

Speech

2 Timothy 4:12

Kenny Hodges

The Apostle Paul gave a young man by the name of Timothy some good advice in I Timothy 4:12. He said, *“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”*

I don't know how old Timothy was, but I suspect he was in his late teens or early twenties. Paul brought up five areas that are important in our lives if we are to be a good example to others. The first is *speech*.

Speech – *“...in speech...show yourself an example to those who believe”*

There are many verses in the Bible that talk about how we speak! Some talk about being honest and not deceitful in how we speak:

Proverbs 4:24 *Put away from you a deceitful mouth and put devious speech far from you.*

Psalms 34:13 *Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit.*

Some tell us that we should not speak in a perverse or unwholesome way. This would be things like cursing or telling dirty jokes:

Colossians 3:8 *But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth.*

Ephesians 5:4 *And there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.*

Proverbs 19:1 *Better is a poor man who walks in his integrity than he who is perverse in speech and is a fool.*

Psalms 10:7 (Speaking of the wicked) *His mouth is full of curses and deceit and oppression; Under his tongue is mischief and wickedness.*

Proverbs 6:12 *A worthless person, a wicked man, is the one who walks with a perverse mouth,*

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 contrast to those who have a perverse or 'dirty' mouth we should speak in a manner that is gracious and edifying to others:

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.*

Proverbs 22:11 *He who loves purity of heart and whose speech is gracious, the king is his friend.*

Psalms 37:30-31 *The mouth of the righteous utters wisdom, and his tongue speaks justice. The law of his God is in his heart; his steps do not slip.*

We are told that we should guard our mouths so that we don't speak and say things we should not.

Sometimes this means we should simply keep quiet instead of blurting out the first thought that comes to our minds:

Proverbs 13:3 *The one who guards his mouth preserves his life; the one who opens wide his lips comes to ruin.*

Proverbs 21:23 *He who guards his mouth and his tongue, guards his soul from troubles.*

James 1:19 *This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger;*

Psalms 141:3 *Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips.*

We are told to be honest in our speech. We should not say things just to please people, but we should speak the truth in love:

Ephesians 4:15 *But speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ,*

I Thessalonians 2:4 *But just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who examines our hearts.*

We should use our mouths and speech to give God the glory He deserves:

Psalm 19:14 *Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my rock and my Redeemer.*

Psalm 109:30 *With my mouth I will give thanks abundantly to the LORD; and in the midst of many I will praise Him.*

Ultimately, we will speak of the things that fill our hearts:

Luke 6:45 *The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth what is evil; for his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart.*

How we speak is so important! We can encourage or discourage, build up or tear down, speak the truth or be dishonest and deceitful. One thing is for sure, **people will judge us by how we speak.**

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