chapter 3 verses 1 to 12.

I like to read through the book of James very regularly. Because it's a practical book. Very practical spiritually.

[18 : 08] And you know, sometimes we have to be careful because we can stroke all our T's and dot all our I's and know all our theology. And be able to say this and that and answer questions.

But when you get to the book of James, it really challenges your heart because it's practical. It's not only being able to answer the questions about theology.

It's not only knowing your doctrines. It's not only knowing the different books in the Bible and what they mean. But it's living. Living for the glory of God. And I believe that James challenges us to live, to be real for God's glory.

And in James chapter 3 verses 1 to 12. It's about the tongue. And I don't know about you, but we need to be careful. We need to put a guard over our mouth.

Because sometimes our tongue can get us into trouble. And we read in James chapter 3 verses 1. It says, Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.

[19 : 27] We all stumble in many ways. If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he's a perfect man.

Able to keep his whole body in check. When we put bits into the mouth of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal.

Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds. They are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go.

Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body. But it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark.

The tongue also is like fire. The tongue also is like fire. A world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person.

[20 : 41] It sets the whole course of his life on fire. And itself sets on fire by hell. And itself sets on fire by hell.

All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles, and creatures of the sea are being tamed. And have been tamed by man.

But no man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil. Full of deadly poison. With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father.

And with it we curse men. We have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing.

My brothers, this should not be. Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? My brothers, can a fig tree bear olives?

[21 : 46] Or a grape vine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water. Amen.

So the tongue. James talks about the tongue. And it's important that we are very careful in what way we use our tongue.

As Christians, it's important that we make sure that we aim to tame our tongue. Because there's been many churches and they've been in trouble.

And it's because someone hasn't tamed their tongue. They're behaving in a way that doesn't glorify God. And they're saying things that doesn't glorify God.

And they've got up to no good. And they're just causing trouble because of their tongue. And in the book of James, it says the tongue makes great boasts.

[22 : 44] The tongue is like a fanger. It is a world of evil. It corrupts the whole person. It is a restless evil full of deadly poison.

And that's why it's important that we look after our tongue. There was a story told about this person who came to the minister and says to the minister, Oh, I just want you to know that I have surrendered my tongue in the altar of God.

I'm going to make sure I don't say things that I'm not supposed to say. And I behave in a way I'm supposed to behave. And the minister turned around and says, where did you get an altar big enough?

In other words, the person used their tongue to cause a lot of problems. And in James chapter 3 in verse 4, it says, when we put bits into the mouth of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal or take ships as an example.

Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go.

[24 : 00] And here is James telling us about the tongue. It's got the power to direct. We look at a horse and a big, strong, powerful horse.

But yet when you put a wee bit of metal in its mouth, the person riding the horse can turn it one way or turn it the other way or pull it to stop.

This big, strong horse, but this wee piece of metal in its mouth can control it by the person who's riding the horse. I look at the big ships, big, amazing ships.

But yet there's a wee rudder where the pilot turns it one way and this big ship will go one way or it'll go the other way. Depends what way the pilot turns the rudder.

And James is telling us clearly that our tongue is like that. It's like that wee bit or it's like the small rudder. You know, we need to make sure as the person riding the horse turns the horse by or makes it go one way or another way because of this wee bit.

[25 : 11] But we need to make sure that as God is in control of our tongue, as God is in control of what is coming out of our mouth. And as this wee bit in the mouth controls the big, powerful horse, we want our tongue to be a blessing.

We want our tongue to strengthen people by what we say because our words are powerful.

They can encourage somebody or they can pull them down. So we want our words to be words of support, words that's going to be a blessing and help people. And that's why it's important that we make sure that we are in control of what we say.

Just like that wee bit, that wee piece of metal that's in the horse's mouth. We need to make sure that the Holy Spirit is in control of what we're saying.

We look at the small, the rudder. We want our life to be true. We want our life to be someone who's kind.

[26 : 25] We want our life to be someone who is caring. And that's why it's important that we make sure that we're in control of what comes out our mouth.

Because isn't it true? It's like the toothpaste. Once you squeeze that toothpaste out, you can't get it back in. And how many times, I'll pop my hand, how many times have we said something and we know we should have kept our mouth shut?

How many times have we said something to someone and we felt rotting after it? How many times does somebody say something to us and it's hurt us and it's cut us?

Because they've just allowed our tongue to say whatever. So that's why it's important as Christians that we ask the Holy Spirit to be in control of us.

And we don't just want our tongue to say anything and be the local gossip, the local person who just causes trouble. We want to help and be a blessing to people.

[27 : 40] You think of that wee rudder. It's only a small part of a ship, but yet it's got an important job. That small rudder depends what way the pilot turns it, depends what way the ship will go.

The rudder, if the pirate turns it the wrong way, it can take them into dangerous water where there's problems. I remember Janice and I and the kids were down in Keswick and we were down there for a few days.

And there was this, I can't remember, was it Lake Windermere or something like that? And we had hired a boat and the man was saying, go round here and stay away from this bit and do this and do that.

It's like a wee, not a speed boat, just like a wee boat with a wee engine and a wee rudder. And they stared down like, aye, fine, fine, no hassle, okay. And he says, stay away from getting right close to the wee island.

He says, cause there's rocks here and it's very shallow because of the rocks. Not a problem, not a problem. Well, Janice, the two kids, Holly was only a wee bambino and Beth was probably about three or something.

[28 : 51] And we head off and I'm staring this. And next minute we end up sort of scraping along these rocks under the water.

And all I heard is, and the smoke was everywhere. The kids were crying and Janice wasn't happy. And I'm like, relax, we're fine. And I'm like, oh Lord, please get us out of here. Please help us. And we're just scraping along all these rocks. And the smoke was everywhere.

Cause it was coming from the engine. Cause I never listened to what the man said. And we ended up in troubled waters because of me. It was because of me.

And I'll tell you, we did get out. And as soon as we got out, I just wanted straight back in. Because I knew that we were in trouble. And I wanted to get back in the shore. And I wanted to tell you, I believe that as the captain steers the ship, I believe that we want God to steer us into his presence and into his glory.

[30 : 03] And we want our lives to be lives that's lived in the holiness of God. And the righteousness of God.

We don't want to behave in a way where we speak. And the way we speak, the way we behave, it affects other people.

Cause your words affect people. I could tell you things that people say to me when I was a wee boy. And I'm 56. And I remember things that adults say to me that hurt me.

And I could tell you them. And I was only a wee boy. Cause they say sticks and stones will break your bones. But names will never hurt you. That's not true.

A stick, if you get hit with a stick, you get bruised. And then the bruise goes away. But words last. And that's why we want to be people who are careful with our tongue.

[31 : 02] We want our tongue to be used for praising God and glorifying God. And verses 5 and 6, it says, Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts.

Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil amongst the parts of the body.

It corrupts a whole person, sets a whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell. You know, the tongue has got the power to destroy, to damage.

James is saying there, consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. A small spark, a small spark, a small spark can cause a lot of damage.

Forests have been burnt to the ground because of a small spark. The amount of damage that's been made and caused in many countries because of a wee spark.

[32 : 24] And the fires that's caused. The results of a fire. I remember when I lived in Muir House, my wee brother, Saturday morning, or a wee lie in.

My mum had just got the curtains cleaned from the dry cleaners and he went down there then. My mum had smoked at that time. He let a match.

Went to the curtains and the curtains went up on fire. We were all upstairs in my bed. And someone across the road in the tower saw it and phoned the fire brigade. Got us all out of the house.

And the living room was wrecked. Ruined. Because of this wee spark. This wee fire that John had lit a match. And so a fire can destroy a home.

A wee match can destroy a whole home. But think of the amount of homes spiritually that's been destroyed because of somebody saying something.

[33 : 24] Think of the amount of people whose lives have been hurt spiritually because somebody said something. Because somebody who professes to be a Christian and they've treated someone in a way that they shouldn't have been treated.

And as a Christian, you know as well as I know, when you get to your local shop, people know that you're a believer. And they should see kindness and love even when you feel frustrated when there's nobody in the till.

Even you feel frustrated when maybe you have to wait in a queue because the person in the front of you is talking too long. And you can maybe say something that you regret.

So as Christians, we don't want to use our tongue that's going to destroy our character. We don't want to use our tongue that's going to waste our testimony.

How many people in life who their lives have been marked because of fire? I've got a wee burn mark in my left hand and because, no sorry, my right hand.

[34 : 36] Because it was plastic that melted in my sister's house. And I tried to scrape it off and it was a fire. Because of that it heated it up and I tried to get it off and it landed in my, just below my thumb there.

And I've still got a mark and I was only probably 18 at the time. And it's marked me. And how many lives have been marked because Christians have said something and they've hurt somebody? Is that the type of testimony you want to have? Is that the type of person you want to be? Be careful. Put a guard over your mouth.

Because how many people have said things and they've hurt somebody? And if you want to be someone who's got a spiritual backbone, if you know you've hurt somebody by saying something, it takes somebody with guts to stand up and go and say, I'm sorry.

To phone them and say, I'm sorry. Or to email them or to text them. Or to say to them, ITI, I'm sorry. I know I shouldn't have said that.

[35 : 49] I know I shouldn't have spoke to you. That way. That takes somebody who's got guts. The coward walks away and doesn't say a thing.

So we want to be people who don't, we don't want to destroy other people. We don't want to hurt other people. We want people to see the glory of God through our lives.

And we want to use our tongue for praising God, not for damaging the work of God. In verses 9 and 10 it says, with the tongue we praise our Lord and Father and with it we curse men who have been made in gods like this.

Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be. We have got the wonderful privilege as Christians that we can delight in the Lord.

Isn't that wonderful? That we can rejoice in the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. That we can sit at the feet of Jesus and spend time in his presence. That we can sit at the feet of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

[37 : 05] That we can rejoice in him. Isn't that amazing? That this same tongue, instead of maybe bringing joy into someone's life.

How many times people are jealous of other people? We don't want to be like that. We want to be people who rejoice in the Lord. How many times have we discouraged someone instead of encouraging them?

We want to be someone who is delighted in the Lord and rejoicing in the Lord. So much so that we put a guard over our mouth. We watch our tongue. We don't want to destroy somebody's walk with God.

Because you can damage. You can damage somebody's walk with God by the things you say. We want to be people who help others to delight in the Lord. To go forward with God.

We want to be a blessing in people's lives. We want to be an encouragement in people's lives. So then, we need to put a guard over our tongue.

[38 : 10] Have you said things that you regret? I know I have. And it's so important that we apologise. And it's so important that we say we're sorry.

So the tongue, even though it's a small part, it can do a lot of good. Or it can do a lot of damage.

You know, I know there will probably be a lot of farmers maybe listening in here. And you know, I was told that a cow, see a cow.

If you stroke a cow's tongue one way, it's as smooth as anything. And then if you stroke it the other way, not that I'm into stroking a cow's tongues.

But if you stroke it one way, it's as smooth as anything. But if you stroke it the other way, it's as rough as anything. And that's us. That is like us.

[39 : 09] Sometimes we say things that praises God and glorifies the Lord and exalts the Lord. Then there's sometimes we can say things that we regret.

And today, we want to be men and women. We want to be men and women who live a life where we put a guard over our mouth.

So that we're a blessing to people. It's only a small part of our body. But we need to get in control of our speech.

We need to get in control of what way we talk to other people. And make sure it will lead them into the Lord's blessing.

And the Lord's glory. Because we can either be a blessing or a blockage in someone's life. We can be a blessing or a blockage in someone's life.

[40 : 09] I know where it happens the most. In the house. In the house. The way that maybe a man talks to his wife.

Or the way that a wife talks to her husband. Or sometimes even the way kids. Supposed to respect their parents. Sometimes the way the kids talk to their parents.

We need to show each other respect. And when you're out in amongst the people you mix and mingle with day by day. Let them see by the way that you speak.

By the way that you don't get caught up with garbage chat. By the way you don't get caught up with gossiping. Let them see by the way that you speak.

That you love Jesus. Now, as we finish. We need to be in control of our tongue. And the only way that's going to happen.

[41 : 13] Is by asking God to help us. And as we read the scriptures. And surrender to him. He will give us the help that we need.

Amen. Let's pray. Father, I do thank you and praise you for your word. That tells us clearly. That we need to get in control of our tongue. Of our speech.

And I pray for anyone who's listening to this. And the Holy Spirit maybe have woken up something in their heart. That they know they've said to someone.

Give them the Holy Ghost boldness. To go and say, I'm sorry. Help us, Heavenly Father, to walk humbly with you.

And never. Help us, Lord, to never be frightened. To apologise. We've made a mistake. And Father, help us to keep short accounts with you.

[42 : 09] In Jesus name. Amen. Amen. God bless you. May the mind of Christ my Savior, live in me from day to day.

By his love and power controlling all I do and say. May the word of God dwell richly in my heart from afar So that all may see I triumph only through his power May the peace of God my Father rule my life in everything That I may become to comfort sick and sorrowing

May the love of Jesus fill me as the waters fill the sea In exalting, self-abasing, this is victory May I run the race before me Strong and brave to face the foe Looking only unto Jesus as I onward go Let us pray

Now to him who is able to keep us And do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine According to his power that is at work within us To him be glory in the church And in Christ Jesus through all generations Forever and ever Amen