

The Sins of the Tongue

Written and compiled by Gary Kukis

These studies are designed for believers in Jesus Christ only. If you have exercised faith in Christ, then you are in the right place. If you have not, then you need to heed the words of our Lord, Who said, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son, so that every [one] believing [or, trusting] in Him shall not perish, but shall be have eternal life! For God did not send His Son into the world so that He should judge the world, but so that the world shall be saved through Him. The one believing [or, trusting] in Him is not judged, but the one not believing has already been judged, because he has not believed in the Name of the only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son of God." (John 3:16–18). "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life! No one comes to the Father except through [or, by means of] Me!" (John 14:6).

Every study of the Word of God ought to be preceded by a naming of your sins to God. This restores you to fellowship with God (1John 1:8–10). If there are people around, you would name these sins silently. If there is no one around, then it does not matter if you name them silently or whether you speak aloud.

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Preface: The Sins of the Tongue are a devastating category of sins. I know this personally because I lost a job based upon sins of the tongue. It began with three female teachers speaking evil about me to one another and ended with students spreading false rumors about me. They are an insidious category of sins, because most of the time, those who commit these sins do not realize just how vicious and destructive this category of sin is.

1. There are three categories of sins: mental sins, verbal sins and overt sins. As our society moves *forward*, we have tended to ignore the first two, as well as groups of the last. Mental sins generally motivate the overt

sins. When one person murders another, the motivating factor is often hatred. When one person commits adultery, the motivating factor is generally lust. However, many verbal sins occur apart from clear, motivating mental sins.

2. The third commandment enjoins us not to use the Lord's name trivially. Like several of the Laws of the Ten Commandments, this Law was distorted by the Jews. One of the things that they did is they no longer pronounced the proper name of Jehovah (which would have been something like Y^ehowah). When reading Scripture aloud, the name *Y^ehowah* was never pronounced, but they said *Adonai* instead (actually, the true pronunciation is closer to *aw-DOHN*; the construct form of this noun is closer to our English pronunciation). However, when the Jews took an oath, particularly one which invoked any name referring to God, and one which they had no intention of keeping, this was actually closer to the concept of using God's name in a trivial manner. It is almost impossible to find a movie where God's name is not taken in vain. Sometimes, a character's primary characteristic is a litany of blasphemies streaming from his or her mouth. Furthermore, it is not unusual for this characteristic to be presented as humorous. Since the 1990's, we have had television show after television show trivialize God's name with the phrases *Oh God* or *Oh my God*. Having been a teacher for over twenty years, I have observed the use of this phrase on television far exceeds its use by youth. I might hear a student use profanity (e.g., *God* attached to a *damn*) once or twice a year. I may hear a student use God's name trivially once or twice a week. Those who write television scripts and those who produce television often claim that they are doing nothing more than holding up a mirror to society (that is, what is found on television is no different than what we find in real life); however, in almost any category of sin, we find it in much more abundance on television than we do in real life.
3. In the ninth commandment, God tells the Jew, **You will not bear false witness against your neighbor** (Ex. 20:16). Although this certainly has application in the courtroom, it applies outside the courtroom as well. When we gossip about someone, we often tend to embellish or inadvertently add to the story, so that we are speaking that which is partially false about someone else. That is bearing false witness against your neighbor.
4. Of the seven worst sins, three are verbal sins. **There are six things which Jehovah hates; in fact, seven which are an abomination to Him: Arrogant eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood (homicide); a heart that devises evil conspiracies, feet that run rapidly to evil, a false witness who utters lies, and one who spreads strife among brothers** (Prov. 6:16–19). The first verbal sin is one who simply lies—this is about oneself. When quizzed on their activity, they lie; when representing their strong or weak points, they lie. The second of the great verbal sins is a person who gossips (that is, *bears false witness against his neighbor*). The third of the great verbal sins is a person who intentionally stirs up trouble between two or more other parties.
5. Paul, when he logically concludes that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin, he quotes Old Testament passages which deal primarily with verbal sins. **To what conclusion are we forced? Are we better than they? No, for we have already indicted Jews and Greeks all under sin. As it stands written: There is none righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks for God. All have turned aside; together, they have become depraved. There is no one who does good; there is not even one. Their throat is an open grave, with their tongues, they continue deceiving. The poison of asps is under their lips. Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood. Destruction and misery are in their paths and the path of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God in their eyes** (Rom. 3:9–18 Psalm 14:1–3 5:9 10:7 Isa. 59:7 Psalm 36:1). The first sins named and the most sins named were all sins of the tongue. As believers, we tend to have a lot of goofy ideas and we disdain those who are guilty of sexual sins, drunkenness, drug abuse; and certainly of those who commit murder. However, when listing the worst sins, we generally find more verbal sins listed than overt ones.
6. In any list of sins, there are as many verbal sins as any other category. **Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have**

- forewarned you that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God (Gal. 5:19–21). Four of the twelve sins mentioned are verbal sins; and several of the other sins can have elements of verbal sins.
7. Verbal sins extend to heresies which are taught in the Church of God: But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master Who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them, the way of the truth will be maligned; and in greed, they will exploit you with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep (1 Peter 2:1–3).
 8. I don't intend to exhaust this doctrine in this short dissertation; so let me conclude with what James wrote: Now if we put bits into the horses' mouths so that they may obey us, we direct their entire body as well. Listen, the ships also, though they are so great and are driven by strong winds, are still directed by a very small rudder, wherever the inclination of the pilot desires. So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. Listen, how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire! 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. For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed, and has been tamed by the human race. But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison. With it, we bless our Lord and faith; and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; from the same mouth comes both blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be. Should your kitchen faucet send out both drinking water and waste water?¹ (James 3:3–11).

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Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

You will note that there are five categories of verbal sins enumerated in this passage:

The Five Categories of Verbal Sins

1. **Cursing:** This would include profanity (using God's name in a trivial manner) and obscenity (toilet/sexual language). This is not the same as using expletives, which use, on certain occasions, is apropos (e.g., using the words *hell* and *damn*). Although Barnes interprets this as blasphemy against God, the NIV Study Bible suggests instead that this would be the cursing that one would do against another person (i.e., pronouncing a curse upon someone invoking the gods to make his life miserable). Apparently, they had a great many such curses that they would pronounce against others. While the interpretation of the NIV Study Bible is probably more valid, both types of cursing are a category of sins of the tongue.
2. **Deceptions:** This is where you deceive others concerning your own actions and thoughts. You either make yourself out to be something that you are not; or you deny that which you have done. We have an example of perjury given in 1 Kings 21:7–15, which resulted in the execution of Naboth. The incident was engineered by Jezebel (who was guilty of the verbal sin of conspiracy) so that her husband could steal Naboth's land from him. Her husband, of course, was guilty of complicity.
3. **Injury or threats:** This appears to be more than the verbal sin of gossip; this is likely threatening and bullying.
4. **Exhausting toil:** Here, whatever you have said about others or to others has caused them great inconvenience and additional wasted work.

¹ I obviously took some liberties with the final line and brought it into the 21st century.

The Five Categories of Verbal Sins

5. **Iniquity:** This is a catch-all category of verbal sins which picks up whatever else is sinful that comes out of your mouth.

This particular doctrine was taken right out of **Psalm 10** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

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It might be good to observe some of the sins of the tongue found throughout the Bible.

A List of Verbal Sins Found in the Bible

Sin	Scripture
Arrogance	<p>Psalm 17:10: They have become hardened; their mouths speak arrogantly.</p> <p>Ezek. 28:2: "Son of man, say to the ruler of Tyre: This is what the Lord GOD says: Your heart is proud, and you have said: I am a god; I sit in the seat of gods in the heart of the sea. Yet you are a man and not a god, though you have regarded your heart as that of a god."</p> <p>2Peter 2:18: For uttering bombastic, empty words, they seduce, by fleshly desires and debauchery, people who have barely escaped from those who live in error.</p>
Boasting	<p>Ex. 15:9: The enemy said: "I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil. My desire will be gratified at their expense. I will draw my sword; my hand will destroy them."</p> <p>1Sam. 2:3: Do not boast so proudly, or let arrogant words come out of your mouth, for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and actions are weighed by Him.</p> <p>1Sam. 17:44: "Come here," the Philistine called to David, "and I'll give your flesh to the birds of the sky and the wild beasts!"</p> <p>Ezek. 29:3: Speak to him and say: This is what the Lord GOD says: Look, I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great monster lying in the middle of his Nile, who says: My Nile is my own; I made it for myself.</p>
Cursing, Blasphemy	<p>1Sam. 17:43: He said to David, "Am I a dog that you come against me with sticks?" Then he cursed David by his gods [God?].</p> <p>Rerv. 13:5–6: A mouth was given to him to speak boasts and blasphemies. He was also given authority to act for 42 months. He began to speak blasphemies against God: to blaspheme His name and His dwelling--those who dwell in heaven.</p>

A List of Verbal Sins Found in the Bible	
Sin	Scripture
Flattering in order to Manipulate Another	Judges 1:16: These people are discontented grumblers, walking according to their desires; their mouths utter arrogant words, flattering people for their own advantage. Psalm 12:2–3: They lie to one another; they speak with flattering lips and deceptive hearts. May the LORD cut off all flattering lips and the tongue that speaks boastfully.
Mocking God	2Kings 19:23: You have mocked the Lord through your messengers. You have said: With my many chariots I have gone up to the heights of the mountains, to the far recesses of Lebanon. I cut down its tallest cedars, its choice cypress trees. I came to its farthest outpost, its densest forest.
Speaking Against God	Daniel 7:25: He will speak words against the Most High and oppress the holy ones of the Most High. He will intend to change religious festivals and laws, and the holy ones will be handed over to him for a time, times, and half a time. Mal. 3:13: "Your words against Me are harsh," says the LORD. Yet you ask: "What have we spoken against You?"
A Variety of Sins	Psalm 73:8–9: They mock, and they speak maliciously; they arrogantly threaten oppression. They set their mouths against heaven, and their tongues strut across the earth.

Most of these verses came from *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge*; by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, Psalm 12:3.

This particular doctrine was taken right out of **Psalm 12** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

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However, let's look at the doctrine of the sins of the tongue anyway. This verse names some of the sins of the tongue that we should avoid. The entire doctrine is below:

Sins of the Tongue (from Jack M. Ballinger)

1. The mouth is a window which reveals who is in control of the "Real You" (Matt.15:11 **"Not what enters into the mouth defiles the man, but what proceeds out of the mouth, this defiles the man"**; cp. Matt.15:18,19).
2. The uncontrolled tongue (James3:5-8):
 - 1) Is like a spark which ignites an entire forest (sets in motion destructive forces, vs.5).
 - 2) Is capable of articulating the entire realm of STA-sponsored evil (vs.6).
 - 3) Defiles the whole body (Matt.15:11).
 - 4) Incites the whole course of human existence (vs.6).
 - 5) Receives its spark from demonic influences (vs.6).
 - 6) Is not amenable to control (vss.7,8).
 - 7) Is unstable and deadly (vs.8).
3. Lying and deceit are closely related verbal sins (Ex.20:16, the ninth Commandment - **"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor"**).

Sins of the Tongue (from Jack M. Ballinger)

- 1) God cannot lie (Heb.6:18).
 - 2) Lying and deceit are an abomination to God (Prov.12:22; Psalm5:6).
 - 3) Lies will not endure (Prov.12:19).
 - 4) The man with the dishonest tongue will fall into calamity. Prov. 17:20
 - 5) Wealth gained by lies leads to the sin unto death (Prov.21:6).
 - 6) Deceit is a function of the unprincipled rich (Psalm52).
 - 7) Lying and deceit are sins associated with national reversionism (Psalm55:11; Jer.5:27; 8:5,10).
 - 8) Deceit is a function of conspiracy (Prov.12:20).
 - 9) Lying conceals hatred (Prov.10:18; 26:24).
 - 10) Antichrist will employ deceit (Dan.8:25).
 - 11) God denies deceivers a place before Him (Psalm101:7).
 - 12) Absence of deceit is a mark of maturity (Psalm32:2).
 - 13) Avoidance of deceit leads to a longer life (Psalm34:8-14; 55:23).
 - 14) We should pray for deliverance from deceitful people (Psalm144:8-11).
 - 15) We should not lie to each other (Col.3:9).
 - 16) Jesus avoided deceit (Isa.53:9; 1Pet.2:22).
 - 17) We are to avoid this sin (Prov.4:24).
 - 18) Wisdom is the opposite of dishonesty. *All the words of my [= wisdom's] mouth are righteous; there is nothing twisted or crooked in them.* (Prov. 8:8; ESV)
4. Flattery is closely associated with deceit and is a sin of the tongue.
 - 1) It is always associated with deceit (Psalm5:9; 12:2; Prov.26:28; Rom.16:18).
 - 2) It is a function of the evil woman (Prov.2:16; 7:5,21).
 - 3) It is a function of the deceivers of the last days (Jd.16).
 - 4) There is more blessing for rebuke than flattery (Prov.28:23).
 - 5) It is something that is foreign to the mature believer (Job.32:21,22).
 - 6) It is not a function of the faithful communicator (1Thess.2:5).
 - 7) God will cut off all flatterers (Psalm12:3).
 5. Gossip and slander are verbal sins (Rom.1:28-30).
 - 1) Such activity was forbidden under the Law (Lev.19:16).
 - 2) A fool spreads slander (Prov.10:18).
 - 3) Slander destroys category 3 love, friendship (Prov.16:28; 17:9).
 - 4) Slanderers will not be established (Psalm140:11).
 - 5) We are not to associate with such persons (Prov.20:19).
 - 6) Malicious gossips abound in the last days (2Tim.3:1-3).
 - 7) Deacon's wives are not to be such (1Tim.3:11).
 - 8) Older ladies are to avoid this (Ti.2:3).
 - 9) We are to isolate this sin (Eph.4:31; Col.3:8; 1Pet.2:1).
 - 10) Absence of this sin is a mark of spiritual maturity (Psalm15:3).
 6. Boasting is a sin of the tongue (1Sam.2:3; James3:5).
 - 1) Men boast in evil (Psalm52:1), wealth (Psalm49:6), idols (Psalm97:7), and men (1Cor.3:21).
 - 2) It is a characteristic of the Rapture generation (2Tim.3:2).
 - 3) Men at the end are enjoined to cease boasting (Psalm75).
 - 4) We are not to boast in tomorrow (Prov.27:1; James4:13-17).
 - 5) Rather, we should boast in our knowledge and understanding of God's plan (Jer.9:23,24; 1Cor.1:31; Psalm20:7; 34:2; 44:8).
 7. Cursing is a sin of the tongue.

Sins of the Tongue (from Jack M. Ballinger)

- 1) It is associated with bitterness (Rom.3:14).
- 2) Directed towards God (Ex.20:7).
- 3) Since man is created in the image of God, we are not to curse man
- 4) Job would not curse God (Job.2:9,10).
8. Complaining is a verbal sin demonstrating maladjustment to one's niche.
 - 1) The Exodus generation was constantly complaining due to reversionism (Ex.15:24; 16:2; Num.14:27; Deut.1:26,27; Psalm106:25).
 - 2) We are not to do as they did (1Cor.10:10).
 - 3) God hears our complaining (Ex.16:7-9,12).
 - 4) Jesus was the object of this sin (Lk.5:30 15:2 19:7 Jn.6:41,61 7:32).
 - 5) We are to do all things without complaining (Phil.2:14 1Pet.4:9).
 - 6) We are not to complain against one another (James5:9).
9. Foul language, dirty jokes or stories, and silly talk is another area that believers should avoid (Eph.5:3,4 "and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks"; cp. 4:29).
10. Blasphemy is a verbal sin that includes reviling God's name (akin to cursing) and contradicting God's word (false doctrine is blasphemy).
 - 1) The King of Assyria committed this sin by telling the Jews that God could not deliver them (Isa.37:1-7).
 - 2) Israel's misfortunes, due to divine discipline, have led to Gentile blasphemy (Isa.52:5; Rom.2:24).
 - 3) Paul was, as an unbeliever, the greatest sinner due to his blasphemy (1Tim.1:13).
 - 4) The Antichrist is a super blasphemer (Rev.13:5,6).
 - 5) The doctrines of false religion constitute blasphemy (Rev.17:1).
 - 6) All blasphemy is subject to forgiveness except rejection of Christ (Matt.12:31).
11. Some other abuses of speech to guard against.
 - 1) Unfulfilled promises (Deut.23:23 Psalm15:4 Eccl.5:4,5).
 - 2) Rash and impudent speech (Prov.29:20 15:28).
 - 3) Many words (Eccl.5:2,3,7 10:14 Prov.10:19 15:2).
12. Control of the tongue is a mark of maturity (Psalm15; James3:2). **If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless.** (James 1:26; ESV)
13. Control your tongue and pursue Bible doctrine instead. **Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.** (James 1:21; ESV)
14. God protects the positive believer from the attack of the tongue (Job.5:21 Psalm31:20 120).
15. Divine discipline awaits those who do not control their speech (Prov.21:23 11:11 10:31).
16. The tongue of the powerful and ruthless.
 - 1) The Word of God recognizes the existence of the ruthless and oppressive
 - 2) Their mouth conceals violence (Prov.10:6).
 - 3) David prayed for protection from such men (Psalm57:4-6; 64; 140).
 - 4) They constantly plot against the righteous (Psalm37:12).
 - 5) Such men from among all nations will be opposed to Israel (Psalm59).
 - 6) God is opposed to them (Prov.8:13).
 - 7) The Word of God describes their end (Psalm73).
 - 8) The perverted tongue will be stopped (Prov.10:31).
17. The prayer of the positive, God-fearing believer with respect to speech: Psalm141:3 "Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; Keep watch over the door of my lips."

This doctrine was taken out of **Proverbs 4** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

From <http://www.versebyverse.org/doctrine/sins-tongue.pdf> accessed April 17, 2020. I have apparently edited and/or supplemented this doctrine.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

A Misuse of Words, from James Rickard

1. Lying, (telling a falsehood about yourself or others): Prov 6:16-17a; 10:18a; 12:19, 22a; 17:4b, 7; 19:5b, 9b, 22b; 21:6; 26:28a.
2. Slandering, (saying something false and bad about someone that may damage their reputation.): Prov 10:18b; 20:19; 30:10.
3. Gossiping, (talking about other people often groundless rumors usually of a personal, sensational or intimate nature, "idle talk"): Prov 11:13; 16:28b; 17:9b; 18:8; 20:19; 26:20, 22.
4. Constant talking, (too busy talking to learn): Prov 10:8, 10b, 19; 17:28; 18:2; 20:19b. Prov 10:10, "[He who winks the eye causes trouble, and a babbling fool will be ruined.](#)"
5. False witnessing, (lying in a court of law or some other fact gathering setting): Prov 12:17b; 14:5b, 25b; 19:5a, 28a; 21:28; 25:18.
6. Mocking, (to scorn, scoff, treat with contempt or mimic someone in a ridiculing way): Prov 13:1b; 14:6a; 15:12; 17:5a; 19:29a; 21:11a; 22:10; 24:9b; 30:17. Prov 17:5, "[He who mocks the poor taunts his Maker; he who rejoices at calamity will not go unpunished.](#)"
7. Harsh talking, (perverse, reckless, harsh, evil, sly words): Prov 10:31b-32; 12:18a; 13:3b; 14:3a; 15:1b, 28b; 17:4a; 19:1, 28b. Prov 10:31-32, "[The mouth of the righteous flows with wisdom, but the perverted tongue will be cut out. The lips of the righteous bring forth what is acceptable, but the mouth of the wicked what is perverted.](#)"
8. Boasting, (to brag about your accomplishments, talents or possessions): Prov 17:7 (Excellent = Boasting); 20:14; 25:14; 27:1-2. Prov 25:14, "[Like clouds and wind without rain is a man who boasts of his gifts](#)"
9. Quarreling, (angry dispute or disagreement, causing strife): Prov 13:10; 15:18; 17:14, 19; 19:13; 20:3; 21:9; 19; 22:10; 25:24; 26:17, 20-21; 27:15. Prov 15:18, "[A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but the slow to anger calms a dispute.](#)"
10. Deceiving, (to delude, trick or mislead by dishonest behavior): Prov 7:19-20; 12:2; 15:4b; 25:23.
11. Flattering, (to praise someone to get something you want): Prov 26:28b; 28:23; 29:5.
12. Ignorant or foolish words: Prov 14:7; 15:2b, 7-14; 18:6-7. Prov 14:7, "[Leave the presence of a fool, or you will not discern words of knowledge.](#)" Prov 18:6-7, "[A fool's lips bring strife, and his mouth calls for blows. A fool's mouth is his ruin, and his lips are the snare of his soul.](#)"

From <http://gracedoctrine.org/proverbs-chapter-6/> accessed September 23, 2015.

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A Correct Use of the Tongue, from James Rickard

1. Words that help and encourage: Prov 10:11a, 20a, 21a; 12:14a, 18b; 15:4a; 18:4, 20-21. Prov 18:4, "[The words of a man's mouth are deep waters; the fountain of wisdom is a bubbling brook.](#)"

A Correct Use of the Tongue, from James Rickard

2. Words that express wisdom: Prov 10:13a, 31a; 14:3b; 15:1a, 7a; 16:10, 21b, 23b; 20:15.
3. Words that are few: Prov 10:19; 11:12b; 13:3a; 17:27a.
4. Words that are fitting, (kind, appropriate, or pleasant): Prov 10:32a; 12:25; 15:1a, 4a, 23; 16:24; 25:11, 15. Prov 12:25, *“Anxiety in a man’s heart weighs it down, but a good word makes it glad.”*
5. Words that are true: Prov 12:17a, 19a, 22b; 14:5a, 25a.
6. Words that are carefully chosen: Prov 13:3a; 15:28; 16:23a; 21:23. Prov 21:23, *“He who guards his mouth and his tongue, guards his soul from troubles.”*

From <http://gracedoctrine.org/proverbs-chapter-6/> accessed April 17, 2020

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Peter Pett: *Both the Old and New Testaments lay great emphasis on the tongue and its dangers, and indeed so often that it would be impossible to list the references, but see e.g. Psalm 15:2–3; Psalm 34:13; Psalm 50:19–20; Psalm 101:5 a, 7b; Isa. 28:15; Isa. 28:17; Zec. 8:16; Matt. 12:34–37; Eph. 4:25; Eph. 4:29; Eph. 5:4; Col. 3:9; Jas. 3:1–12; 1Peter 3:10. For the tongue is the revealer of the heart.*²

Full Title: “Grunge Christianity? Counterculture’s Death-Spiral and the Vulgarization of the Gospel” by John MacArthur. I have removed the person’s name from this study.

Counterculture’s Death-Spiral and the Vulgarization of the Gospel by MacArthur

“Worldly preachers seem to go out of their way to put their carnal expertise on display—even in their sermons. In the name of connecting with “the culture” they want their people to know they have seen all the latest programs on MTV; familiarized themselves with all the key themes of “South Park”; learned the lyrics to countless tracks of gangsta rap and heavy metal music; and watched who-knows-how-many R-rated movies. They seem to know every fad top to bottom, back to front, and inside out. They’ve adopted both the style and the language of the world—including lavish use of language that used to be deemed inappropriate in polite society, much less in the pulpit. They want to fit right in with the world, and they seem to be making themselves quite comfortable there.

_____ is one of the best-known representatives of that kind of thinking. He is a very effective communicator—a bright, witty, clever, funny, insightful, crude, profane, deliberately shocking, in-your-face kind of guy. His soteriology is exactly right, but that only makes his infatuation with the vulgar aspects of contemporary society more disturbing.

_____ ministers in Seattle, birthplace of “grunge” music and heart of the ever-changing subculture associated with that movement. _____’s unique style and idiom might aptly be labeled “post-grunge.” His language—even in his sermons—is deliberately crude. He is so well known for using profane language that in *Blue Like Jazz* (p. 133), Donald Miller (popular author and icon of the “Emerging Church” movement, who speaks of _____ with the utmost admiration) nicknamed him “_____ the Cussing Pastor.”

I don’t know what _____’s language is like in private conversation, but I listened to several of his sermons. To be fair, he didn’t use the sort of four-letter expletives most people think of as cuss words—nothing that might

² Dr. Peter Pett; *Commentary Series on the Bible*; from e-sword, Prov. 10:19.

Counterculture's Death-Spiral and the Vulgarization of the Gospel by MacArthur

get bleeped on broadcast television these days. Still, it would certainly be accurate to describe both his vocabulary and his subject matter at times as tasteless, indecent, crude, and utterly inappropriate for a minister of Christ. In every message I listened to, at least once he veered into territory that ought to be clearly marked off limits for the pulpit.”

I do not have a problem with Bible teachers, from time to time, using such words as *damn* or *hell*; or even *bitch*. Part of the problem is, how often these words are used and to what purpose. I am not sure I want to keep this in here, simply because I do not like naming pastors, teachers or evangelists by name in a negative way (unless they are long-gone).

From <http://defendingcontending.com/2008/09/27/john-macarthur-on-mark-driscoll/> accessed October 1, 2015.

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And because I see no reason to reinvent the wheel, here are several sources, which appear to be reliable, on the sins of the tongue.

Links to Sins of the Tongue

Source	Website Address
Kukis	The doctrine of the Sins of the Tongue (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).
Robert McLaughlin	http://www.gbible.org/index.php?proc=pub&sf=rea&pid=10
Grace Notes (a ministry of Austin Bible Church, Austin, Texas)	http://www.gracenotes.info/documents/TOPICS_DOC/SinsOfTheTongue.pdf
Lake Erie Bible Church (P-T Ken Reed)	http://www.lakeeriebiblechurch.org/doctrine/pdf/sins_of_the_tongue.pdf
Maranatha Church (Ballinger)	http://www.versebyverse.org/doctrine/sins-tongue.html
James L. Melton	http://www.biblebelievers.com/jmelton/SinsofTongue.html
Sonnet's Notes	http://www.swordofthespiritbibleministries.com/images/simplelists//NOTESSZ/Sins%20of%20the%20Tongue.pdf
Bible Topics Library (I think these are R. B. Thieme, Jr. notes as well)	http://www.realtime.net/~wdoud/topics/sintngue.html

James 3:5–6 Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. Behold how little a fire kindles how large a forest! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. So the tongue is set among our members, spotting all the body and inflaming the course of nature, and being inflamed by hell.

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