

Poison From the Tongue

by Erlo Stegen

Erlo Stegen's sermon emphasizes the destructive power of the tongue and the necessity of spiritual control over one's speech.

Duration: 1:22:18

Scripture: Exodus 4:10-11, Psalm 103:13, Proverbs 18:21, Proverbs 21:23, Matthew 12:36-37, Ephesians 4:29, James 3:6

Topics: "Tongue"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of being cautious about the content we consume, particularly videos. He warns against allowing negative influences into our lives and encourages parents to monitor what their children watch. The preacher urges listeners to expose sin and confront it directly, seeking guidance from God. He also shares a personal story of overcoming anger through prayer and repentance. The sermon concludes with a reminder to reflect on the power of our words and to examine ourselves in light of God's standards.

Transcript

Let us pray. Lord, once again we thank you for your having kept us till this day. And that we have the opportunity, the chance to meet around your word.

And to examine ourselves in this mirror of your word. And that the one who hears can sit at your feet so that your word would find entrance. Lord, please meet with us by your holy word.

Amen. Now, today I would like to speak on another topic. The tongue.

The tongue and the... As I examined the Bible, I was astonished what it had to say about the tongue. When you are at home, study James chapter 3. Read there about the tongue and the sins thereof. Perhaps it will shock you as you read it.

I'll read verse 6. 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.

Is set on fire by hell. We should read the whole chapter. But for the sake of time, I think it's sufficient just to read that verse.

There are members of the body which can be dangerous. If we think of sex, we presume that this is the sin which causes all the conflict and damage. And we sometimes think that the sins of a sexual nature are the worst possible sins in this world.

But the Bible says no, the more dangerous one is the tongue. Think of what promiscuity has achieved and how many it has destroyed and the many who are six foot under today as a result of it. Just in Africa, millions have died only as a result of this.

And as one looks around and observes, one thinks that this is like a spirit that has just poured upon the people. And you see things that are absolutely shocking. Children who aren't even yet in school who get involved sexually.

You find people who have no regard even for their own family. And I wouldn't like to go into more detail for the Bible says there are some things which shouldn't even be mentioned. But had you just been married couples, I would have mentioned some of the awful perversions that are going on.

Sodom and Gomorrah. I was speaking to Uncle Horgat who was telling me that he may not make it to go up to Malelana because he makes daily visits to a boy who is dying of AIDS. He is in hospital.

When he first began visiting him, the boy said, Uncle, my heart is so hard. It is just iron hard. Yet he used to come to services while still a little boy.

His mother goes to services. Those who forsake the Lord and forsake coming to services, their hearts are hardened in an awful way. The Lord Jesus himself said that when a demon leaves the heart and he finds it swept, but not occupied, he brings his pals along and then seven enter in and the man's latter state is worse than the former.

But when he asks for prayer that the Lord would soften that hard heart, he says, Uncle, my heart is so hard. As he asked the Lord for a softened heart, he said, Uncle, after having been to that meeting, Uncle, it was like the Lord showed me my sins for the first time, like a film before me. And he poured out his heart one thing after the other, confessing his sins.

And then he said, Uncle, won't you please call that certain person, though he himself is wicked, I was more wicked and I was united with him in his wickedness. Ask him please to come and see me in hospital, for I need to put right with him. And Uncle Hogarth says that he is just pouring out his heart and has asked him to please come as often as possible for chances to make right.

The AIDS crisis is awful and is tragic. However, it preaches a wonderful sermon and deals with those who refuse to listen from the pulpit when they are lying down. And their hearts are softened.

And I said that perhaps we will find many in heaven who were reached by the gospel which AIDS preached at them. When I got there these days, when Uncle Hogarth got there to this boy, this boy said, Uncle Hogarth, are there Psalms in the Bible? Psalms. Is there a book of Psalms? He said indeed.

So he asked him to read them. He asked him to read Psalm 103. And then Uncle Hogarth started at verse 1 and he said no, not verse 1, start at verse 13.

Psalm 103 verse 13. And so he read it to him. Just as a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him.

The way in which the Lord speaks to his people, like a father pitying his children, so too the Lord has compassion on those who fear him. Oh God is someone else. Our inclination is to say, well, you got what you deserved.

You got AIDS and you deserved it, etc. But God, even when seeing that a person has received the just rewards of his life, still says, I will show compassion on you if you fear me. God pities those who fear him.

It is wonderful to fear God. The Lord has compassion on those who fear him. I remember visiting, I think it was the third witch who I had visited.

It was there in the Vienna area, right in the sticks in the hills there. And she said, Pastor, I no longer fear God. I've got my life sorted out with him.

I don't fear him anymore. But I'd heard that actually she had returned back to her occult practices. There are many sins, like the sins of promiscuity.

The sins of lying, of the occult, of stealing, but there is nothing worse than the tongue, the sins of the tongue. At the end of verse 8 it says, the tongue is full of poison which kills. AIDS kills people.

But the corpses that there are as a result of the tongue are many more than as a result of AIDS. Where people are dead spiritually because of this thing, the tongue. And our text says, and the tongue is a fire, a 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. And Satan came wanting to deceive Eve. He came with the tongue, deceiving her softly with the tongue.

Be very careful of the tongue of a person. That she fell, man fell because of the tongue of the old serpent. The serpent came in a very nice way, a helpful way and noticed that he wanted to open their eyes.

Those are the most dangerous people. They come and they want to enlighten you, they want to help you, they want to teach you. And the most deadly poison is under their tongue.

Beware of the person who comes with that serpentine poison, wanting to open your eyes. But he comes with the poison of a viper. The psalm asks, who will ascend the hill of the Lord? He who has a pure heart, he whose lips have not been given to evil.

That is why this chapter starts with the point, let not many of you become teachers. Knowing that such as we will incur a stricter judgment, for we all stumble in many ways. But if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man.

But the slanderer is one who comes, coming to teach and instruct. But your reply should be, let's leave that. It says the tongue of the person is the world.

It is the cosmos, full of all manner of iniquity. How great is the evil and the iniquity found in the world. There is murder, witchcraft, prostitution, drunkenness, jealousy, many things.

Our text says that the tongue of the person is the world. The tongue contains all that iniquity, for it is the very world of iniquity. Think deeply upon that.

You should be testing and examining yourself and asking the Lord, God how is my tongue? What is it like? It says that there is a direct connection with hell, between the tongue and hell, set on fire by hell. In this past week I sat down praying and thinking. I thought back of the 50 years which I have been preaching.

I have been through many experiences. I have been through much. I could never tell you all.

What I have met up with in relation to different people, the blacks, the whites, the coloreds, the Indians and every nation. I asked, where did people fail? What has been the main cause of people falling? And I found that in probably every case it was the tongue. And I said Lord, indeed your word is true, that the tongue can be set on fire by hell itself and defiles the entire body.

Wicked is the tongue and I don't want to just pass by from this point. I want it to sink in. Some ask, When will we have special men's meetings or special women's meetings or special youth meetings? But I am now telling you, I collect all these together.

If you want and have a need for men's meetings, here, this is the message for you. Likewise for women's meetings and youth meetings and children's meetings. Consider your tongue, whether you are here or in your home, in your room or at work or at school.

For your tongue will bring upon you perversion and wickedness that isn't found elsewhere. For at a spring of water you will not find simultaneously salty, brackish water and sweet water together. You will not pluck grapes from a fig tree.

You will not pluck grapes from a fig tree. But with the same tongue we will praise God and then curse others. You won't find such a thing in the animal world, whether they are under the sea or on land or in the air.

It says, all the animals you may tame, you can tame. Whether it's a horse or a donkey or a mule or a cow or bird or the creatures of the sea, every creature you can tame. But you can never tame the tongue of a person.

Some years ago I told you the story of an Islamic lady who was troubled by her tongue even after conversion. She had become a Christian and she went and asked for prayer from others. For two or three days she would lay off her gossiping but then it would be back again.

Finally she took a needle and she went to the Mary and she preached to herself. She held her tongue, some of her shorter. She must have had a longish tongue.

She said, now listen here, you tongue. If you just dare to gossip again, I'm going to pierce you with this needle. I will make you to feel the pain.

She told me that she was genuine in what she said. She was totally sincere that she would have done it. She said she now has asked the Lord that her tongue would be circumcised and that she took those strict measures.

I once heard a man tell me a story. He said his wife used to forget so much. When she would forget yet again, he would be so furious and scold her.

One day he was travelling by plane with his wife and they got out the plane and they took a taxi to visit a certain person with whom they had agreed on a rendezvous at a certain place. The husband said, don't

worry, we didn't even meet there, we will take a taxi all the way to your home. When they got there, the taxi stopped outside and they took their luggage.

As they were getting out, his wife began trembling, fearing that she would be decapitated that day. She came to her husband trembling and said softly, I am dreadfully sorry but I have forgotten my handbag in the taxi. The husband was furious yet again and used violent language against her and scolded her.

And so they had to get back to the airport and seek that handbag for it contained very important things in it. Fortunately they got it back and so it took them hours off their way. But he had given her a real peace of his mind and had shown great anger.

But this wife had a certain disease, epilepsy. When they got to the home, she said I need to go to the bathroom to bathe and she went off to bathe. And the husband was relaxing in the bedroom, his wife wasn't returning from the bathroom, she heard a noise there.

He opened the door and asked what was happening. He heard the noise, wondering what was happening. When he got to the door and he listened, he heard a knocking on the bath.

She had had an epileptic fit in the bath and remember that if you are in the bath water you can drown. He called out her name but she didn't reply. That man said he felt like it was hell itself, he sweated.

Hanged on the door demanding that she opens. Just heard that noise and heard what sounded like her head smacking the side of the bathtub like a stone. He ran around hoping that he could perhaps save her life.

He ran around hoping that he could perhaps get through the bathroom window but he found that the windows were just slits only his hand could go through. He then ran back and tried to break down the bathroom door, some doors especially those owned by wealthy people. But difficult and very strong and he then heard the noises becoming less and less.

He thought to himself well she is probably drowned and when I find her it will just be her corpse in the bath. He told me that he prayed as he had never prayed before calling upon the Lord for mercy and also beginning to wonder whether her epileptic fit hadn't been brought on by his severe anger and scolding of her earlier on that day. Remember husband that the Bible says your wife is a weak awake vessel.

Live therefore with wisdom and gentleness with your wife. Don't overburden her. Remember that she is given to you and you are to help.

Finally he heard her respond very slightly as if though she was waking up from her unconsciousness. He thanked God and said she is breathing, she is still alive. Finally she came to the door and opened it.

He noticed on her face the severe injuries from the fit. What had happened was that she had just let the water out, she had taken the plug out and as it was running out she had had that severe fit and it injured her face on the bath and also the handle of the bath and it bruised herself very badly. He told me that he knelt down there and then and said oh my God forgive me, save me from my anger.

He told me earlier I was healed of that anger that very day. I have never been troubled by it again. God used his shambok on me.

He received a great shock. He was like a child who had been thrashed by a parent. He said that was the end of the problem.

The doctors and scientists who are not believers, they don't understand what conversion means. They would find a sentence like the person got converted or repented, they would translate it and say oh it means that they had a shock, they had a shocking experience. A shock can be good if it is from God.

But it can help you to stop completely with what you have been doing. The tongue, the most evil thing in our bodies, an unbridled tongue is a sure sign of an unsanctified soul. The tongue? The unrestrained tongue.

The tongue that is at liberty to speak what it wants to speak is a sign of the pit of filth and wickedness in the heart that is the world. And not just unsanctified, but undisciplined. And maybe even an unsaved soul.

You live in a fool's paradise, a hypocrite calling yourself saved, but your tongue bears testimony to the fact that you are the opposite. It is a sure sign as well that you are not under the government of the Holy Spirit. Take this home.

Take this home with you. That it would dawn on you that Satan, the devil has been given free reign because of your tongue. Moses, the man of God, one day uttered a hasty and foolish word.

It was just a very, very short speech. He would have taken it back undoubtedly if he could have done so. However, his speech was already recorded in heaven.

It had gone up already to be recorded up there. And there it stood in heaven, those words which he uttered. And that, those few words, that little short speech of his destroyed the hope of a lifetime.

All his life he wished and he longed for the day when he could put his foot on the promised land, enter that promised land. And he lost it because of a word he had spoken. You hear men.

You hear men. Be careful what you say. You want a spiritual life? You want the full blessing of Christ? You'll never get it.

Unless that sin problem in your tongue has been dealt with. You speak what you like in your bedroom to your wife, to your children, to your friends, but you won't dare say it in public. You'll gossip, mention people's names, but you don't go to them.

Oh, you're an evil man, a curse to the Church of God. You're an evil man, a curse to the Church of God. And women, what you say, all those things that you freely speak to your friends and pals, do you know that they're all being registered in heaven? I've often mentioned regarding that great preacher of Germany, Werner Heuckelbach.

Where he would preach till he got exhausted and he noticed that people weren't coming as usual and they weren't repenting as they usually did. And he got tired and he lost the divine fire, not the fire of hell that kindles the tongue. Now listen to what he said.

He said, He said, He didn't do as I often instruct people to do, to go and test and examine themselves. Because he said to himself, let me stop preaching while I examine myself before the Lord. And he took his writing pad and he would write names of sins, unfaithfulness, sins of the tongue, and various things where he said, I'll examine myself around these sins one by one.

After that he did it yet again, praying, saying, Lord help me, I don't want one stone to remain uncovered, unturned over. For two weeks. While his coworkers were nagging him, asking him, when are we going out to preach? He said, just leave me alone, I'm seeking the Lord in prayer, searching my heart.

After two weeks of cleansing himself, he began to preach. And the people poured in as had been in the beginning. People cried about their sins as they repented of their sins and surrendered to the Lord.

Do you hear that secret? A great secret. Do that if you want to avoid being a hypocrite, a Pharisee, a scribe. Just today, take only this sin and ask, have I ever used the name of somebody else, speaking about, gossiping about him without him being there? Have I ever gone to somebody and spoken and chatted about that person? It is said, by your tongue you will be justified, or by your tongue you will be condemned.

If Moses lost so much on earth, the earthly treasures, just because of a few sentences, how much more so with all your intoxicated, drunken speech? When Isaiah the prophet began his real ministry, it was his lips that were sanctified first. His lips had to be dealt with. The live coal was only applied to those members of his lips.

When he said, woe unto me, I'm a man, he didn't say I'm a woman. It's a pity that we men can sin with our tongues as well. And that live coal touched his lips, and God says, lo, this has touched your lips.

Your iniquity is taken away, and your sin is purged. His tongue had to be purified before God could use him. That's where it starts.

And all the trouble in these years, just about all the trouble that we have gone through, was because of unclean lips. On the day of Pentecost, tongues of fire came down. Tongues possessed and filled and sanctified by God the Holy Spirit.

If you have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, your tongue has received the first touch. And if it hasn't, that baptism needs to be questioned, whether it's from above or from below. To claim that you filled and baptized with the Holy Spirit, and your tongue didn't receive the first touch, your whole experience is just mockery.

If those tongues of fire come down, that fire is from above and not from below. You will never talk as you have talked in the past. The way you used to talk, never, never, never.

You will never have that unlicensed freedom that you have had all your life, once the Holy Spirit has sanctified you and filled you. And a man of God said, A.B. Simpson, When the Holy Spirit has filled you, your language will be under the control of a watchful spirit. A watchful spirit.

You won't go around speaking all nonsense and foolish things. Playing the role of a silly woman, even if you are in dead earnest. What a pity that many men, many a man and many a woman of beautiful qualities, Wrecked their whole lives and their fantastic testimonies by an uncontrolled tongue.

And this evil tongue settles, influences our very life, our whole character. Even here, like here and now, today, or yesterday, But if it affects our life and character and testimony, how much more in the sight of God, Who has said, By your words, you will be justified. By your words, you will be content.

Everybody who takes this seriously, By your tongue you will be condemned. Even if you claim to be a child of God. We may ask the question, Why is the tongue such a wicked, wild animal? It is because you have an adulterous spirit inside your own heart, And what you say unto others is simply expressing what you are inside.

Maybe jealousy inside, self-seeking, Excusing yourself, justifying yourself, and seeking to excuse yourself. That is why you have a tongue like that of a mule. What is your tongue like? Now take it, do it properly, don't just do it in a reckless way.

The member of your body which is killed in the name of Jesus Christ, The member of your body which has killed and destroyed many others, And yet you say, I am a teacher, I instruct others, I preach to others. You enlighten other people. You can see the mistakes that others make, but your own you do not see.

But the word says, For we all stumble in many ways, But the way you speak, it seems like you never sin. If it was possible, I would like to preach this sermon all over again, Just to make sure that you can hear and understand, Or that those who haven't understood remain behind, and we preach it again. If you find that you have sinned with your tongue, Immediately make that thing right, get right with God, Go and apologize to those that you have defiled with your tongue.

I know it's difficult. If you have plucked a chicken and walked along in the wind with the feathers floating away, It's difficult to go and collect the feathers again. However, you will never receive the blessing, And stand in the holy place, If lies have come out of you.

Your tongue needs to be cleansed, sanctified, And that there is discipline put on your tongue. The brother of the king, This brother of the Lord, This brother of the Lord who wrote these words said, The rudder of a ship is a very small instrument, But small as it is, it drives the ship's direction. The rudder of a ship is a very small instrument, But small as it is, it drives the ship's direction.

This brother of the Lord, This brother of the Lord who wrote these words said, This brother of the Lord who wrote these words said, to speak some vain words and notice how it will steer a whole group of people in a certain direction although there are those who have discernment and will not just be taken with the crowd. That's why Paul said, I'm afraid lest you are deceived like Eve was deceived by the serpent. Don't be the offspring of Eve and be deceived.

Pray and say, Lord, deliver me from a tongue that is full of the world and all manner of wickedness. When will you wake up? When will you wake up? Do you want to wait until you are on the throes of death when God's hand is squeezing you and you want to make right with certain people but they are perhaps long since dead? May the Lord work in you that you would have a true spirit of repentance and be like that boy who had called Uncle Horgat and has that freedom to confess his sins and get things right and deal with things continually. Something else, just by the way, which is just by the way, which might have something to do with the tongue but may not.

The letters and the books that you read, what are they like? Are they good, those which you chat to other people about? Some men will take evil books and pornographic things and hide it under their mattresses or under the pillow, things that are hellish. The videos you look at, what are they like? Certain men who died in my bed there where I sleep, a young man, he had been born of my uncle, from my mother's side. He said, Birla, please go and tell the people to watch out for their videos.

For it can happen that a bird flies overhead and drops something on your head. That's just an accident which can happen. But don't go into the birdcage or into the aviary and collect all the bird droppings and smear it on your head.

Such are people who look at videos, and you parents who have children, you should be able to check every single thing that they look at, every video, go through it, and if it's not a good one, bring it to me, we can have a fire service, we can burn the lot. And you parents even here, watch out for what you've got in your homes, lest you're seeking the Lord for him to work, but you're hiding the devil and putting him in your pocket. And you say, I'll be silent, I won't say a thing.

You're as guilty and will go to hell with the one who commits his sin. So expose sin, directly confront, and ask what should be done. If they don't listen, come to me, and we deal with the matter.

Let's take that thing and throw it out the window. Should the person not be willing to part from it, he can go with it, out the window. For if we have such things, the tongue becomes the world of evil.

I don't want to be used to it. I don't want to be your preacher while you sit on sin, for I'll always then remain a thorn in your flesh. I know that very clearly.

Many of you have not experienced revival, that is why you live as you do, and you need to be rebuked every Sunday. Sunday after Sunday, you've got to be told these basic things. And every day, pray that you'll get saved thoroughly.

And when you are saved, that you'll be revived. And that you'll meet up with that divine fire, with those cloves of fire that came down at Pentecost. That Pentecost will be a reality in your life.

I think I've spoken long enough, it's close to two hours that you've been here now in the service. If God isn't gracious to us, and this help doesn't help you, I don't know what will help you. God alone knows, and may he use it, what he knows.

Let's bow our heads and pray. We ask you Lord, that your words wouldn't be in vain to us. As you say that the tongue is a world of unrighteousness, defiling the whole body, and defiling the whole body of Christ.

Lord, send revival beginning with the tongue of each and every one. That the Holy Spirit would be able to fill the church of Christ. And put out Lord, that fire of hell which is on the tongue of some.

That we may worship you in truth, and in the fear of you. And show forth the fruit of repentance. Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/3/SID3289.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/erlo-stegen/poison-from-the-tongue/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net