

## **The Insolent Tongue: Cussing With & Without Using Bad Words**

(appropriate for Mid Schoolers and older)

Michael R. Daily, June 2021

Other youth bible studies by Michael Daily available at: <http://gciweb.org/2011/04/youth-bible-study-materials-michael-r-daily/>

People are becoming more insolent in the way they talk to and about each other (social media as an example).

**Insolent:** *insultingly contemptuous in speech or conduct; expressing deep hatred or disapproval in disregard of others; exhibiting shameless boldness*

### **Hosea 7:16**

**They turn, *but* not upward, They are like a deceitful bow; Their princes will fall by the sword Because of the insolence of their tongue. This *will be* their derision in the land of Egypt.**

But how we as Christians talk is a big deal to God. In contrast to an insolent tongue, God wants our speech to meet a different standard.

### **Ephesians 4:29**

**Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a *word* as is good for edification according to the need of *the moment*, so that it will give grace to those who hear.**

In **Titus 2** God gives instructions to young men to make sure their speech is “sound and beyond reproach”.

### **Titus 2:6-8**

**Likewise urge the young men to be sensible; <sup>7</sup> in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, *with* purity in doctrine, dignified, <sup>8</sup> sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.**

“Sound speech” is talk that is: *free from flaw, defect, decay, and error, is logically valid, based on truth, and shows good judgment.* Speech that is “beyond reproach” is a style of talking that: *provides nothing that others can disapprove of or use as a reason to discredit what you said.*

In **Eph 5** God also says “there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting”.

### **Ephesians 5:3-4**

**But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints; <sup>4</sup>and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.**

Filthy talk is talk that is: *morally unclean, impure, or contaminated* with something bad.

Silly talk is talk that: *exhibits a lack of common sense or good judgment.*

Coarse jesting is joking around and teasing that is: *crude or unrefined in taste, manners, or language, and done with a tone that is disagreeable, uncomfortable, or painful to others.*

Instead our speech is to be gracious.

### **Proverbs 22:11**

**He who loves purity of heart And whose speech is gracious, the king is his friend.**

### **Colossians 4:6**

**Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.**

Gracious speech is talk that is: *marked by kindness, courtesy, tact, charm, good taste, and generosity of spirit.*

In addition God tells us to avoid abusive speech (**Colossians 3**) and to malign no one (**Titus 3**).

**Colossians 3:8,17**

**But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth.**

**17 Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.**

**Titus 3:1-2**

**Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, <sup>2</sup> to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men.**

Abusive speech is talk that is: *harsh and insulting*. To malign someone means to say things that are: *evil in nature, influence, or effect and that have or show an intense and vicious ill will*. Instead our speech is to be characterized by gentleness.

**Proverbs 15:1**

**A gentle answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger.**

**Philippians 4:5**

**Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near.**

Gentle speech is talk that is: *free from harshness, sternness, or violence*. God also tells us to take into consideration the circumstances of the situation and the feelings of the other person when deciding how to say something.

**Proverbs 25:11**

**Like apples of gold in settings of silver Is a word spoken in right circumstances.**

**Proverbs 16:21**

**The wise in heart will be called understanding, And sweetness of speech increases persuasiveness.**

**Let's Review**

God says when we talk, our speech is to be wholesome, show good judgment, be truthful, be free of error or exaggeration, be logical, be morally clean, be consistent with good manners and good taste as defined by the culture we live in, be done with a tone that is agreeable, comfortable, and pleasant to others, using a style that is kind, courteous, tactful, gentle, considers the rights and feelings of others, and delivers the message in a way that enhances its credibility. Can you do all of this in your speech and also cuss? No. All forms of cussing, cursing, swearing, profanity, blasphemy, taking the Lord's name in vain, vulgarity, and obscene language violate one or more of these commands.

But wait! There's more. Its not just the words we use. Its also what we say that can defile us.

**Defile:** *to make unclean with something contaminating.*

**James 3:6-10**

**And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell. 7 For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by the human race. 8 But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison. 9 With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; 10 from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way.**

### Matthew 15:10-11

After Jesus called the crowd to Him, He said to them, “Hear and understand. <sup>11</sup> *It is not what enters into the mouth that defiles the man, but what proceeds out of the mouth, this defiles the man.*”

### (Mark 7:17-23)

When he had left the crowd *and* entered the house, His disciples questioned Him about the parable. <sup>18</sup> And He said to them, “Are you so lacking in understanding also? Do you not understand that whatever goes into the man from outside cannot defile him, <sup>19</sup> because it does not go into his heart, but into his stomach, and is eliminated?” (*Thus He declared all foods clean.*) <sup>20</sup> And He was saying, “That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man. <sup>21</sup> For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, <sup>22</sup> deeds of coveting *and* wickedness, *as well as* deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride *and* foolishness. <sup>23</sup> All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man.”

### Cussing & Cursing

Cussing goes beyond using bad words. Cussing is also a slang word for cursing. Cursing means: *to call for harm or injury to come upon someone*. So, if I call for something bad to happen to someone but I don't use any “bad words”, guess what? I'm still cussing!

Here are some examples of cussing without using bad words: “I hope he chokes on his pizza!” or “I hope you lose your game tonight!”

The Bible says that we are not to curse our enemies (**Job 31:29-30**)

### Job 31:29-30

“Have I rejoiced at the extinction of my enemy, Or exulted when evil befell him? <sup>30</sup> “No, I have not allowed my mouth to sin By asking for his life in a curse.”

We are not to curse those who persecute us (**Romans 12:14**)

### Romans 12:9-18

Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. **10** Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; **11** not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; **12** rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, **13** contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality. **14** Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. **15** Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. **16** Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation. **17** Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. **18** If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.

We are not to curse rich people or people in authority (**Ecclesiastes 10:20**)

### Ecclesiastes 10:20

Furthermore, in your bedchamber do not curse a king, and in your sleeping rooms do not curse a rich man, for a bird of the heavens will carry the sound and the winged creature will make the matter known.

We are not to curse political leaders or God (**Exodus 22:28**)

### Exodus 22:28

You shall not curse God, nor curse a ruler of your people.

And we are not to curse anybody else (**Matthew 5:21-22**)!

### Matthew 5:21-22

“You have heard that the ancients were told, ‘YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER’ and ‘Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.’<sup>22</sup> But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, ‘You good-for-nothing,’ shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, ‘You fool,’ shall be guilty *enough to go* into the fiery hell.

There is also a special type of curse called an oath. An oath is a self-curse where a person asks God to inflict punishment on them if they fail to keep the promises they made under the oath. We’ll talk more about oaths in the next section.

### Swearing

Swearing is the use of obscene language or language that is: *repulsive due to it disregard of moral or ethical principles*. In addition, swearing also means: *to insist a statement is true by appealing to something else to lend value or credibility to the statement or to make a promise under oath*.

As in the case of cursing, it is also possible to swear without using any bad words. Some examples are: “With God as my witness I’ll never swear again!” or “I solemnly affirm on a stack of Bibles it’s the truth” or “Cross my heart and hope to die!” or “I tell you on my mother’s grave I didn’t do it!”

The problem with swearing is it lessens the truth, validity, or weight of all unsworn statements. This is why God tells us to not swear, make vows, or take oaths about things that we are serious about.

### James 5:12

**But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but your yes is to be yes, and your no, no, so that you may not fall under judgment.**

### (Matthew 5:33-37)

“Again, you have heard that the ancients were told, ‘YOU SHALL NOT MAKE FALSE VOWS, BUT SHALL FULFILL YOUR VOWS TO THE LORD.’<sup>34</sup> But I say to you, make no oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God,<sup>35</sup> or by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, or by Jerusalem, for it is THE CITY OF THE GREAT KING.<sup>36</sup> Nor shall you make an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black.<sup>37</sup> **But let your statement be, ‘Yes, yes’ or ‘No, no’; anything beyond these is of evil.**

But we are also told not to swear falsely about things we don’t even mean.

### Leviticus 19:12

**You shall not swear falsely by My name, so as to profane the name of your God; I am the LORD.**

### Matthew 26:69-75

Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard, and a servant-girl came to him and said, “You too were with Jesus the Galilean.”<sup>70</sup> But he denied *it* before them all, saying, “I do not know what you are talking about.”<sup>71</sup> When he had gone out to the gateway, another *servant-girl* saw him and said to those who were there, “This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.”<sup>72</sup> **And again he denied it with an oath**, “I do not know the man.”<sup>73</sup> A little later the bystanders came up and said to Peter, “Surely you too are *one* of them; for even the way you talk gives you away.”<sup>74</sup> **Then he began to curse and swear**, “I do not know the man!” And immediately a rooster crowed.<sup>75</sup> And Peter remembered the word which Jesus had said, “Before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.” And he went out and wept bitterly.

In fact the only person who has a legitimate right to make vows and oaths is God Himself.

Why? Because anything He says will come true 100% of the time, unlike us.

**Vow:** *a solemn promise by which a person is bound to an act, service, or condition.*

### **(Hebrews 6:13-18)**

For when God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, <sup>14</sup> saying, “I WILL SURELY BLESS YOU AND I WILL SURELY MULTIPLY YOU.” <sup>15</sup> And so, having patiently waited, he obtained the promise. <sup>16</sup> For men swear by one greater *than themselves*, and with them an oath *given* as confirmation is an end of every dispute. <sup>17</sup> In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath, <sup>18</sup> so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us.

### **Profanity**

Profanity is profane language. To profane something means: *to treat something sacred with abuse, irreverence, or contempt and to lower its status by an incorrect, unworthy, or crude and offensive use*. So, when someone speaks profanity they are using crude and offensive language to intentionally lower the status of something sacred or of high value. The things of God are sacred and human beings have high value. Profanity is often targeted at both. Once again profanity without “bad words” is also possible. Some examples include: “My teacher is stupid” or using the name of Jesus or God in an exclamation when there is no real intent to call on Him.

### **Blasphemy**

Blasphemy is: *the act of insulting or showing contempt or lack of reverence for God*. When someone speaks blasphemy they are intentionally insulting God. Once again blasphemy can be spoken even without using any “bad words”. An example would be saying something like, “God has failed to ensure the infallibility and inerrancy of the Bible, it has mistakes in it”. That is a direct insult to God’s ability to watch over His Word and ensure its trustworthiness.

### **Taking God’s Name In Vain**

Taking God’s name in vain means to attach His name to something that is: *futile, ineffective, unsuccessful, and without value*.

### **Exodus 20:7**

**You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.**

### **(Deuteronomy 5:11)**

**You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.**

Matthew Henry (1662 to 1714), English Bible commentator & Presbyterian minister, described five categories of actions that constitute taking God’s name in vain:

- 1) Making a profession of God’s name, but not living up to that profession
- 2) Vow/oath breaking – if one makes promises to God yet does not carry out the promised actions
- 3) Rash Swearing
- 4) False Swearing
- 5) Using the name of God lightly and carelessly, for charms or spells, jokes or entertainment.

Numbers 2, 3, and 4 are forms of swearing using God’s name. Number 5 is a combination of profanity and blasphemy using God’s name. Number 1 we will discuss now.

When we become Christians we take His name. Just as a wife takes the name of her husband we take the name of Christ when we accept Him as our Savior and Lord.

But if we take His name without any evidence of a changed life then we have taken His name in vain.

One of the things that leads to blasphemy & profanity among non-believers is observing sinful behavior by those claiming to be believers.

### **Romans 2:21-24**

**you, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal? <sup>22</sup> You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? <sup>23</sup> You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor God? <sup>24</sup> For “THE NAME OF GOD IS BLASPHEMED AMONG THE GENTILES BECAUSE OF YOU,” just as it is written.**

### **Proverbs 30:9**

**That I not be full and deny *You* and say, “Who is the LORD?” Or that I not be in want and steal, And profane the name of my God.**

### **(Leviticus 20:1-5)**

**Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 2 “You shall also say to the sons of Israel: ‘Any man from the sons of Israel or from the aliens sojourning in Israel who gives any of his offspring to Molech, shall surely be put to death; the people of the land shall stone him with stones. 3 I will also set My face against that man and will cut him off from among his people, because he has given some of his offspring to Molech, so as to defile My sanctuary and to profane My holy name. 4 If the people of the land, however, should ever disregard that man when he gives any of his offspring to Molech, so as not to put him to death, 5 then I Myself will set My face against that man and against his family, and I will cut off from among their people both him and all those who play the harlot after him, by playing the harlot after Molech.**

The bottom line is, how we talk is as important to God as how we act.

### **I Timothy 4:12**

**Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but *rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.***

### **Conclusion**

God’s standards for how to talk to and about other people and about God are very high!

Our speech is to be wholesome, edifying to others, free from flaw/defect/decay/error, logically valid, based on truth, showing good judgment, providing nothing that others can disapprove of or use as a reason to discredit us, is not silly, is morally clean/pure/uncontaminated, refined in taste/manners/tact/charm, have an agreeable tone, marked by kindness/gentleness/courtesy/generosity of spirit, and not harsh/insulting/stern/violent.

**Cursing:** We are not to call for harm or injury to come upon our enemies/persecutors/those in authority/political leaders/anyone else!

**Swearing:** We are not to use language that is repulsive due to it disregard of moral or ethical principles or to insist a statement is true by appealing to something else to lend value or credibility to the statement or to make a promise under oath.

**Profanity:** We are not to speak in a way that treats something sacred with abuse, irreverence, or contempt or to lower its status by an incorrect, unworthy, or crude and offensive use.

**Blasphemy:** We are not to speak in a way that insults or shows contempt or lack of reverence for God.

**Taking God’s Name in Vain:** We are not to attach God’s name to something that is: futile, ineffective, unsuccessful, and without value.

But rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, we are to be examples of those who believe.

**QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD**

***JEREMIAH 15:16***

**THEME: *The Insolent Tongue: Cussing With & Without Using Bad Words***

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Hosea 7:16***

**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Ephesians 4:29, Titus 2:6-8***

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**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Colossians 3:8,17***

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**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Titus 3:1-2, Proverbs 15:1, Philippians 4:5***

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**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *James 3:6-10, Matthew 15:10-11***

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**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Mark 7:17-23***

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**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Romans 12:9-18***

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**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Job 31:29-30, Ecclesiastes 10:20, Exodus 22:28***

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**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Matthew 5:21-22***

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**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Leviticus, 19:12, Matthew 26:69-75***

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**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Proverbs 30:9, Leviticus 20:1-5***

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**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *1 Timothy 4:12***

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