

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your correspondence to the Al Denson Show and for tuning in every week to our program. My prayer for you is to be encouraged in your daily walk with Christ through the words of this booklet. Our hope is that in turn you will tell others of what God is doing through our ministry to youth and parents on TV. I am convinced you will not find another program on any network anywhere that deals with issues today's youth and their parents are facing, and provides answers from a Godly perspective.

In addition, we would love for you to help us by going to our web site at [www.aldenson.com](http://www.aldenson.com). Here you can write to us, order additional material like this booklet, check out all my music, have a daily bible study, and stay up to date on the ministry. You can also send us a prayer request and questions for the TV show. But more importantly, please continue to be in prayer with us as we work together to help those that are in need.

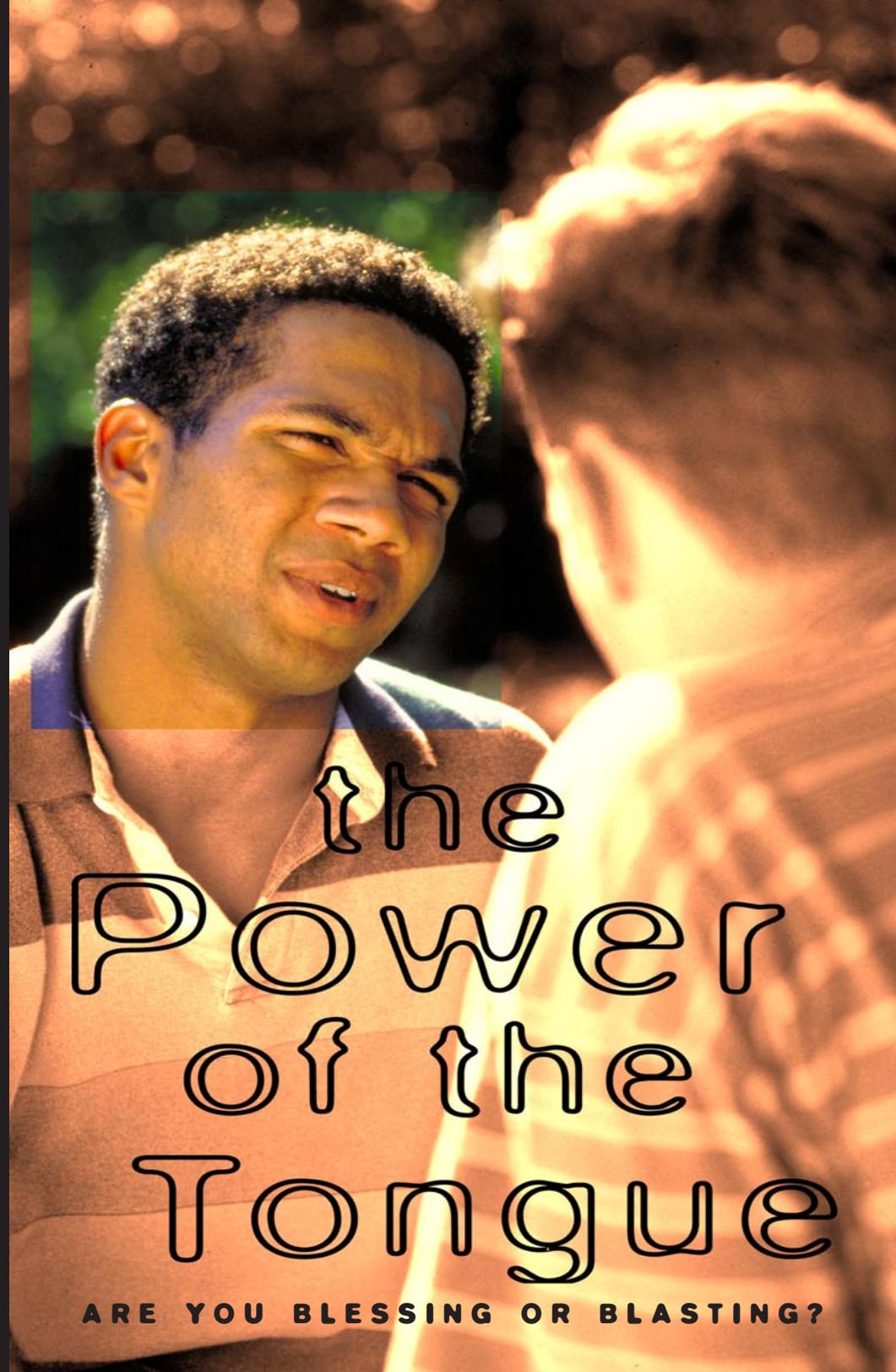
Thanks for watching and God Bless!

Sincerely,



**An Outreach of Celebration Ministries**

The Al Denson Show  
Box 220 Grapevine, TX 76099  
Toll Free 1-877-HOPE101  
Email: [aldenson@aol.com](mailto:aldenson@aol.com)  
Web Site: [www.aldenson.com](http://www.aldenson.com)



the  
Power  
of the  
Tongue

**ARE YOU BLESSING OR BLASTING?**



Most artists create for only a brief moment in time. That phenomenon was once known as “15 minutes of fame”. Yet even in a fickle world, there still emerge a talented few that transcends time and trends. With nearly 15 years as a major label recording artist and seven hit

albums to his credit, Al Denson is that kind of artist.

But the attention and acclaim his artistry has brought him over the years are anything but the routine rewards of worldly success. Rather, they are the fruits of a life of purpose and passion, and a mission that has always reached far beyond merely making music.

The millions of young people Al has performed for, befriended, counseled, consoled and clowned around with in his career already know that. And thousands more are finding out every day.

This past year has seen Al expand his efforts to a global audience through the reach of his daily syndicated television production, “The Al Denson Show.” “You’ve got to reach out to people where they are with the most powerful means and this form of media allows you to build trust and a rapport,” says Al. “This has all been so amazing. I can’t imagine what lies in store when the Lord finally calls me home, but I don’t have to wait for heaven to receive rewards. I get them every time a kid comes up to me and says, ‘I heard what you said, and I accepted Christ.’ You can’t ask for anything more or better than that.”

Write Al at: Box 220 Grapevine, TX 76099  
Email: [aldenson@aol.com](mailto:aldenson@aol.com) Web Site: [www.aldenson.com](http://www.aldenson.com)

# the Power of the Tongue

ARE YOU BLESSING OR BLASTING?

The book of James in the New Testament is a heavy hitter on this subject. In the first chapter, James makes it very clear that if we really know Christ it will show up in two ways: in our walk and in our talk. This means that the way we talk and treat others will either give the world an accurate or an inaccurate picture of God, and may determine whether or not lost people will be receptive to the Gospel. In other words, James is trying to say that consistency is very important in the life of a Christian.

We must understand that how we talk and how we live is going to have a big impact on lost people all around us. God stakes His reputation on His kids. Every time we choose willfully to sin with our lips, it makes the lost world think that our God is weak and powerless. We may not like to hear it, but what lost people think of God and what people think of the church will be determined by the talk and the lives of those who call themselves Christians.

Many people are driven away from Christ and straight to hell by the petty gossiping, fighting, or ungodly language of those who call themselves Christians. Jesus came to earth, and for 33 years, in every situation, every circumstance of life, He modeled to the world the love and character of God. When He

went back to heaven, Jesus left us here to take up where He left off. It is now our responsibility to show the world the love and character of God, so that others can come to know Him, too.

In James 1:19-21, he says, “My dear brothers, take note of this. Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for man’s anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires. Therefore get rid of all

moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the Word planted in you, which can save you.”

James makes a point here that conversation involves two things: listening as well as speaking. Sometimes the trouble we get into with our mouths is because we don’t do what God is telling us to do in these verses. We talk when we should be listening.

God gave us two ears and one

mouth, to remind us of this! When our lifestyle is consistent with the life of Christ we are listening more than we are talking. Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, said, “When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise. A man of knowledge uses words with restraint, and a man of understanding is even-tempered.” (Proverbs 10:19; 17:27).

The tongue is so small, but so powerful. Solomon said in Proverbs 18:21, “The tongue has the power of life and death.” It can either be a source of encouragement and blessing to people

We talk when we should be listening. God gave us two ears and one mouth, to remind us of this!

# a person who isn't mastered by CHRIST will be mastered by his tongue.

or it can be a dangerous weapon to hurt and destroy people. Many Christians who would never dream of physically harming another person think nothing of injuring others with their words. Words are very powerful. Long after physical wounds have healed, the wounds from words are still with us.

How can we be consistent in our talk and in our walk? James says by accepting the Word of God. James says to “humbly accept the Word planted in you, which can save you.” Accept means to “receive as the door by which we enter.” The Word of God is the door by which we enter into consistent living. We are saved by receiving from God, and we are changed the same way. Not by working, or trying harder, but by receiving. Romans 12:2 says that we are to be “transformed (changed) by the renewing of our minds.” The only way that we will be able to talk and walk in a way that is consistent with Christ is to accept and welcome the Word of God into our lives and allow it to transform us.

James says that we are to accept the Word of God “humbly.” The word humbly is the same word translated as “meekly.” It is a picture of a wild horse that has been broken and is now under the control of a master. It is still powerful, but obedient. You can't accept the Word of God and let it change your talk and your walk unless you are willing to be mastered by Christ. You see, man was created to be mastered. If he isn't surrendered to the Lord Jesus Christ as his master, by default he will be mastered by other things. So a person who isn't mastered by Christ will be mastered by his tongue.

People who have really been saved not only have a walk that is consistent, but they will talk in a way that shows the character of Christ. In James 1:26 it says, “If anyone considers himself religious and does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless.” You see, it says here that two things happen when a person does not control his tongue: he deceives himself, and his religion is worthless.

The word “deceives” means “cheats.” James is saying that if you can't control your tongue, you are cheating yourself out of a life that reflects the character of Christ and the love, joy, and peace that He gives. The word “worthless” used here means “without achieving the intended goal.” So what James is saying is

that if you can't control your mouth then what you have is empty, and doesn't achieve the goal of Christ-likeness, and therefore it has no value in your life.

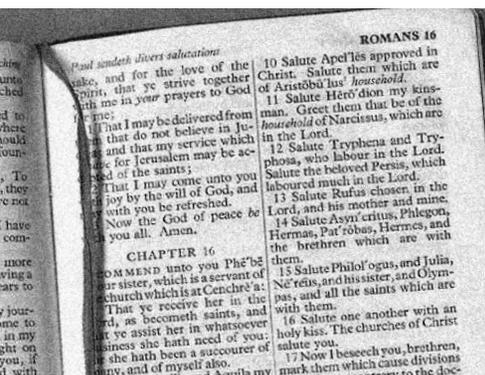
James also makes three important statements about the tongue in the third chapter of James. James 3:3-12 says, “When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. Likewise the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell. All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and creatures of the sea are being tamed by man, but no man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be. Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? My brothers, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.”

## I. Our Lives Become Useful and Have Direction When Our Tongues Are Under Control.

James illustrates this point in two ways — using a horse and a ship:

“When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal...” A horse who is controlled by a bit in his mouth can be of great use. But a horse that is uncontrolled can hurt itself and others, as well. The word “bit” means “to lead.” A horse will never be able to pick up a bit and bridle itself. No, a master must do that. In the same way, we cannot bridle our own tongues. Again, trying harder to clean up what comes out of our mouth is not the answer. We must be willing to make Jesus our master and to be led or bridled by Him. Under the Master's control, a horse can be led down the right path. When we are in the control of our master, Jesus, then our lives will have direction and bring blessing and not harm to us and to others.

“Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go.” Of course, when James wrote this passage he was thinking of huge sailing ships. The winds were very necessary, otherwise the boat would go nowhere.



The stronger the winds, the faster the boat would go. But if a boat did not have a captain controlling the rudder, it was at the mercy of the winds. It would have no direction and would never reach its destination. A sailing ship or boat could easily be wrecked on the rocks without a captain in control.

All of us have storms or problems in life. The winds that rip against us during those storms can destroy us, too, without a captain at the helm of our lives. Our goal as Christians is to be like Christ. When Jesus is our captain and we allow Him to be in control, the storms of life can actually help us reach that destination faster.

King David said in Psalm 141:3, "Set a guard over my mouth, O Lord; keep watch over the door of my lips." Only as we acknowledge the Lordship of Jesus over our lives can we have our tongues under control.

## II. Our Lives Become Destructive when Our Tongues Are Out of Control.

Again, James uses two things to illustrate his point — fire and poison.

A. "Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell." As this is being written, there are fires burning out of control in New Mexico, Nevada and Florida. Thousands of acres of

beautiful forest are being destroyed. One little spark from a match or a lightning strike can do so much damage! The tongue, just like fire, can get out of control and does equally as much damage. One word of rumor, a tiny bit of gossip, a little lie, can grow and spread and be out of control before we know it. Relationships and reputations can be ruined just as surely as a fire had swept over them.

James goes on to say that, "All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and creatures of the sea are being tamed by man, but no man can tame the tongue." Men have learned to tame even wild animals, but only Jesus can tame a tongue! It takes a supernatural act of God to get a mouth under control.

Next James says that, "It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison." That's pretty straight to the point! Not all poisons are the same. Some will kill immediately, and some work very slowly and secretly until death comes. Whether it happens right away or over a period of weeks or even months, our words can destroy relationships and reputations that have taken years to build. Words will either bless or blast, encourage or discourage, build up or tear down.

James doesn't pull any punches when he says that the damage done with our tongues comes right out of hell itself. Behind every piece of gossip, every rumor, every divisive or filthy word is Satan himself, who is in business to destroy lives.

## III. Our Lives Become Contradictions when Our Tongues Are Out of Control.

James illustrates his point in two ways:

"Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring?" Just like it would be ridiculous to think that fresh water and salt water could flow out of the same opening, James says that it is ridiculous for praise and cursing to come out of the same mouth.

You can almost see the tears in his eyes when he says, "With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be." What a confusing witness this must be to the lost!

"My brothers, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs?" Of course not, we would answer. Just like the fruit on a tree will show you what kind of tree it is, what comes out of our mouth shows the world what is in our hearts.

Whether like a spring of water or a tree, what comes out of our mouth will show our real nature. If we are able to bless or praise the Lord and yet curse or destroy another person with our words, something is terribly wrong.

Jesus said that our words are a very serious matter. In Matthew 12:34-36 He said, "For whatever is in your heart determines what you say. A good person produces good words from a good heart and an evil person produces evil words from an evil heart. And I tell you this, you must give an account on judgement day for every careless word that you speak."

Our goal as Christians is to be like Christ.

# Sometimes when you have a problem with your mouth it is because of unresolved anger in your life.

If you are a Christian and yet your words seem to contradict that fact, something is radically wrong with your heart. Your speech is not the problem, it is only a symptom of the problem. Simply trying to “clean up your mouth,” or “turn over a new leaf” isn’t the answer. If you were sick and went to a doctor, he would ask you about your symptoms. Say you have a rash that is very painful. The doctor could give you some cream that would make the rash feel better, but it wouldn’t cure your problem. But if he is a good doctor he will not just treat your symptoms, in this case, your rash, he’ll look for the disease, or bacteria that is causing the rash. In the same way, you need to look deep inside at your heart to find the source of your problem.

Sometimes when you have a problem with your mouth it is because of unresolved anger in your life. If this is your problem, you are not alone, because unresolved anger is a big problem for a lot of Christians. When something bad happens in your life, the natural reaction many times is to feel angry. You may think anger is the emotion that you experience first, but it isn’t. Anger is born out of either fear, frustration, hurt or some combination of the three. It is really about unfulfilled expectations. Frustration from not receiving what you had expected from other people or from life.

Hurt when you don’t hear the words or receive the actions we expected. Fear because either you expect something bad to happen, or fear that what you want to have happen won’t.

When you don’t face your anger honestly and deal with it, there can be some serious consequences in your life. Anger can cause physical problems such as backaches, headaches, neck aches, ulcers, stomach and digestive problems, as well as heart disease. Another consequence of anger that hasn’t been dealt with is a lowered sense of self-worth that can produce problems with addictive behaviors, like drugs, alcohol, sex, food, or work. Anger can take many forms. It is not always aggressive and explosive. You can be passive, withdrawn, or sarcastic, but still be angry.

One of the deepest needs that humans have is to know that someone understands their pain. No one wants to hurt alone. Many times you may become angry because you feel that there is no one in your life who understands how deeply you hurt. You inflict pain on others with your words, so others will feel your pain and hurt with you. It is true that hurting people hurt other people. Unresolved anger is like a videotape of past offenses that keeps playing over and over in your mind, doing tremendous damage to you and to everyone around you.

No matter how hard you try, unresolved anger can keep you from being able to control your tongue, and make you miserable and miserable to be around. Remember, you can choose to deal with your anger. If you choose to ignore or justify your anger, you will never have control over what comes out of your mouth. There is a difference between people who get angry and angry people. Everyone will experience anger from time to time. But when anger becomes a way of life, you won’t be able to hide it. Your mouth will give you away.

The first step in dealing with anger is to be honest about it. Talk to someone who can help. Your parents or another family member, a teacher, pastor, counselor, or any adult who is mature and wise enough to help you work through your feelings. Secondly, ask God to show you what is really going on in your life. What is the real emotion that has given birth to the anger you are experiencing? Is it fear, frustration, or hurt? Remember, “the truth will set you free,” but only if you are truthful.



Thirdly, you must understand that hurt will happen; that is a fact of life. The only way those hurts can be healed is through forgiveness. This is the key to dealing with your anger in a healthy, constructive way. Most people believe that forgiveness is a feeling and that you can't forgive someone unless you "feel" like it. But that is not true. Forgiveness is not a feeling. It is an act of the will, an act of obedience. Forgiveness is giving up our right to get even. It is making a decision not to hold on to anger or negative emotions.

A lot of Christians have a hard time with forgiveness because they believe that if they forgive they are excusing the behavior, or letting the other person off the hook. Nothing could be further from the truth. Forgiveness is acknowledging that what was done was wrong and inexcusable, but choosing to show someone else the same kind of forgiveness God has shown us. Colossians 3:13 says, "Bear with each other and FORGIVE whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as God forgave you." How did God forgive us? With forgiveness that is unconditional and complete. We don't deserve it, and He provided it before we ever asked for it or even knew we needed it. Forgiveness is not a suggestion, it is a commandment, and God gives it to us for our own emotional health.

You may have a hard time controlling your tongue because you are "following Jesus from afar." In Luke 22:54, it says that when Jesus was arrested the night before He was crucified that Peter followed Jesus "from afar," or at a distance. This is the same Peter who at one time left everything he had to follow Jesus and stay close to Him. But now we see him following Jesus from a distance. The next thing we see happening to Peter is recorded in Mark 14:71 when the Bible says that he denied knowing Jesus and cursed and swore at those who said he did. Do you see? When you choose as a Christian to start following Jesus from a distance, it won't be long before your life will deny that you even know Him. Like Peter, our tongue is usually the first place where it shows that we are following Jesus from "afar."

One last reason you seem to have no control when it comes to your tongue is because you are simply a person who has never really been saved. Perhaps you have even grown up in a Christian home and have been in church all your life. You may know all the right answers to all the questions, but have never really had a personal experience with Christ. You have assumed that having Christian parents, or going to church, or being baptized was all you needed, and you have been trying to live the Christian life without the benefit of a power source. In that case, you need to give your heart and life to Jesus Christ and be filled with His empowering Spirit.

...you need  
to give your  
heart and life  
to Jesus Christ  
and be filled  
with His  
empowering  
Spirit