

Words can be spoken out loud, inwardly, or written down. The Bible has a lot to say about the power of words, whether they are used for good or evil purposes. Jesus says that words are an indication of the inner condition, *“For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.”* Writing to the Ephesians, the Apostle Paul warns:

Let no evil talk come out of your mouth, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear.

(Ephesians 4:29-30)

Most commentators interpret *“evil talk”* to include profanity and gossip, and also the *“slander,”* and *“obscene, silly and vulgar talk,”* which Paul mentions in the following verses.

Christians should be careful about their choice of vocabulary and avoid inappropriate language because it pollutes the minds and manners of those who hear it!

Worse than this, it grieves the Holy Spirit, and if not checked will eventually cause Him to withdraw His presence and gracious influences. I believe the Epistle of Jude is a clear example of what we are saying. We read:

Yet in the same way these dreamers also defile the flesh, reject authority, and slander the glorious ones. But when the archangel Michael contended with the devil and disputed about the body of Moses, he did not dare to bring a condemnation of slander against him, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"

(Jude 8:10)

Just think of how evil and wicked Satan is and all the pain he has caused to humanity. Yet the Archangel Michael refused to rail against him. But such respect for God's authority and the holiness of His presence was not to be found in these men Jude addresses in his Epistle!