

## **The Tongue**

### **Objectives:**

To learn about the tongue and its implications and ways to tame the tongue.

### **References:**

- ❖ CopticHymns.net- The Tongue- Servant's Manual

### **Scriptural Verses:**

- ❖ “A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks” (Luke 6:45)
- ❖ “The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly, But the mouth of fools pours forth foolishness” (Proverbs 15:2)
- ❖ “If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body” (James 3:2)

### **Lesson Outlines**

- ❖ Words are our most prized possessions. And they really set us apart from the whole of creation because plants, rocks, and animals cannot speak. Words show us to be made in the image and likeness of God. Through words, we can communicate with God and with each other. But also we can blaspheme and curse with it. St James warned us from the sins of the tongue when he said: “But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening? Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh” (James 3: 8- 12).
- ❖ The word of God creates: In the very first chapter of the Bible, we read over and over again that when God created the world, He said...and it was so. The word of God has the power to bring to birth new realities that never existed before “So will my word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to me empty without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it” ( Isaiah 55:11).
- ❖ The word of man also has its power either to build or to destroy: Our Lord said: “But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the Day of Judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned ” (Matthew 12:36-37) and St. John Chrysostom said: "God has surrounded the tongue with a double wall, with the barrier of teeth first and the fence of the lips second. In order that it may not easily and needlessly utter words it should not speak”

### **Our speech identifies us**

- ❖ “A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks” (Luke 6:45).
- ❖ Justin Martyr, Church Father and Apologist, wrote, “By examining the tongue of a patient, physicians find out the diseases of the body; philosophers find out the diseases of the mind; Christians find out the diseases of the soul.”
- ❖ Recall what the maid said to the Apostle Peter after he had denied the Lord Jesus three times. She said, "your speech shows it" (Mark 14:70)

## **The Tongue and our relationships**

- ❖ Don't repeat everything you hear "A talebearer reveals secrets, but he who is of a faithful spirit conceals a matter." (Proverbs 11:13)
- ❖ "Like a madman who throws firebrands, arrows, and death, is the man who deceives his neighbor, and says: I was only joking!" (Proverbs 26:18-19)
- ❖ "A man who bears false witness against his neighbor is like a club, a sword, and a sharp arrow." (Proverbs 25:18)
- ❖ "Ointment and perfume delight the heart, and the sweetness of a man's friend gives delight by hearty counsel" (Proverbs 27:9)
- ❖ "He who covers a transgression seeks love, but he who repeats a matter separates friends." (Proverbs 17:9)
- ❖ "He who loves purity of heart and has grace on his lips, the king will be his friend." (Proverbs 22:11)
- ❖ "By long forbearance a ruler is persuaded, and a gentle tongue breaks a bone." (Proverbs 25:15)
- ❖ "Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, but those who deal truthfully are His delight." (Proverbs 12:22)

## **How does God desire us to use our tongue?**

- ❖ There is a beautiful verse in Psalm 51 (Psalm 50 in the Agpeya) that we read in the beginning of every hour, "Open my lips O Lord, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise" (Psalm 51:15). Note that the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost appeared in the form of tongues! (Acts 2:3) For it is the office of the tongue to proclaim the Good News and glorify the Almighty.
- ❖ In psalm 15: 1-3, we learn that he who may dwell in the holy hill of the Lord is he who walks uprightly, and works righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart; he who does not backbite with his tongue, nor does evil to his neighbor, nor does he take up a reproach against his friend.
- ❖ "Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." (Ephesians 5: 19)
- ❖ "Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers." (Ephesians 4:29)

## **Conclusion**

We need to tame our tongue.

"If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless." (James 1:26)

"In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, but he who restrains his lips is wise." (Proverbs 10:19)

## **Activities / Discussion Points**

1. Learn to THINK before you speak and ask yourself if your words are T(true), H(helpful), I(inspiring), N(necessary), K(kind)?
2. Pray to the Lord:
  - ❖ "Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips." (Psalm 141:3)
  - ❖ "Deliver my soul, O LORD, from lying lips and from a deceitful tongue." (Psalm 120:2)
3. In what ways can our words bring healing and hurt to others?