

# LANGUAGE

“And he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him.”

**Leviticus 24:11-16**

The Lord has spoken again in our time concerning this serious matter. In the revelation given to President Brigham Young on January 14, 1847, while the Saints were preparing to leave Winter Quarters for these valleys in the West, the Lord said to them, “Keep yourselves from evil to take the name of the Lord in vain, for I am the Lord your God, even the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob” (D&C 136:21).

“But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.”

**Col. 3:8**

**President McKay** speaks clearly regarding profane language: “No parent can consistently teach faith in Christ who profanes the name of Deity. Profanity is never heard in the well-ordered home. Swearing is a vice that bespeaks a low standard of breeding. Blasphemous exclamations drive out all spirit of reverence.”

*Gospel Ideals*, Salt Lake City: *Improvement Era*, 1953, p. 420.

The Lord speaks with clarity on this subject through his prophets. President Joseph Fielding Smith states: “Profanity is filthiness. A person is known as much by his language as he is by the company he keeps. ... Filthiness in any form is degrading and soul-destroying and should be avoided.” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1:13.)

**Ted E. Brewerton, “Profanity and Swearing,” *Ensign*, May 1983, 72**

If we are not most careful with our thoughts and speech, the words we use will use us. Language has its own ethics, and one who communicates truth is like a bright light in the darkness. We must nurture language like that.

**Ted E. Brewerton, “Profanity and Swearing,” *Ensign*, May 1983, 72**

It should be obvious to every believer that these mighty names—by which miracles are wrought, by which the world was formed, through which man was created, and by which we can be saved—are holy and must be treated with the utmost reverence. As we read in modern revelation, “Remember that that which cometh from above is sacred, and must be spoken with care, and by constraint of the Spirit.” (D&C 63:64.)

**Dallin H. Oaks, “Reverent and Clean,” *Ensign*, May 1986, 49**

The words we speak are important. The Savior taught that men will be held to account for “every idle word” in the day of judgment. “For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.” (Matt. 12:36-37.) He also said, “That which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.” (Matt. 15:11.)

**Dallin H. Oaks, “Reverent and Clean,” *Ensign*, May 1986, 49**

“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good.”

**Ephesians 4:29**

How you speak says much about who you are. Clean and intelligent language is evidence of a bright and wholesome mind. Use language that uplifts, encourages, and compliments others. Do not insult others or put them down, even in joking. Speak kindly and positively about others so you can fulfill the Lord’s commandment to love one another. When you use good language, you invite the Spirit to be with you.

**For the Strength of Youth**

Choose friends who use good language. Help others around you use clean language by your example and by good-naturedly encouraging them to choose other words. Politely walk away or change the subject when others around you use bad language.

**For the Strength of Youth**

If you have developed the habit of swearing, you can break it. Begin by making a decision to change. Pray for help. If you start to use words you know are wrong, keep quiet or say what you have to say in a different way.

**For the Strength of Youth**

After speaking with a person for a short while, don't you begin to form an impression that may last for years? The same thing happens when others listen to you. They form impressions of you that can have long-lasting effects. If what they hear is uplifting, they think well of you and of what you represent. But if what they hear is profane or derogatory. ...

**Robert K. Dellenbach, "Profanity," *New Era*, May 1992**

"How you speak and the words you use tell much about the image you choose to portray. Profane, vulgar, or crude language and inappropriate or off-color jokes are offensive to the Lord. They harm your spirit and degrade you. Don't lower yourself to use such language or jokes, even if people around you do."

***For the Strength of Youth, Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1990, p. 10.***

Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained that profanity "embraces any language that shows contempt for holy things, that breathes a spirit of irreverence or blasphemy, or that is vulgar in nature, thus leaving a mental impression of unclean and unwholesome things. Profanity," he emphasized, "is an evidence of a diseased soul." ("Profanity," *Mormon Doctrine*, 2d ed., Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, Inc., 1966, p. 602.)

**John S. Gholdston, "Words of Darkness, Words of Light," *Ensign*, Jan. 1992**

The Lord does not mince words about the words we use. He says "that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgement."

**John S. Tanner, "Sin—On the Tips of Our Tongues," *Ensign*, Feb. 1991**

We are judged by our words every day. Nothing reveals us so intimately as how we use our divine gift of speech. Are we mean, crude, irreverent, thoughtless, smug, self-righteous, pompous? Our tongues will tell. Our language, too, reveals much about our integrity, honesty, kindness, goodness, humility, and decency. Language reveals character.

**John S. Tanner, "Sin—On the Tips of Our Tongues," *Ensign*, Feb. 1991**

"After this life, you will be restored to that which you have here allowed yourself to become."

**Elder Richard G. Scott, *Ensign*, May 1997**

"Oh, the kind words we give shall in memory live  
And sunshine forever impart.

Let us oft speak kind words to each other;

Kind words are sweet tones of the heart."

**Let us Oft Speak Kind Words, LDS Hymn 232**

"Nay, speak no ill; a kindly word  
Can never leave a sting behind;  
And, oh, to breathe each tale we've heard  
Is far beneath a noble mind.

Full oft a better seed is sown

By choosing thus the kinder plan,

For, if but little good is known,

Still let us speak the best we can..."

**Nay, Speak No Ill, LDS Hymn 233**

Cease to be idle; cease to be unclean; cease to find fault one with another...

**Doctrine and Covenants 88:124**

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your 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, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

**Ephesians 4:29-32**

Thou shalt not speak evil of thy neighbor, nor do him any harm.

**Doctrine and Covenants 42:27**