

“PROFANITY!”

America’s New National Language

By Evangelist Dea Warford

It was about the fifth grade and a new kid had come to school. His name was David Myers. I was shocked at his vocabulary – one cuss word after another. Why was I so shocked? Because kids at our school didn't talk that way. Kids on my block didn't talk that way. My parents didn't talk that way. People on TV didn't talk that way. Thus, it was something new and shocking to me. I don't know where he learned to cuss, but in 1960, he was certainly the exception.

Now, (if one believes Hollywood's depiction of life in the USA), everybody cusses: preachers, kids, ladies. And, their preferred word is the 'f' word. Hollywood thinks this is "art reflecting life". It isn't. I truly believe that Hollywood was the primary tool of the enemy to teach America to cuss: From Clark Gable's 1939 “Gone With The Wind” line, “Frankly, Scarlett, I don’t give a (blank)” to the 1999 "South Park" movie where there are 340 obscenities. Christian film reviewer Ted Baehr called it "the most vile movie in history". And, it took only 60 years!

Where did profanity come from? Why do people use profanity? Is it a sin to use a cuss word? What about Christians who use profanity? This month I would like to speak to this very current and very relevant topic.

Though Hollywood has championed foul language, I am convinced that profanity was spawned in Hell itself. James 3:6 says, *"The tongue is afire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is **SET ON FIRE BY HELL.**"* Hell ignites the tongue's evil fury. Dr. Ebby spoke at the church where I pastored back in November, 1989. He had a powerful testimony of how he had fallen to his death.

While lying with other dead bodies in the hospital morgue, God miraculously resurrected him from the dead an hour or two later. While dead, God took him to heaven and hell. In hell, he found himself in a small cave, where demons were there with him. They kept tormenting him with the foulest language he had ever heard. Demons love to cuss! They are mad about their eternal punishment. They are mad at man's opportunity for eternal salvation. And, they are in total rebellion to God and his plan for his universe.

If foul language is the vocabulary of Hell, what is the Satanic motivation in putting these same cuss words in man's mouth? We can discern this from a look at Isa. 6:3, where Isaiah received a vision of the Lord with angels around His throne crying *"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts."* The highest aspect of God's character is His holiness. Some mistakenly think it is his love. But, even God's love for lost mankind, must yield to His holiness, as one day he will forever banish wicked men from his presence because of their sin.

When Isaiah saw the Lord in all His holiness, the first thing he said was, *"Woe is me, for I am undone (lost); because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips"* (v. 5). Think about it! Here was one of the most righteous men of his day, yet when he was

personally confronted with the holiness of God, his first compunction for sin was his "unclean lips" and dwelling among others with "unclean lips". Unholy speech makes us unholy. *"From within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications ... wickedness . . . Lasciviousness ... Pride ... Foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man."* (Mark 7:21-23).

To defile, in the Old Testament, meant to make something no longer acceptable by God or useable by the priests attending the Temple. Priests wore holy garments and made sacrifices for the sins of Israel using the holy dedicated instruments.

Even touching a dead carcass rendered a holy priest "defiled" until he could be made clean again by bathing in pure water, etc. A holy God needs us to be holy people to use us too: *"As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear."* (1 Pet. 1;15-17).

"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things" (Matt. 12:34, 35). Profanity reveals something that is already in a person's heart. The devil excites it and encourages one to express it, but to actually give vent to it and say it, one must already have yielded a place for it in his heart. *"Let your yes, be yes, and your no, be no, for whatsoever is more than these, comes of evil."* (Matt. 5:37).

Every cuss word "cometh of evil" but we are responsible before God for giving place to that evil (Eph. 4:26, 27). Profanity is so unnecessary, because there are perfectly adequate words that express the same sentiment, without being offensive. For instance, why not say "baloney" instead of B.S.? Why not say dung instead of the dirtier word? All "evil" language in some way shows either disrespect or disdain for God, is sexual in nature, refers to a person's "private parts", or speaks of bodily discharges. Let's look at these 4 types of cuss words ...

1. USING GOD'S NAME IN VAIN: The Word is very clear about this – *"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain ; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."* (Exod. 20:7). The Jews would not even speak God's name for centuries for fear that they would be speaking it in vain (This is why there is still debate as to whether God's revealed Old Testament name is "Jehovah" or "Yehweh". In the Hebrew, it could be pronounced either way). [See article "God, or G-d", at <http://www.christsbondservants.org>]

"Thine enemies take thy name in vain." (Ps. 138:20). Those who insist on using God's (or Jesus') name in vain, have chosen to be an enemy of God. To use God's name as a cuss-word trivializes his precious name. It shows disrespect for who He is: The Lord of the universe. It shows a lack of fear for God and "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." (Prov. 9:10). And, it simply gives vent to Satan's hatred of that name.

2. Sex acts: God is no prude. He created sex. What does He think about sex? He says so in Heb. 13:4, *"Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled; but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. "* Sex, within the marriage bed is "undefiled". It isn't a "holy" act, so to speak, but it is

certainly not "an unholy act". But, sex outside of marriage is. God will judge such acts. Today's movies and TV programs celebrate premarital, extramarital and homosexual sex. Satan's and Hollywood's attempts to bring sex out of the marriage bed into our living rooms, classrooms, and casual dialogue is part of a conspiracy to make sex something it isn't (a public forum) and to make marriage something it isn't (One big ongoing sex-act). Cuss words and loose speech that casually (and constantly) try to glorify sex outside of marriage simply plays into the hands of Satan's attempts to destroy the USA, like Sodom and Gomorrah who were "going after strange flesh". Sexual perversion is "strange", that is, contrary to God's plan for His creation. And, foul "sexual" language is the flesh's "strange" vocabulary.

3. Private parts of the human body: When Adam and Eve were first created, they were naked. After the fall, however, God made clothing for them of animal skins. Man had become so evil, that his inordinate interest in private parts would ultimately lead him to sin, so God helped reduce the temptation with clothing. Hollywood's disrobing of movie stars is nothing less than man's rebellion in refusing to wear the clothing God intended him to wear for good reason. Renaissance art helped birth what became a centuries downward spiral into our present pornography on video and the internet. Dirty jokes and dirty words simply encourage and perpetuate fallen man's distorted and carnal interest in the naked body.

4. Bodily wastes: There's nothing evil about what is flushed down the toilet. But, we flush it down the toilet for good reason. It stinks, is poisonous or germ laden, and it's ugly. Digging bodily wastes from the sewer and into our vocabulary only adds to our life something that "stinks" is "poisonous" and "ugly". *"Put off all these things ... Filthy communication out of your mouth"* (Col. 3:8). *"The words of the pure are pleasant words."* (Prov. 15:26). Bathroom humor is "filthy", and speaks of filthy things. It is not "pleasant".

One of the things that Jesus made very clear in His teachings, was that we would be judged, not just by our faith and our deeds, but also by our words. *"But I say unto you, that every idle (careless) word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."* (Matt. 12:36, 27). *"Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God, for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few (in other words, choose them carefully)."* (Eccl. 5:2).

Solomon further wrote, *"Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error. why should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands. For in ... many words there are also divers vanities but fear thou God"*. (Eccl 5:7). James says that our vocabulary is proof of our religion: *"If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, that man's religion is vain."* (James 1:26).

We prove our sincerity by our words, and we prove our insincerity with the same. In fact, James further warns *"Above all things (so this is Most important!) swear not, neither by heaven" (the meaning of "swear" evolved through the centuries to now mean, not only making on oath, but also the use of profanity!). . . But let your yea be yea and your nay, nay: lest ye fall into condemnation (judgment)."* (James 5:12). Jesus said the same thing in Matt. 5:34, 37, *"Swear not at all ... Let your communication be yea, yea: nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."* "Swearing,

in order to bring heaven's witness to prove one's sincerity was allowed in Old Testament times, but not any longer! In fact, swearing "cometh of evil". And, adding four letter words for emphasis or to impress others more than the necessary "yea or nay" (simply speaking clear, easily understood sincere words) also "cometh of evil".

Jesus said, *"I am come that you might have life, and that you might have life more abundantly."* (John 10:10). Jesus comes to give us "life". Since "death and life is in the power of the tongue" (Prov. 18:21), we want to be very careful of what comes out of our mouth. This proverb goes on to say, "and they that love it, shall eat the fruit thereof". Words are like seeds. Seeds become trees – trees of life or trees of death. Eventually, these trees bear fruit. And, we or those around us will end up eating the fruit. Christians should produce good fruit – *"the fruit of the Spirit"* (Gal. 5:22).

See if the following list of the fruit of the Spirit is compatible with foul language:

Love: Do expletives reveal one's love for his kids & grandma?

Joy: Do foul sounding words make people around us happy?

Peace: Does cursing stimulate a peaceful environment?

Patience: Do hastily spoken words show one's patient side?

Gentleness: Does filthy talk demonstrate one is a gentleman?

Goodness: Do evil words do any good to anybody?

Faithfulness: Does profanity show loyalty to a Holy God?

Meekness: Does public cursing prove one's humility?

Self-Control: Does offensive speech reveal self-discipline?

Any honest person would have to admit that foul language does not fit the criteria for the "fruit of the Spirit". Eph. 4:29, 30 says, *"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of thy mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God."* He is called "the Holy Spirit" for a reason. True Christians long to have the power of the Spirit in their lives. They desire His guidance, His blessing and to please Him. Thus, they will carefully guard their speech, keeping it "whole" or "holy", so as not to offend The "Holy" Spirit.

My son, Nathan, has a friend who is supposed to be a Christian, yet speaks with a foul mouth, even using the "f" word regularly. Nathan's frustration with knowing how to deal with him was part of my motivation to write this article. Nathan tried talking to him about it, but his answer was, "I have prayed about it, and God hasn't convicted me of it." There is a problem with his attitude. First, the conscience can be *"seared with a hot iron"* (1 Tim. 4:2), so that one who has repeatedly offended the Holy Spirit by his persistence in sin, can no longer depend on the compunctions of a weak, seared

conscience. Second, since *"the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it"* (Jer. 17:9), a person is a fool to depend only on what his heart tells him *"He who trusts in his own heart is a fool."* (Prov. 28:26). That is why God gave us the Word: the only inerrant standard by which to judge evil. Thus anyone who still doubts the error of cursing should study the following Biblical warnings:

"I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue. I will keep my tongue with a bridle." (Ps. 39:1). Err on the side of caution/holiness, not on the side of fleshly stubbornness.

"A time to keep silence" (Eccl. 3:7). If there is a time to be silent, wouldn't an ideal time be before you curse?

"Behold, the Lord cometh ... To execute judgment upon all, and to convict all that are ungodly among them of all ... Their hard speeches (Harsh things) which ungodly sinners have spoken against him . . . Their mouth speaking great swelling words (pride motivates much cursing)" (Jude 15, 16). Keep in mind that you'll one day stand before your judge and give account for your words. The best rule: before you say it, ask, "would I be saying this if Jesus were in this room now?" People who curse near me may apologize because I'm a minister. I tell them, "I'm not your judge". (But Jesus is!) *"He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life, but he that opens wide his lips shall have destruction."* (Prov. 13:33).

"A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul" (Prov. 18:7). Don't enter the cursing trap!

"If thou hast thought evil, lay thy hand upon thy mouth" (Prov. 30; 32). It's bad enough to think it, but you don't have to say it!

For those who are truly seeking to guard your speech, here are wonderful scriptures to encourage you in that ... *"All the words of my mouth are in righteousness, there is nothing perverse in them."* (Prov. 8:8). Can you say this too?

"In her mouth is the law of kindness." (Prov. 31:26)

"The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious." (Prov. 10:12). We should always be considerate of what others want.

"Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that you might know how you ought to answer every man." (Col. 4:6). We are to carefully choose our words.

"In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works... in sound speech, that cannot be condemned, that he that is of the contrary part (opponent) may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you." (Titus 2:7, 8). Others are imitating you!

"For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body." (James 3:2). Your goal: no offense to others!

The Word makes it clear how we can deal with foul-mouthed people around us: "*Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge.*" (Prov. 14:7) and "*Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou be like unto him*" (Prov. 26:4). How? Don't laugh at filthy jokes or respond positively to filthy words. There is every good, holy and righteous (right) reason to never speak an unclean word. There is also every evil, vile reason to do so. May the above truths convince you to choose the holy!

Finally, if you find yourself ever using profanity when you get really mad, or hurt yourself, or do some stupid thing that disgusts you, there is something you can train yourself to do. Psalm 76:10 says, "*Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.*" If you will simply make yourself say "Thank you Jesus!" by faith, this Psalm promises that the Lord will restrain any further outburst of anger. You train yourself for such times by learning to praise the Lord in everything (1 Thess. 5:16-18), praising him when depressed (Isa. 61:1-3) and when circumstances look grim (II Cor. 12:7-10).

A spirit trained to do what the word says at every juncture in life will be on auto-pilot when Satan tries to inspire a cuss word during some fit of anger. If you've struggled in this area of your life, make a commitment to Christ right now to glorify him with your mouth, repent of being the devil's lackey and start each day by saying David's words: "*Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, Oh Lord my strength.*" (Psalm 19:14). — By Evangelist Dea Warford