

**Devotional Guide**  
***Guarded Speech, Open Heart***  
**July 27 – August 2**

**Monday**

Psalm 141:3, Matthew 12:26; 2 Corinthians 6:11 - 13

The Psalmist asks God to set a guard on his lips, and Jesus warns us that we are held accountable for every word we say. At the same time, Paul encourages the Corinthians to “open up.”

*Think about it:* How do I deal with the tension between guarding my speech and opening up my heart? If I err, is it on the side of too much candor, or on the side of closing up?

*Prayer:* For wisdom to speak circumspectly.

**Tuesday**

Matthew 12:34-35; Psalm 19:14

“Heart” is used almost as a technical term in much of Scripture to refer not to the organ that pumps blood, but to the memory and reflective function of our mind. Our heart is the source of the words we speak; our words therefore reveal the condition of our heart.

*Think about it:* How do words reveal inner attitudes? What do my words tell others about my inner self?

*Prayer:* “May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.”

**Wednesday**

Ecclesiastes 5:2; James 1:19; Ephesians 4:29

Control of our words begins with learning to discipline ourselves to listen more than we speak. When we listen we should think about how what we say will be heard by the other person. What is their world view? How will they interpret our words? What can we say that will bring grace to them?

*Think about it:* Has there ever been a time when I said one thing and the person I was talking to heard something else? How and why did this happen?

*Prayer:* For discernment and discipline in listening.

**Thursday**

James 3:10 - 12; 4:11; 5:9 Ephesians 4:29, 5:4

Our speech should not involve cursing. The essence of cursing is not vulgar language (although that is often involved) but rather reviling and condemning others.

*Think about it:* What kind of attitude do I reveal in myself when I put others down? What does that attitude say about the state of my fellowship with God?

*Prayer:* For forgiveness for those times when I have reviled others; for grace to say things lovingly and truthfully.

**Friday**

James 4:13; Matthew 5:33 - 27; Ecclesiastes 5:4 - 5

Our speech should not involve boasting. The essence of boasting is asserting that I have control over things I really can't control; it is making promises I can't keep; it is claiming credit for things that were not my doing.

*Think about it:* Do I make plans without considering the Lord's will? Do I assume I can control my future? Have I made any promises I haven't kept?

*Prayer:* For the grace to keep my tongue from boasting and the wisdom to make only such promises as I can keep.

**Saturday**

Philippians 4:8 - 9

Since our heart is the source of our words, our words will be pure if our heart is right. Paul encourages us to “think on these things.” Thinking on things that are true will help us use words that give an accurate impression and are supported by the facts. Thinking on things that are honorable will help us say what promotes respect and reverence. Thinking on what is right – on justice – will help us say words appropriate to the time and occasion. Thinking on what is pure will help us say what is unselfish and without manipulation.

*Think about it:* What are specific examples of true, honorable, right, and pure things on which my mind can dwell?

*Prayer:* For my heart to be full of true, honorable, right, and pure thoughts.

## **Sunday**

Philippians 4:8 - 9

Thinking on what is lovely what help me say what is pleasant and reflects gratitude; thinking on what is of good repute will help me to say what would bring honor and exalt someone else's reputation; thinking on what is excellent will help me say words that encourage virtue and high moral standards; thinking on what is praiseworthy will help me communicate commendation and approval.

*Think about it:* What are specific examples of things that are lovely, of good repute, excellent, and praiseworthy on which my mind can dwell?

*Prayer:* For my heart to be full of thoughts that are lovely, of good reputation, excellent, and worthy of praise.