IRONWORKS

PROVERBS 27:17

A 30-DAY WORKBOOK FOR MEN

GUARD YOUR MOUTH.

THE WORKBOOK



CURSE WORDS · 30 DAYS · ABOUT 15 MINUTES A DAY

HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

ONE PASSAGE A DAY. ONE HONEST ANSWER AT A TIME.

This workbook goes with the 30-day reading plan on joinironworks.com. You don't need any Bible background. You need a Bible, a pen and about 15 minutes a day.

SECTION OPENERS

Five short sections. Each one opens with the readings, a key verse and what the section is about.

DAILY PAGES

Read the passage first. Then read a short devotional thought and answer three questions.

MAN TO MAN

At the end of each section, a question to talk over with another man you trust.

FORGE IT

One specific action to take before you start the next section.

MY TONGUE

A one-page map you fill out before Day 1 and update as you go.

VERSE AND PRAYER

A memory verse for each section and prompts to help you pray about what you read.

THREE QUESTIONS EVERY DAY

SEE IT

What does the passage say?

UNDERSTAND IT

What does it mean?

LIVE IT

What will you do?



THIS WORKBOOK BELONGS TO

STARTED ON

READING PARTNER

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

YOUR WORDS COME FROM SOMEWHERE.

Most men picked up rough language somewhere. A job site, a locker room, the military, a deer camp, a kitchen table. For some it slips out only when the hammer misses. For others it is just the way they talk, and they stopped noticing years ago.

James wrote about the same problem:

> *"From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so."*
> JAMES 3:10 (ESV)

This workbook is not a list of words to avoid. Jesus goes deeper than that. He said, "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (Matthew 12:34). The words are the fruit. The heart is the root.

For 30 days you will look at where your words come from, what God says about filthy talk and His name, how to answer a curse with a blessing, and how to set a guard over your mouth. And you will end with the words God wants in their place: words that build up.

Be honest on these pages. No one has to see them but you and the Lord.



FILL THIS OUT BEFORE DAY 1

MY TONGUE

“Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips!” (Psalm 141:3). You can’t guard a door you have never looked at. Write down when, where and why the words come out, and what you will put in their place. Be specific. Update this page as you go.

WHEN DO THE WORDS COME OUT? Time of day, under pressure, when I’m tired or running late

WHERE AM I WHEN IT HAPPENS? In traffic, at work, at a game, at home, on the phone

WHO AM I WITH? The crew, old friends, my kids, by myself

WHAT USUALLY COMES OUT? Cursing, crude jokes, the Lord’s name, cutting words

WHAT IS GOING ON IN MY HEART? Anger, pride, fear, wanting to fit in, plain habit

WHAT I WILL SAY OR DO INSTEAD A pause, a breath, a short prayer, a better word

THE MAN WHO WILL HOLD ME TO IT His name, and when I will tell him

DAYS 1–7

IT STARTS IN THE HEART



READINGS

- ☐ DAY 1 — Matthew 12:33–37
- ☐ DAY 2 — Luke 6:43–45
- ☐ DAY 3 — Mark 7:14–23
- ☐ DAY 4 — James 3:1–12
- ☐ DAY 5 — Proverbs 4:20–27
- ☐ DAY 6 — Psalm 19:7–14
- ☐ DAY 7 — Isaiah 6:1–8

WHAT THIS SECTION IS ABOUT

Jesus never treated bad language as a mouth problem. He treated it as a heart problem. This week you will read His words about trees and fruit, treasure and what comes out of a man. You will see why the tongue is so hard to tame, and you will watch a man of unclean lips meet a holy God and be made clean.

> *"For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks."*
>
> LUKE 6:45 (ESV)

DAY 1 · IT STARTS IN THE HEART

☐ READ MATTHEW 12:33–37

EVERY CARELESS WORD

Jesus said a tree is known by its fruit, and then He applied it to the mouth: “For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks” (12:34). Whatever fills you up will spill out, especially when you get bumped.

Then He said something sobering: “I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak” (12:36). Not just the planned words. The careless ones, the ones that slip out. God takes our words more seriously than we do.

SEE IT What does Jesus say the mouth reveals, and what will happen on the day of judgment (12:34–37)?

UNDERSTAND IT Why would God judge “careless” words, not only the ones we mean?

LIVE IT What careless words have come out of your mouth this week?

WHAT I’M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

DAY 2 · IT STARTS IN THE HEART

☐ READ LUKE 6:43–45

OUT OF THE ABUNDANCE OF THE HEART

"For each tree is known by its own fruit" (6:44). You don't fix a bad apple tree by painting the apples. You can bite your tongue for a while, but if the heart doesn't change, the words will come back.

"The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks" (6:45). The question is not only, "What am I saying?" It is, "What am I storing up?"

SEE IT What two kinds of treasure does Jesus describe, and what does each produce (6:45)?

UNDERSTAND IT What are some ways a man stores up evil treasure without noticing?

LIVE IT What are you putting into your heart every day through your eyes and ears?

WHAT I'M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

DAY 3 · IT STARTS IN THE HEART

☐ READ MARK 7:14–23

WHAT COMES OUT DEFILES

The religious leaders worried about what went into a man's mouth. Jesus turned it around: "There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him" (7:15).

Then He gave a list of what comes "from within, out of the heart of man" (7:21): evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, slander, pride and more. A filthy mouth is a symptom. It points to something going on inside that God wants to clean.

SEE IT What does Jesus say defiles a person, and where does it come from (7:20–23)?

UNDERSTAND IT Why does it matter so much to Jesus where our words start?

LIVE IT Which item on Jesus' list do you see in yourself when your words go bad?

WHAT I'M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

DAY 4 · IT STARTS IN THE HEART

☐ READ JAMES 3:1–12

A RESTLESS EVIL

James compares the tongue to a bit in a horse's mouth, a rudder on a ship and a spark in a forest: "How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire!" (3:5). One word can start a fire you can't put out.

"But no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison" (3:8). Then the hard part: "From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so" (3:10). The same mouth that sings on Sunday can curse on Monday. James says it should not be that way.

SEE IT List the pictures James uses for the tongue (3:3–8).

UNDERSTAND IT If no human can tame the tongue, where does a man find help?

LIVE IT Where do blessing and cursing come out of your same mouth?

WHAT I'M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

DAY 5 · IT STARTS IN THE HEART

☐ READ PROVERBS 4:20–27

PUT AWAY CROOKED SPEECH

A father tells his son, “Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life” (4:23). Before he says a word about the mouth, he says, guard the heart.

Then: “Put away from you crooked speech, and put devious talk far from you” (4:24). He goes on to the eyes and the feet. A man guards his whole life by guarding the heart first. Put away is an action word. It doesn’t happen by accident.

SEE IT What parts of a man does the father tell his son to guard (4:23–27)?

UNDERSTAND IT Why does guarding the heart come before guarding the mouth?

LIVE IT What is one thing you need to “put away” this week?

WHAT I’M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

DAY 6 · IT STARTS IN THE HEART

☐ READ PSALM 19:7–14

THE WORDS OF MY MOUTH

David praises God's word as perfect, sure, right, pure and true: "More to be desired are they than gold" (19:10). Then he turns to himself: "Who can discern his errors? Declare me innocent from hidden faults" (19:12). Some of our worst habits are ones we can't even see.

He ends with a prayer every Christian man can pray: "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer" (19:14). Words and meditation together. What you think about all day is what you will talk about.

SEE IT What does David say God's word does for a man (19:7–11)?

UNDERSTAND IT What are "hidden faults," and how might your speech be one of them?

LIVE IT Write Psalm 19:14 in your own words as a prayer for tomorrow.

WHAT I'M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

DAY 7 · IT STARTS IN THE HEART

☐ READ ISAIAH 6:1–8

A MAN OF UNCLEAN LIPS

Isaiah saw the Lord "sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up" (6:1), and heard the seraphim cry, "Holy, holy, holy" (6:3). His first reaction was about his mouth: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips" (6:5).

God did not leave him there. A coal touched his mouth: "Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for" (6:7). Then Isaiah said, "Here I am! Send me" (6:8). The same lips that were unclean were now ready to speak for God. That can be true of you.

SEE IT What did Isaiah say about himself, and what did God do for him (6:5–7)?

UNDERSTAND IT Why did seeing God's holiness make Isaiah think first about his lips?

LIVE IT What would it look like for God to use your mouth for His work?

WHAT I'M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

END OF DAYS 1–7

IT STARTS IN THE HEART

FORGE IT

Fill out your “My tongue” page. Then pray Psalm 19:14 out loud every morning this week before you leave the house.

MAN TO MAN

WHEN THE WORDS COME OUT, WHAT IS USUALLY GOING ON IN YOUR HEART?

FOLLOW-UP: Tell another man the one moment this week when your words surprised you, and what you think was underneath them.

WHO I TALKED WITH, AND WHAT I LEARNED

MEMORY VERSE

“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 19:14 (ESV)

PRAYER PROMPTS

- Ask God to search your heart and show you what is feeding your words.
- Confess the words you have said that you knew were wrong.
- Thank Him that a man of unclean lips can be made clean.
- Ask Him to make your heart good so your words will be good.

WHAT GOD SHOWED ME IN THIS SECTION

DAYS 8–14

WHAT GOD SAYS ABOUT FILTHY TALK



READINGS

- ☐ DAY 8 — Ephesians 4:25–32
- ☐ DAY 9 — Ephesians 5:1–7
- ☐ DAY 10 — Colossians 3:1–10
- ☐ DAY 11 — Colossians 4:2–6
- ☐ DAY 12 — Exodus 20:1–7
- ☐ DAY 13 — Leviticus 24:10–16
- ☐ DAY 14 — Matthew 5:33–37

WHAT THIS SECTION IS ABOUT

Some men say there is no list of bad words in the Bible. But God says plenty about the kind of talk that does not belong in a Christian's mouth: corrupting talk, crude joking, obscene talk and careless use of His name. This week you will read what He says, and you will see what He wants in its place.

> *"Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving."*
>
> EPHESIANS 5:4 (ESV)

DAY 8 · WHAT GOD SAYS ABOUT FILTHY TALK

☐ READ EPHESIANS 4:25–32

NO CORRUPTING TALK

Paul gives a simple test for every word: “Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear” (4:29). Corrupting talk is rotten. It tears down. It leaves people worse than it found them.

Right after that he says, “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God” (4:30). Our words can grieve God. Then: “Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice” (4:31). Filthy talk usually travels with anger and bitterness.

SEE IT What three things should our words do, according to verse 29?

UNDERSTAND IT How can words “grieve the Holy Spirit” (4:30)?

LIVE IT Run yesterday’s words through verse 29. Which ones would not pass?

WHAT I’M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

DAY 9 · WHAT GOD SAYS ABOUT FILTHY TALK

☐ READ EPHESIANS 5:1–7

NO CRUDE JOKING

"Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children" (5:1). A son picks up his father's way of talking. Christians are meant to talk like their Father.

"Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving" (5:4). The dirty joke at the shop, the crude comment at the game. Paul says it is out of place for a Christian. He doesn't just say stop. He gives a replacement: thanksgiving.

SEE IT What three kinds of talk does Paul say are out of place, and what should replace them (5:4)?

UNDERSTAND IT Why would thanksgiving be the opposite of crude joking?

LIVE IT When are you most tempted to laugh along with, or tell, a crude joke?

WHAT I'M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

DAY 10 · WHAT GOD SAYS ABOUT FILTHY TALK

☐ READ COLOSSIANS 3:1–10

PUT AWAY OBSCENE TALK

Paul starts with where a Christian's mind should be: "Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth" (3:2). Then he gets specific: "But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth" (3:8).

Notice the reason. You "have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator" (3:9–10). When you were baptized into Christ, the old man was buried. His way of talking belongs in the grave with him.

SEE IT List everything Paul says to put away in verses 5–9.

UNDERSTAND IT What is the connection between the "new self" and the way we talk?

LIVE IT What part of your old way of talking are you still carrying around?

WHAT I'M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

DAY 11 · WHAT GOD SAYS ABOUT FILTHY TALK

☐ READ COLOSSIANS 4:2–6

SEASONED WITH SALT

Paul asks for prayer that he would speak the gospel clearly (4:3–4). Then he tells the church how to talk to people outside it: “Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person” (4:6).

Salt adds flavor and keeps food from spoiling. Gracious speech isn’t soft or fake. It is good to listen to, and it keeps a conversation from going rotten. The men around you notice how you talk. Your words can open a door for the gospel or close it.

SEE IT How does Paul say a Christian should speak to outsiders (4:5–6)?

UNDERSTAND IT What does it mean for speech to be “seasoned with salt”?

LIVE IT Who outside the church hears you talk every week? What do they hear?

WHAT I’M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

DAY 12 · WHAT GOD SAYS ABOUT FILTHY TALK

☐ READ EXODUS 20:1–7

NOT IN VAIN

The third of the Ten Commandments is about a name: "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain" (20:7). To take it in vain is to treat it as empty, to use it for nothing.

Many men who would never say a four-letter word still use God's name or Jesus' name as an exclamation. God attached a warning to this command. His name is not a filler word. It is the name we pray in and the name we are saved by.

SEE IT What warning does God attach to this commandment (20:7)?

UNDERSTAND IT What are some ways people use God's name "in vain" today?

LIVE IT How often does God's name come out of your mouth when you are not talking to Him or about Him?

WHAT I'M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

DAY 13 · WHAT GOD SAYS ABOUT FILTHY TALK

☐ READ LEVITICUS 24:10–16

HE BLASPHEMED THE NAME

Two men got into a fight in the camp, and in the heat of it one of them "blasphemed the Name, and cursed" (24:11). A fight, a temper and a mouth that went too far. It is a familiar story.

The Lord said, "Whoever curses his God shall bear his sin. Whoever blasphemes the name of the Lord shall surely be put to death" (24:15–16). We do not live under that law today, but it shows how seriously God takes His name. He has not changed. What has changed is that in Christ there is forgiveness for the man who repents.

SEE IT What happened in the camp, and what did God say about it (24:10–16)?

UNDERSTAND IT What does this passage teach about how God sees His name?

LIVE IT When a fight starts, what tends to come out of your mouth?

WHAT I'M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

DAY 14 · WHAT GOD SAYS ABOUT FILTHY TALK

☐ READ MATTHEW 5:33–37

SIMPLY YES OR NO

In Jesus' day people swore by heaven, by earth, by Jerusalem or by their own heads to make their words sound more believable. Jesus said, "Do not take an oath at all" (5:34).

"Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from evil" (5:37). A man whose word is good doesn't need to swear to it. "I swear to God" should never be part of a Christian's everyday talk. Be the kind of man whose plain word can be trusted.

SEE IT What did Jesus say about oaths, and what should replace them (5:34–37)?

UNDERSTAND IT Why would a man feel the need to swear to make his words believed?

LIVE IT Is your plain "yes" trusted by the people around you? Why or why not?

WHAT I'M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

END OF DAYS 8–14

WHAT GOD SAYS ABOUT FILTHY TALK

FORGE IT

Go one full week without using God's name except to pray to Him or talk about Him. Notice how often you are tempted.

MAN TO MAN

WHICH WORDS OR JOKES HAVE YOU TREATED AS HARMLESS THAT GOD CALLS CORRUPTING?

FOLLOW-UP: Ask another man to tell you honestly whether your talk sounds different from the world's.

WHO I TALKED WITH, AND WHAT I LEARNED

MEMORY VERSE

"Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear."

EPHESIANS 4:29 (ESV)

PRAYER PROMPTS

- Thank God that His name is holy.
- Confess any time you have used His name carelessly.
- Ask Him to help you put off the old self and put on the new.
- Pray for the men you work with to hear something different from you.

WHAT GOD SHOWED ME IN THIS SECTION

DAYS 15–21

BLESS, DO NOT CURSE



READINGS

- ☐ DAY 15 — Romans 12:14–21
- ☐ DAY 16 — Luke 6:27–36
- ☐ DAY 17 — 1 Peter 3:8–12
- ☐ DAY 18 — 2 Samuel 16:5–14
- ☐ DAY 19 — Matthew 26:69–75
- ☐ DAY 20 — Proverbs 15:1–4
- ☐ DAY 21 — James 1:19–27

WHAT THIS SECTION IS ABOUT

Cursing is not only about four-letter words. It is also about what we wish on people when they cross us. This week you will read Jesus' command to bless those who curse you, watch David take a cursing without cursing back, and see Peter swear he never knew the Lord. You will learn the power of a soft answer.

> *"Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them."*
>
> ROMANS 12:14 (ESV)

DAY 15 · BLESS, DO NOT CURSE

☐ READ ROMANS 12:14–21

BLESS AND DO NOT CURSE

“Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them” (12:14). Paul is not talking about a stranger who is easy to love. He is talking about people who are against you.

He goes on: “If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all” (12:18). And he ends with this: “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good” (12:21). When someone wrongs you, cursing him back lets the evil win twice. Blessing him is how a Christian fights back.

SEE IT What does Paul tell Christians to do instead of taking revenge (12:14–21)?

UNDERSTAND IT How does cursing someone back let evil “overcome” you?

LIVE IT Who is the hardest person in your life to bless right now?

WHAT I’M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

DAY 16 · BLESS, DO NOT CURSE

☐ READ LUKE 6:27–36

BLESS THOSE WHO CURSE YOU

Jesus gives four commands in a row: “Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you” (6:27–28). He knew His followers would be cursed. He told them what to say back.

Then He gives the reason: “and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil” (6:35). When you bless a man who cursed you, you look like your Father. Anybody can curse back. It takes a son of God to bless.

SEE IT List the four commands in verses 27–28.

UNDERSTAND IT Why does blessing an enemy make a man look like his Father (6:35–36)?

LIVE IT What would it sound like to bless someone who has cursed you?

WHAT I’M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

DAY 17 · BLESS, DO NOT CURSE

☐ READ 1 PETER 3:8–12

NOT REVILING FOR REVILING

“Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing” (3:9). To revile is to insult, to tear down with words. Peter says a Christian is called to the opposite.

He quotes Psalm 34: “let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit” (3:10). Peter had learned this the hard way. He once cut off a man’s ear and later swore he never knew Jesus. The man who wrote these words was changed.

SEE IT What are Christians called to do instead of reviling (3:9)?

UNDERSTAND IT Why does Peter connect a guarded tongue to loving life and seeing good days (3:10)?

LIVE IT When have you answered an insult with an insult? How could you answer next time?

WHAT I’M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

DAY 18 · BLESS, DO NOT CURSE

☐ READ 2 SAMUEL 16:5–14

HE CURSED CONTINUALLY

King David was running from his own son Absalom when a man named Shimei came out, threw stones and "cursed continually" (16:5). One of David's men said, "Let me go over and take off his head" (16:9). Most men would have let him.

David said no. He even said, "It may be that the Lord will look on the wrong done to me, and that the Lord will repay me with good for his cursing today" (16:12). David did not curse back. He left Shimei to God and kept walking.

SEE IT What did Shimei do, and how did David respond (16:5–13)?

UNDERSTAND IT What did David trust God to do that kept him from cursing back?

LIVE IT Who is your Shimei, and what would it look like to leave him to God?

WHAT I'M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

DAY 19 · BLESS, DO NOT CURSE

☐ READ MATTHEW 26:69–75

HE BEGAN TO INVOKE A CURSE

Peter had promised he would never deny Jesus. Then a servant girl recognized him. He denied it. Another said the same. He denied it with an oath. When someone said, “your accent betrays you” (26:73), “he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, ‘I do not know the man’” (26:74).

Under pressure, his old way of talking came right back. Then the rooster crowed, “and he went out and wept bitterly” (26:75). But that was not the end of Peter. Jesus restored him, and he preached the first gospel sermon at Pentecost. There is a way back for a man whose mouth has failed.

SEE IT How did Peter’s denials get worse each time (26:69–74)?

UNDERSTAND IT Why do our words often go bad when we are afraid or want to fit in?

LIVE IT Where has your mouth denied Christ by the way you talk around certain people?

WHAT I’M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

DAY 20 · BLESS, DO NOT CURSE

☐ READ PROVERBS 15:1–4

A SOFT ANSWER

"A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger" (15:1). This may be the most practical verse in the Bible for a man with a quick tongue. You get to choose whether a conversation cools down or heats up.

Solomon adds, "A gentle tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit" (15:4). Your words can bring life to your wife, your kids and your crew, or they can break something in them. A soft answer is not weakness. It takes more strength than a harsh one.

SEE IT Compare the two kinds of answers in verse 1 and the two kinds of tongues in verse 4.

UNDERSTAND IT Why does a soft answer take more strength than a harsh one?

LIVE IT Who in your home needs a soft answer from you this week?

WHAT I'M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

DAY 21 · BLESS, DO NOT CURSE

☐ READ JAMES 1:19–27

BRIDLE HIS TONGUE

"Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger" (1:19). Most of our worst words come when we are fast to speak and fast to anger. James says to flip the order: listen first, speak later.

Then a strong warning: "If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless" (1:26). A man can sit in the pew every Sunday and still fool himself. An unbridled tongue tells the truth about his faith.

SEE IT What three things does James say every person should be (1:19)?

UNDERSTAND IT Why does James say an unbridled tongue makes religion worthless (1:26)?

LIVE IT What would "slow to speak" look like in the place you struggle most?

WHAT I'M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

END OF DAYS 15–21

BLESS, DO NOT CURSE

FORGE IT

The next time someone cuts you off, insults you or lets you down, answer with a blessing out loud or in prayer before you say anything else.

MAN TO MAN

WHO HAVE YOU CURSED, TO HIS FACE OR BEHIND HIS BACK, THAT YOU NEED TO BLESS INSTEAD?

FOLLOW-UP: Name one person who gets under your skin. Pray for him by name every day this week, and tell another man you are doing it.

WHO I TALKED WITH, AND WHAT I LEARNED

MEMORY VERSE

"Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing."

1 PETER 3:9 (ESV)

PRAYER PROMPTS

- Pray by name for someone who has wronged you.
- Ask God to give you a soft answer when you want a harsh one.
- Confess any words you have used to tear someone down.
- Thank Jesus that He did not revile when He was reviled.

WHAT GOD SHOWED ME IN THIS SECTION

DAYS 22–28

SET A GUARD



READINGS

- [ ] DAY 22 — Psalm 141:1–4
- [ ] DAY 23 — Psalm 39:1–3
- [ ] DAY 24 — Proverbs 10:18–21
- [ ] DAY 25 — 1 Corinthians 15:30–34
- [ ] DAY 26 — Philippians 4:4–9
- [ ] DAY 27 — Galatians 5:16–26
- [ ] DAY 28 — Ephesians 5:15–21

WHAT THIS SECTION IS ABOUT

Knowing what is right is not the same as doing it. This week is about practical guard duty: praying for help before the moment comes, holding your tongue, choosing your company, filling your mind with what is pure and walking by the Spirit. A guarded mouth is not an empty one. It is a mouth that has been filled with something better.

> *"Whoever keeps his mouth and his tongue keeps himself out of trouble."*
>
> PROVERBS 21:23 (ESV)

DAY 22 · SET A GUARD

☐ READ PSALM 141:1–4

SET A GUARD OVER MY MOUTH

David did not trust himself to keep his mouth clean. So he asked for help: “Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips!” (141:3). He treated his mouth like a door that needed a guard posted on it.

He also prayed about his heart and his company: “Do not let my heart incline to any evil, to busy myself with wicked deeds in company with men who work iniquity” (141:4). The guard starts with prayer, before the moment comes, not after.

SEE IT What three things does David pray about in verses 3–4?

UNDERSTAND IT Why is it wise to pray about your words before the day starts?

LIVE IT Write a one-sentence prayer you will pray each morning this week, based on verse 3.

WHAT I’M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

DAY 23 · SET A GUARD

☐ READ PSALM 39:1–3

A MUZZLE ON MY MOUTH

David made a decision ahead of time: “I will guard my ways, that I may not sin with my tongue; I will guard my mouth with a muzzle, so long as the wicked are in my presence” (39:1). He knew he was most at risk around certain people.

He also admits it was hard: “My heart became hot within me. As I mused, the fire burned” (39:3). Holding your tongue doesn’t make the feeling go away. But David took the fire to God in prayer instead of letting it out on people.

SEE IT What did David decide, and when was he most at risk (39:1)?

UNDERSTAND IT What should a man do with the heat inside when he holds his tongue (39:3–4)?

LIVE IT Around whom do you need a “muzzle” most?

WHAT I’M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

DAY 24 · SET A GUARD

☐ READ PROVERBS 10:18–21

WHOEVER RESTRAINS HIS LIPS

“When words are many, transgression is not lacking, but whoever restrains his lips is prudent” (10:19). The more a man talks, the more chances he gives himself to sin. Sometimes the best guard is simply saying less.

Solomon adds, “The lips of the righteous feed many” (10:21). Restraint is not the same as silence. A wise man saves his words for what helps, and when he speaks, people are better for it.

SEE IT What does Solomon say happens when words are many (10:19)?

UNDERSTAND IT How can the lips of the righteous “feed many” (10:21)?

LIVE IT Where would talking less keep you out of trouble this week?

WHAT I’M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

DAY 25 · SET A GUARD

☐ READ 1 CORINTHIANS 15:30–34

BAD COMPANY RUINS GOOD MORALS

In the middle of a chapter about the resurrection, Paul gives a warning: "Do not be deceived: 'Bad company ruins good morals'" (15:33). You will start to talk like the men you spend the most time with.

That doesn't mean you stop working with or loving unbelievers. It means you watch who is shaping you. Then Paul says, "Wake up from your drunken stupor, as is right, and do not go on sinning" (15:34). Some men need to wake up to how much their crowd has changed their mouth.

SEE IT What warning does Paul give in verse 33?

UNDERSTAND IT How do the people around us shape the way we talk?

LIVE IT Whose way of talking has rubbed off on you? Whose would you like to rub off instead?

WHAT I'M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

DAY 26 · SET A GUARD

☐ READ PHILIPPIANS 4:4–9

WHATEVER IS PURE

Paul tells the church to bring everything to God in prayer, "and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (4:7). God Himself stands guard over the heart of a praying man.

Then he tells them what to fill their minds with: "whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable … think about these things" (4:8). You can't just empty out bad words. You have to fill the space with something better.

SEE IT List the things Paul tells us to think about (4:8).

UNDERSTAND IT How does what you think about shape what you say?

LIVE IT What is filling your mind most days: news, music, screens, Scripture? What needs to change?

WHAT I'M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

DAY 27 · SET A GUARD

☐ READ GALATIANS 5:16–26

SELF-CONTROL

"But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh" (5:16). Paul lists the works of the flesh, including enmity, strife and fits of anger, the things that so often come out as curse words.

Then the fruit: "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" (5:22–23). Self-control is the last on the list, and it is not something you squeeze out on your own. It grows in a man who walks by the Spirit, following the word He gave us.

SEE IT Which works of the flesh in verses 19–21 tend to come out through the mouth?

UNDERSTAND IT What does it mean to "walk by the Spirit" day to day?

LIVE IT Which fruit of the Spirit would most change the way you talk?

WHAT I'M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

DAY 28 · SET A GUARD

☐ READ EPHESIANS 5:15–21

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

"Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise" (5:15). Paul contrasts two ways a man can be filled: "do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit" (5:18).

Then he shows what a Spirit-filled mouth sounds like: "addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything" (5:19–20). A mouth full of praise and thanks has less room for cursing.

SEE IT What does Paul say comes out of a man who is filled with the Spirit (5:19–21)?

UNDERSTAND IT Why would singing and thanksgiving help guard a man's mouth?

LIVE IT What hymn or psalm could you have ready for the moment you want to curse?

WHAT I'M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

END OF DAYS 22–28

SET A GUARD

FORGE IT

Pick your worst place from the “My tongue” page. Set one guard there this week: a card on the dash, a song in the truck, a pause before you answer.

MAN TO MAN

WHERE DO THE WORDS COME OUT MOST: IN TRAFFIC, AT WORK, AT A GAME OR AT HOME? WHAT GUARD WILL YOU SET THERE?

FOLLOW-UP: Tell another man the place you named, and ask him to check on you about it at the end of the week.

WHO I TALKED WITH, AND WHAT I LEARNED

MEMORY VERSE

“Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips!”

PSALM 141:3 (ESV)

PRAYER PROMPTS

- Ask God to set a guard over your mouth before the day starts.
- Ask Him to show you where your company is shaping your words.
- Thank Him for the fruit of the Spirit, including self-control.
- Ask Him to fill your mind with what is true, honorable and pure.

WHAT GOD SHOWED ME IN THIS SECTION

DAYS 29–30

WORDS THAT BUILD



READINGS

- ☐ DAY 29 — Proverbs 16:21–24
- ☐ DAY 30 — Hebrews 13:15–16

WHAT THIS SECTION IS ABOUT

God does not want a quiet man. He wants a man whose words are gracious, sweet to the soul and full of praise. These last two days turn from what to stop saying to what to start saying.

> *"Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear."*
>
> EPHESIANS 4:29 (ESV)

DAY 29 · WORDS THAT BUILD

☐ READ PROVERBS 16:21–24

LIKE A HONEYCOMB

“The heart of the wise makes his speech judicious and adds persuasiveness to his lips” (16:23). This is where the whole plan has been heading: a wise heart produces wise words.

“Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body” (16:24). Your words can be sweet to a tired wife, a discouraged son or a struggling friend. The same mouth you have been learning to guard can become one of the best gifts you give.

SEE IT What does a wise heart do for a man’s speech (16:23–24)?

UNDERSTAND IT Why does Solomon compare gracious words to honey?

LIVE IT Who needs a “honeycomb” word from you this week?

WHAT I’M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

DAY 30 · WORDS THAT BUILD

☐ READ HEBREWS 13:15–16

THE FRUIT OF LIPS

“Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name” (13:15). The same name some men use carelessly is the name a Christian lifts up in praise.

And praise goes with action: “Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God” (13:16). For 30 days you have been learning to put off corrupting talk. Now keep putting on praise, thanks and words that build. That is the fruit God is looking for.

SEE IT What two sacrifices please God, according to verses 15–16?

UNDERSTAND IT How is praise the opposite of taking God’s name in vain?

LIVE IT What has changed in your words over these 30 days, and what will you keep working on?

WHAT I’M TAKING WITH ME TODAY

END OF DAYS 29–30

WORDS THAT BUILD

FORGE IT

Write a short note of thanks or encouragement to three people this week: your wife or a family member, a coworker and a fellow Christian.

MAN TO MAN

WHOSE DAY WILL YOU BUILD UP WITH YOUR WORDS THIS WEEK?

FOLLOW-UP: Name one man who needs a good word from you, and tell him before Sunday.

WHO I TALKED WITH, AND WHAT I LEARNED

MEMORY VERSE

"Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body."

PROVERBS 16:24 (ESV)

PRAYER PROMPTS

- Thank God for every change He has made in your words these 30 days.
- Ask Him to make your mouth a source of grace to others.
- Offer Him the fruit of your lips in praise.
- Pray for the people you will build up this week.

WHAT GOD SHOWED ME IN THIS SECTION

THE FIRST STEP

NEW LIFE STARTS WITH THE GOSPEL.

Everything in this workbook is written to Christians, men who have been forgiven and added by the Lord to His church. If you have never obeyed the gospel, that is the first step home.

> *"Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."*
> ACTS 2:38 (ESV)

Hear the good news that Jesus died for your sins and rose again (1 Corinthians 15:1–4). Believe it (John 8:24). Turn from sin (Acts 17:30). Confess your faith in Christ (Romans 10:9–10). Be buried with Him in baptism and rise to walk in newness of life (Romans 6:3–4). Then keep walking with Him, together with His church.

If you would like to study this with someone, the men of Ironworks would be glad to sit down with you.

KEEP GOING

ANOTHER 30-DAY PLAN

Sexual temptation, anger, anxiety, money, loneliness, technology, AI, marriage and fatherhood, at joinironworks.com.

FORGED IN THE WORD

The one-year reading plan for men, five readings a week.

BREAKFAST

Join the men of Ironworks the third Saturday of every month.





IRON SHARPENS IRON, AND ONE MAN SHARPENS ANOTHER.

PROVERBS 27:17 (ESV)

JOINIRONWORKS.COM

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