

6. A member of the Gashouse Gang, his aggressive, hustling, and daring approach during his 13-year career won him the nickname of Wild Horse of the Osage.
7. In the environment of the Christian way of life, a legalistic, excessive conformity to a religious or moral code, which the Bible does not impose for salvation, is typical of those who are “working” for salvation.
8. Our devout worker is not only living a lie, he imposes his erroneous lifestyle on others. This behavior is indicated by the phrase, “does not bridle his own tongue.”
9. James uses the tongue in another illustration in chapter 3, verse 3, where he refers to a man with the ability “to bridle the whole body” where he again uses horses to make his point in:

**James 3:3** Now if we put bits into the horses' mouths so that they will obey us, we direct their entire body as well.

10. Let's note a few principles on the problem of sins of the tongue:

(1) Sins of the tongue originate from the sin nature:

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

(2) Sins of the tongue are the verbal expressions of certain mental attitude sins such as pride, envy, jealousy, bitterness, vindictiveness, implacability, hatred, etc.

**Psalms 5:9** There is nothing reliable in what they say; their inward part is destruction itself. Their throat is an open grave; they flatter with their tongue.

(3) Proverbs 6:16–19 lists the seven worst sins and three of those are sins of the tongue. See if you are smart enough to identify these three:

**Proverbs 6:16** There are six things the Lord hates, yes, seven which are an abomination to Him:

**v. 17** Haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,

**Proverbs 6:18** a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that run rapidly to evil,

**v. 19** a false witness which utters lies, and one who spreads strife among brothers. (NASB)

(4) Sins of the tongue produce triple compound discipline:

**Matthew 7:1** “Do not judge so that you will not be judged.

**v. 2** “For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you.

The sin of the tongue is the result of a mental attitude sin so there is divine discipline for the mental attitude sin.

The sin of the tongue always maligns, judges, or gossips about someone else so divine discipline for that.

Therefore, the sin of the tongue always mentions someone else’s sin. Whichever one is mentioned, if the individual actually committed that sin, he is not punished for it.

This sin is instead measured back to you. This results in triple compound sins. The cluster can result in painful discipline from the justice of God.

(5) The continued commission of sins of the tongue can result in scar tissue of the soul. Unabated, it can result in the sin unto death.

**Psalms 12:3** May the Lord cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that boasts! (NET)

(6) God protects and blesses the believer who is victimized by the sins of the tongue.

**Job 5:19** He will deliver you from six calamities; yes in seven no evil will touch you.

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**Note:** In Scripture, the number six relates to man where as the number 7 represents deity. The implication from this verse is that man will impose **צָרָה (sarah)**: “calamities,” a noun meaning “trouble, distress, anguish”:

It refers to a situation or a time of extreme discomfort, an affliction for many different reasons. God delivers His people from this condition (Genesis 35:3; Psalm 9:9; Job 5:19). The pursuit of wisdom is also a refuge in a time of distress.<sup>1</sup>

- (7) *Sarah* is the result of life in the devil’s world. It affects those who do not have wisdom but operate on guidance from the lie.
- (8) Believers who acquire wisdom can lengthen their lives and find great inner happiness by avoiding the sins of the tongue:

**Psalm 34:12** Who is the man who desires life and loves length of days that he may see good?

**v. 13** Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit [ **מִרְמָה (mirmah)**: intentional deception by withholding truth to accomplish evil ].

- (9) These verses inform the believer that his life will not only be lengthened but it will be full and prosperous by refraining from judging others with sins of the tongue.
- (10) Those who do not refrain from committing verbal sins are classified as troublemakers in:

**Psalm 52:2** Your tongue devises destruction, like a sharp razor, O worker of deceit [ **רְמִיָּה (remiyyah)**: the production of deceit by use of the tongue ].

- (11) Believers are commanded to avoid fellowship with troublemakers in:

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<sup>1</sup> Warren Baker and Eugene Carpenter, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament* (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 2003), 968.

**Romans 16:17** Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them.

**v. 18** For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.

- (12) Control of the tongue is a sign of maturity and possession of the sophisticated spiritual life which will be developed soon in James 2:1–13.
- (13) Because sins of the tongue can destroy a congregation, it is the duty of the pastor to constantly warn against them.

**2 Timothy 2:16** Avoid worldly [ ἄπειρος (*ápeiros*): doctrinally ignorant ] and empty chatter [ κενοφωνία (*kenophōnía*)<sup>2</sup>: senseless, wicked speech ], for it will lead to further ungodliness [ ἀσέβεια (*asébeia*): neglect or violation of duty toward God ],

**v. 17** and their talk [ λόγος (*lógos*): word of human rationales ] will spread like gangrene [ γάγγραινα (*gangraina*)<sup>3</sup> ].

- (14) Paul is signing off with this epistle and in doing so includes a warning to Timothy as a pastor-teacher and to congregations at large that destruction awaits those doctrinally ignorant who speak words void of biblical guidance.
- (15) Such talk, rich with human viewpoint, is likened to decaying bodily tissue that untreated ultimately results in physical death. Such was the ultimate result in the Ephesian churches if not stopped by the city's pastors.

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<sup>2</sup> “Paul designates the godless as those who engage in senseless or wicked discourses, speeches that are devoid of any divine or spiritual character, fruitless as far as the satisfaction of man’s need of salvation and the molding of Christian life and character are concerned” (Spiros Zodhiates, gen. ed., *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, rev. ed. [Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 1993], 856).

<sup>3</sup> “Gangrene or mortification which, unless properly treated, spreads from the place affected and eats away or consumes the neighboring parts of the body and at length destroys the whole body” (Ibid., 352).