

Seeing All of Life Through the Truth of Scripture

MAIN IDEAS:

- > The Bible is the only source of truth for all the most important questions.
- > We can only come to both know and love the truth by God's grace, through faith in Jesus.
- > The Bible is to be the lens through which we see and interpret everything in life.

SCRIPTURE:

1. Romans 12:2
2. Colossians 2:6-8
3. Psalm 43:3a
4. Psalm 119:105
5. 2 Timothy 3:16-17

CURRICULUM RESOURCES:

- > PowerPoint® Slides for Lesson 9
- > Parent Memo for Lesson 9 (one per student)
- > "Christians and Halloween" article (one per student)

OTHER VISUALS:

- > Bible

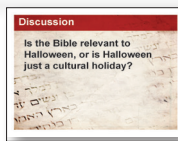
PREPARATION FOR TEACHERS AND SMALL GROUP LEADERS:

Be sure to read the "Christians and Halloween" article before class to prepare for this class.



(DISPLAY LESSON 9.)

Small Group Discussion (5-10 minutes)



(DISPLAY DISCUSSION.)

ARTICLE:
CHRISTIANS AND
HALLOWEEN (ONE
PER STUDENT)

Can you guess which holiday comes second only to Christmas in terms of economic activity in the U.S.? [Halloween] Where and how did Halloween originate? How is it usually celebrated in our culture? Are these practices good, bad, or simply neutral? Is it okay for Christians to participate in any of these practices?

You may want to give a brief account of your

own childhood experience with Halloween. (At this point, simply encourage discussion. Do not make judgments on their answers. The article will be sent home with the students for further discussion. **Please read the entire article before class to understand the context and conclusion.**) Read to them the following excerpt from the article by Travis Allen¹:

The name “Halloween” comes from the All Saints Day celebration of the early Christian church, a day set aside for the solemn remembrance of the martyrs. All Hallows Eve, the evening before All Saints Day, began the time of remembrance. “All Hallows Eve” was eventually contracted to “Hallowe’en,” which became “Halloween.”

As Christianity moved through Europe it collided with indigenous pagan cultures and confronted established customs. Pagan holidays and festivals were so entrenched that new converts found them to be a stumbling block to their faith. To deal with the problem, the organized church would commonly move a distinctively Christian holiday to a spot on the calendar that would directly challenge a pagan holiday. The intent was to counter pagan influences and provide a Christian alternative. But most often the church only succeeded in “Christianizing” a pagan ritual—the ritual was still pagan, but mixed with Christian symbolism...

The Celtic people of Europe and Britain were pagan Druids whose major celebrations were marked by the seasons. At the end of the year in northern Europe, people made preparations to ensure winter survival by harvesting the crops and culling the herds, slaughtering animals that wouldn't make it. Life slowed down as winter brought darkness (shortened days and longer nights), fallow ground, and death. The imagery of death, symbolized by skeletons, skulls, and the color black, remains prominent in today's Halloween celebrations...

Halloween didn't become an American holiday until the immigration of the working classes from the British Isles in the late nineteenth century.

1. Allen, Travis. "Christians and Halloween" (2006). <http://www.gty.org/Resources/Articles/A123_Christians-and-Halloween> (accessed June 29, 2010).

While early immigrants may have believed the superstitious traditions, it was the mischievous aspects of the holiday that attracted American young people. Younger generations borrowed or adapted many customs without reference to their pagan origins.

Does understanding the background of Halloween give you a better understanding about how a Christian should view its pagan roots and practices? Have you ever examined these practices through the truth of Scripture? Is the Bible relevant to Halloween, or is Halloween just a cultural holiday that has nothing to do with the Bible?

Large Group Lesson



(DISPLAY **FIVE QUESTIONS.**)

- ☞ 1. How did we get here?
- ☞ 2. Why do we exist?
- ☞ 3. What is wrong with the world?
- ☞ 4. What is the solution?
- ☞ 5. What will happen when we die?

Point out that in the previous lessons we have been learning about how all people are seeking the answers to these questions, and how the Bible is the only source for knowing the truth. However, as we learned in the previous lesson, unless God acts to give us new spiritual sight, we will not only never come to know the truth, but we will also never respond in faith—trusting in Jesus alone for our salvation.



(DISPLAY **WORLDVIEWS.**)

- ☞ But seeing the truth of the gospel and then responding to Jesus in belief is not merely meant to change the way we see the gospel. What is meant by that?

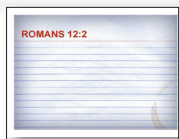
Suppose a blind man has an operation that now gives him clear sight. Will he just see people, but not dogs? Will he just see his house, but not trees and grass? Will his sight help him find the grocery store, but not the library?

This is something like coming to see and love the truth of the gospel. Once you are given new sight to see and love Jesus for who He is, what He has done, and all that He has promised to do, that new sight is meant to also let you see the truth about other things. That new sight is meant to transform you.

What does the word “transform” mean? If a blind person is suddenly given sight to see people, dogs, trees, grass, and everything else, will that new sight also transform his life

in other ways? How? Give me a few examples. This can help us to understand how the gospel is meant to change our lives.

Have the students turn to **Romans 12:2** in the Bible.



(DISPLAY **ROMANS 12:2**.)

Romans 12:2—Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

- ☞ What is the negative command in this verse?
- ☞ What are we not to be?
- ☞ What is the positive command in this verse?
- ☞ What are Christians to be?

Why is this done by “the renewal of the mind”? Why would our thinking need to be renewed?

What does it mean to test and discern? Do we just passively become transformed, or do these words suggest taking conscious action? (Direct the students to the main point and the related question in the journal.)



Illustration

(DISPLAY **DISCERN**.)

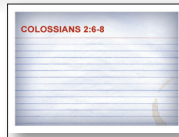
- ☞ Suppose your parents allow you to get a cell phone for your birthday. Would you just go to the store and buy the first cell phone you see? What would you want to know about the phone before buying it? You might want to find a friend who has the phone you are interested in, and test it to see if it has the functions you want it to have. You might want to ask your friend how his phone works and if he likes it before you purchase one. You might go online and try to find out more information about the phone and the service provider. You may need to consider the price before you purchase. You would want to use your capability to test and discern which phone would be the best one for you to buy! You take conscious actions to determine which phone is the best fit for you.

But what does any of this have to do with a discussion of Halloween?

- ☞ Explain that as the students were discussing the question of Halloween, they were each seeing and understanding it from a certain perspective. Something was informing their thinking and response.

But what was shaping your understanding and response? The world, or something else? Should a blind man who has been given his sight, now put on darkened glasses so he can remain conformed to living as a blind man, walking with a cane, feeling his way in the darkness? Or is there a new way for him to walk?

Have the students turn to **Colossians 2:6-8** in the Bible, and also turn to that section and related questions in the **journal**:



(DISPLAY **COLOSSIANS 2:6-8**.)

Read:

Colossians 2:6-7— Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, ⁷rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

- ☞ What does it mean to “walk in Christ”?
- ☞ Is this simply a one-time “decision” someone makes to trust in Jesus and then go on living your life however you want? (Like the once blind man who goes on using a cane?) No. It is a continuous walk that is following Christ. And to do this, we must be on our guard against something. Read verse 8.

Colossians 2:8— See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.

- ☞ What are these verses warning Christians about?
- ☞ What does it mean to be taken captive by philosophy, empty deceit, or human tradition? [absorbing what the culture practices and teaches without examining it through the lens of Scripture] For example, a sponge will soak up whatever is in the bucket, whether it is water or gasoline. It soaks up its environment without taking into account what it is soaking up.

Another example: Suppose you are in a science class in which the teacher is explaining that humans are simply the result of evolutionary processes. Does that teaching take your mind “captive”? Does your thinking conform to this? Or, does your mind test and discern what is being taught?

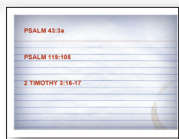
What about being taken captive by human tradition? Can you give an example of this?

Illustration

If possible, try and use a personal example of rejecting human tradition after being transformed by the gospel. For example, did the way in which you celebrate a holiday

such as Christmas change in any way after you became a Christian? [e.g., perhaps turning the focus away from Santa Claus and presents and toward the birth of Christ] Was abandoning such a prevalent human tradition easy? Did it call for testing and discernment?

But how will you determine if something is “not according to Christ”? Does the Bible mention Halloween, Christmas, evolution, or the many other questions we are faced with in everyday life?



(DISPLAY AND QUICKLY READ **God’s Word.**)

Psalm 43:3a—

☞ *Send out your light and your truth; let them lead me.*

Psalm 119:105—

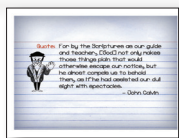
☞ *Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.*

2 Timothy 3:16-17—

☞ *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.*

According to these verses, what is to lead and guide our thinking and living? [God’s Word] Do these verses limit the Bible to just leading and guiding in specific areas, but not in others? What should we understand by that?

*According to **2 Timothy 3**, is the Bible profitable for some good works, but not for others? Should we limit the use of God’s truth to some areas of life, but not others?*



(DISPLAY **CALVIN**, AND READ THE QUOTE.)

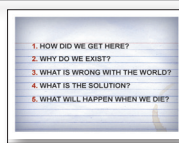
For by the Scriptures as our guide and teacher, [God] not only makes those things plain that would otherwise escape our notice, but he almost compels us to behold them, as if he had assisted our dull sight with spectacles.²—John Calvin

Direct the students to this quote and related questions in the **journal**.

According to this quote, what does John Calvin compare to a pair of spectacles or eye glasses? [Scripture, the Bible] How does the Bible act as a pair of spectacles? Is it meant to only give clear sight to some things, but not to others? How is this like a person

2. Calvin, John. *Genesis (The Crossway Classic Commentary Series)*. J.I. Packer and Alistair McGrath, editors. (Wheaton: Crossway, 2001), xiii-xiv.

being given new sight to understand and love the gospel, which then gives him new eyes to see everything else in life?



(DISPLAY **FIVE QUESTIONS.**)

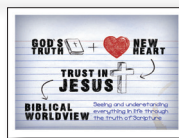
1. How did we get here?
2. Why do we exist?
3. What is wrong with the world?
4. What is the solution?
5. What will happen when we die?

Point out that the Bible alone provides the truth to these questions. We can only fully see and love that truth by grace, through faith in Jesus. But that new sight does not stop there. It is meant to give us sight for the truth of another important question missing from the list:

- ☞ 6. How now should we live?

(Direct the students to complete question #6 in the **journal**.)

And just as the Bible provides the truth for the previous questions, it also provides the truth for how we are to live each day. The Bible is like a unique, one-of-a-kind set of lenses, through which we are to see and understand everything in life...not just questions about how the world came into existence, or the problem of sin and how Jesus came to die on the cross to save sinners and give us eternal life. The Bible also is the lens through which to see and interpret everything else in life—how we live, the friends we make, how we do our school work, how we view Halloween, and everything else. That is the meaning of the term Christian or biblical worldview—seeing all of life through the truth of Scripture.



(DISPLAY **BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW.**)

Ask the students to draw a picture depicting what is meant by biblical worldview—seeing all of life through the truth of Scripture—in the **journal**.

Small Group Application

The following examples are possible discussions for the small group application time. Select the topics that are most applicable to your group. (See Introduction for more information.)

- **Truth Statement:** Discernment comes as Christians filter all of life through Scripture.
- **Think About It:** Ask the students if, after the lesson, they would now feel the same or differently about their initial discussion about Halloween. Did the facts regarding the pagan origin of Halloween come directly from the Bible? Even though the Bible does not

specifically mention “Halloween” does the Bible speak of darkness and evil? In what context? How should we view this through a biblical “lens”? [See **Ephesians 5:6-11, 15-16.**]

Examine Your Heart: *Even though the Bible is very clear in regard to evil, it does leave room for how a Christian might confront evil. For example, some Christians use Halloween as a means to be a “light” to others by taking out its dark practices and replacing these with wholesome practices. How have you seen Christians respond to Halloween in ways that resisted evil and glorified God?*

Live It: How could you oppose evil and glorify God during Halloween? How could your family respond to this holiday in a way that reveals Christ to others? (Remember to send home the article *Christians and Halloween* by Travis Allen. Encourage the students to read and discuss it with their parents.)

- **Truth Statement:** Transformation is a process that requires the renewal of the mind through Scripture over time.

Think About It: Read **Romans 12:2**. Talk about what the words “conformed” and “transformed” mean. [“Conformed” means to be shaped into something; “transformed” means to become something else entirely.] *Why are we all, by nature, conformed to this world? How does it demonstrate itself in everyday life? Why is being “transformed by the renewal of your mind” a process in our lives? In other words why don't Christians automatically see and understand everything in life through the truth of the Bible when they come to faith in Christ?* [It might help to use the example of a person who comes to live here from a region of the country where he has a certain accent. That accent does not automatically disappear. He will have to make a conscious effort and work at speaking in a new way.]

Examine Your Heart: *Are you making a conscious effort to see and understand everything in life through the truth of Scripture? What will be necessary in order to grow in this area?* [See **Psalms 43:3a** and **Psalms 119:105.**] *Is your first thought when presented with a circumstance or issue, “What does the Bible say about this? What will help me to understand this better through a biblical perspective?” Are some things in life more difficult to test and discern through a biblical perspective than others? What might these be? Does that mean the Bible is silent, or does it just take more practice and searching for the answers? Do you take the time to renew your thinking? How?*

Live It: With your small group, list some topics that are coming up in your life this week (e.g., school, homework, difficulties with siblings, soccer practice, music lessons) How can you consider these topics in light of what the Bible has to say? Have each person pick a topic to “research” in the Bible this week.

- **Truth Statement:** Christ is the center of all things—He designed them all and upholds them by His power.

Think About It: Ask the students if they tend to view their life in certain specific categories (e.g., sleeping, eating, entertainment, friends, school, sports, work, etc.). Do they believe the Bible, while truthful, is not as relevant to some of these categories? Quickly read **Colossians 1:16-18**. Who is the “he” in these verses? [Jesus] What two-word phrase is repeated four times? [all things] Why is this repeatedly emphasized? What “categories” do all things include? What is meant by the last part of verse 18? How does this demonstrate why we are to see all of life through the truth of Scripture?

Examine Your Heart: *Is there anything in your heart and mind that makes you want to not have this be the case? What might it be? Why might there be an area of life where we don't want to see the truth? In the example of Halloween, how might the truth challenge you to change? Why is this a struggle?*

Live It: Pray with your small group for God’s grace in wanting to know and practice what is true.

- **Truth Statement:** To discern something is to test to see if it stands up to the truth.

Think About It: What does discernment mean? How does testing relate to discernment? [See **Romans 12:2**.] How can you test whether or not something is true in a situation?

Examine Your Heart: *What is your usual response to a new thing, person, or situation? Do you test a situation to determine what is true and what is not? What would it look like to use discernment in daily life?*

Live It: With your small group, develop a list of questions that you could ask about a topic, subject, or situation to discern whether or not something is “according to Christ.” [For example: “What Scriptures relate to this topic? Is this topic in my Bible index?” “Does this fit with the gospel? How?” “Does this demonstrate God’s character to others? If not, could it? How?” “According to what I know about Jesus/Scripture, how might Jesus respond in this situation? Can I think of a similar situation in Scripture that makes it clear how Jesus might respond?”]

- **Truth Statement:** Transformation occurs as we search the Bible for God’s truth.

Think About It: Look at **Romans 12:2** together. *Does transformation begin in the mind, heart, or will? [mind] Why do you think it begins in the mind? What tool has God given us to inform our minds of what God’s truth, or will, is?*

Examine Your Heart: *Are there any methods you usually use to find God’s truth about a situation? How could you search the Bible to see what it says about a certain topic? What are some tools that could help you? [Bible concordance, index, cross-references, etc.] What other places could you go to find help in filtering life through the lens of Scripture? [Christian parents, pastor or Bible teacher, an older Christian mentor or friend]*

Live It: Have each student pick a method or series of questions they will use to apply to one specific topic this week. Have them bring their truth discoveries back to share with the group next week!

- **Truth Statement:** Transformation occurs first in the mind, then in the heart, and finally in our lives.

Think About It: Is “theology” something that is usually separate from your everyday life? Take a topic like “forgiveness.” *How are people forgiven by Christ? How could an understanding of forgiveness be revealed in the life of a Christian?*

Examine Your Heart: *Do you feel like you know Scripture in your head, but have a hard time applying it in real life? Why is there a disconnect between what you hear in church or read in Scripture, and what you do in daily life?*

Live It: *What can you do this week to eliminate the disconnect between the “spiritual” parts of your life, and the rest of your life? [e.g., talking about the sermon with family and discussing possible applications together, memorizing Scripture and bringing it to mind throughout the day, using methods of searching the Scripture, or asking “big picture” questions such as those mentioned above to explore specific areas where there is currently a disconnect]*

Encourage students to apply one thing from the discussion to their lives this week. Try to follow up with them next week. Also, if time permits, ask them about how they applied one thing from last week’s lesson.

Send Home

Parent Memo for Lesson 9

"Christians and Halloween" article

Discussion

SAMPLE LESSONS

Is the Bible relevant to Halloween, or is Halloween just a cultural holiday?

5 QUESTIONS

1. HOW DID WE GET HERE?

2. WHY DO WE EXIST?

3. WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE WORLD?

4. WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

5. WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN WE DIE?

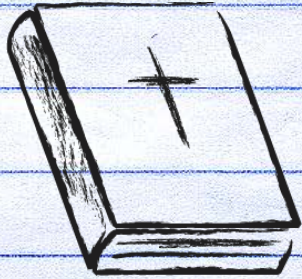
SAMPLE LESSONS



+



REJECT GOD'S
TRUTH



GOD'S WRATH

GOD'S
TRUTH



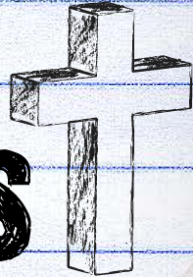
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NEW
HEART



TRUST IN
JESUS



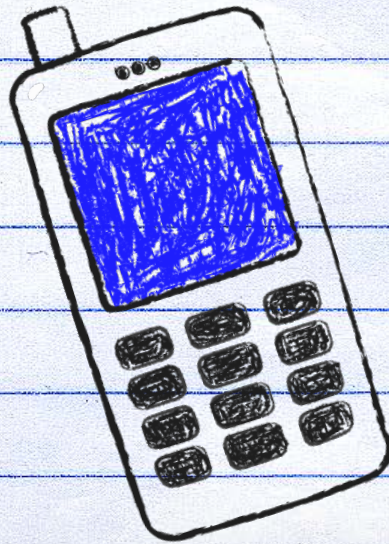
ETERNAL LIFE

ROMANS 12:2

- **What is the negative command in this verse?**
- **What are we not to be?**
- **What is the positive command in this verse?**
- **What are Christians to be?**

“DISCERN”

How would you decide?



COLOSSIANS 2:6-8

- **What does it mean to “walk in Christ”?**
- **Is this simply a one-time decision?**
- **What are these verses warning Christians about?**
- **What does it mean to be taken captive?**

PSALM 43:3a

Send out your light and your truth; let them lead me.

PSALM 119:105

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

Quote: For by the Scriptures as our guide and teacher, [God] not only makes those things plain that would otherwise escape our notice, but he almost compels us to behold them, as if he had assisted our dull sight with spectacles.



– John Calvin

1. HOW DID WE GET HERE?

2. WHY DO WE EXIST?

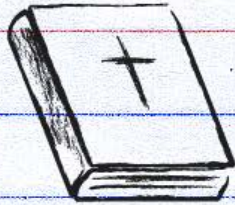
3. WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE WORLD?

4. WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

5. WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN WE DIE?

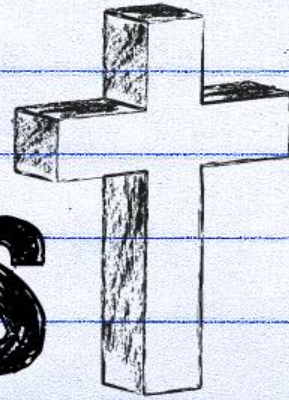
6. HOW NOW SHOULD WE LIVE?

**GOD'S
TRUTH**



**NEW
HEART**

**TRUST IN
JESUS**

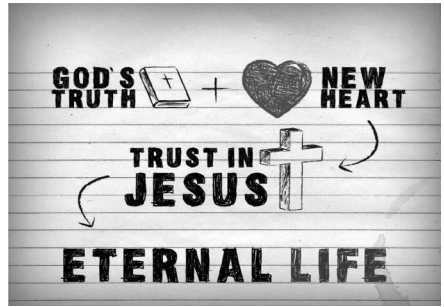
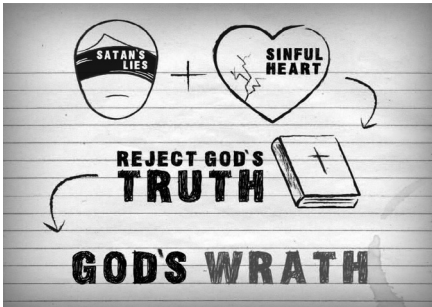


**BIBLICAL
WORLDVIEW**

Seeing and understanding
all of life through
the truth of Scripture

Lesson 9

In Class



Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.— ROMANS 12:2

Main Point:

Seeing and loving the truth of the gospel is meant to change the way we see everything in life.

What does the above statement mean?

Scripture: Colossians 2:6-8

What does it mean to "walk in Christ"?

Give an example of being taken captive by philosophy, empty deceit, human tradition, or elemental spirits of the world.

How will you determine if something is "not according to Christ"?

John Calvin Quote:

For by the Scriptures as our guide and teacher, [God] not only makes those things plain that would otherwise escape our notice, but he almost compels us to behold them, as if he had assisted our dull sight with spectacles.

—JOHN CALVIN

SAMPLE LESSONS

Your Word is Truth

What does John Calvin compare to a pair of spectacles (eyeglasses)?

How does the Bible act like a pair of eye glasses?

Six Questions:

1. How did we get here?
2. Why do we exist?
3. What is wrong with the world?
4. What is the solution?
5. What will happen when we die?
6. How now should we _____?

Draw a picture depicting what is meant by "biblical world view"—seeing everything in life through the truth of Scripture.



Do these verses change your initial thoughts regarding Halloween? If so, how?

*Do not be
conformed to this
world, but be transformed
by the renewal of your mind,
that by testing you may discern
what is the will of God, what
is good and acceptable and
perfect.*

ROMANS 12:2

Small Group Notes

This week, I plan to apply the following truth to my life in this way:

Lesson 9 Review—Seeing All of Life Through the Truth of Scripture

Main Ideas

- > The Bible is the only source of truth for all the most important questions.
- > We can only come to both know and love the truth by God's grace, through faith in Jesus.
- > The Bible is to be the lens through which we see and interpret everything in life.

At Home

Read and discuss with your parents Travis Allen's article "Christians and Halloween." (It may also be found at www.gty.org by searching for the article titled "Christians and Halloween.")

In the Christian life, transformation tends to be a process that occurs over time. How does this change occur, according to Romans 12:1-2? (Mind is transformed; actions follow.) What is one area of your life you have never considered in light of God and His truth? Write it here, and search the Bible to see what impact it might have on that topic. Write the Scripture references here, and share your findings with a parent. If your parents are Christians, ask for additional areas of Scripture they think would apply to this topic. Pray that God would renew your mind and transform your thinking.

Can you come up with a plan that will help you to transform (with God's help) this area of your life? Track your progress over time, and make sure you record areas where you experience victory so you will be encouraged that God is transforming you!

Advertising: An Exercise in Discernment

This week, watch for advertising on TV, at school, at the store, or in other places. Using biblical discernment, can you spot any lies in these ads? What about any truths? Any "half-truths"? In other words, the statement itself may be true, but the result it is intended to produce doesn't match up with Scripture? How is the advertised item presented? Now consider what the fruit of the advertisement is supposed to be. What do the advertisers want or expect you to do as a result? Would the object they want you to buy, or the service they want you to use bear good fruit in your life all the time? Some of the time? Most of the time? Not at all? Explain to your parent or small group leader some of your findings as you test the truth.

Seeing All of Life Through the Truth of Scripture

MAIN IDEAS

We have seen that the Bible is the source of truth for all of life's most important questions. God must act to remove a sinner's blindness so that he will accept the truth and believe in Jesus. After a person has come to know and love the truth of the gospel, the Bible should be the "lens" through which he sees and interprets everything else in life. This involves a process in which the mind is renewed and transformed. A Christian must ask the question: How now should I live?

Summary from Previous Lessons:

SATAN'S LIES + SINFUL HEART → REJECT THE TRUTH → GOD'S WRATH

GOD'S TRUTH + NEW HEART → TRUST IN JESUS → ETERNAL LIFE

The Truth

- The gospel is meant to transform our lives. (See **Romans 12:2** and **Colossians 4:6-8**.)
- The Bible is to be the lens through which we see and interpret everything in life. (See **Psalms 43:3a**; **Psalms 119:105**; and **2 Timothy 3:16-17**.)

The Bible Answers the Most Important Questions

1. How did we get here?
2. Why do we exist?
3. What is wrong with the world?
4. What is the solution?
5. What will happen when we die?
6. How now should we live?

ARTICLE

Read and discuss the article sent home with your student "Christians and Halloween," by Travis Allen.

How might God's truth transform the way in which you see, interpret, and respond to a celebration such as Halloween?

INTERACTING WITH YOUR STUDENT

Your student has been asked to apply one truth learned from this lesson to his/her life this week. Ask about this, and pray with your student to encourage him/her in this application. Ask God to work in your student's heart, and encourage your student to grow in God's truth.

Encourage your student to complete the "At Home" section of the Student Journal and discuss it with you. Help him/her to complete the "Advertising: An Exercise in Discernment" activity in this section.

Communication

MAIN IDEAS:

- > God created us to be relational.
- > Our words and manner of speech flow out of the desires of our heart.
- > The type of words we use and the manner in which we use them can be a powerful tool for either blessing or cursing.
- > Each mode of communication presents us with unique opportunities and dangers that we must carefully evaluate.

SCRIPTURE:

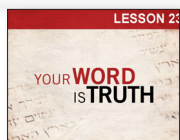
- | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Ephesians 4:15 | 5. Titus 3:2 | 9. Matthew 12:34b |
| 2. Ephesians 4:29 | 6. Romans 16:18 | 10. James 3:4-10 |
| 3. Ephesians 5:4 | 7. Matthew 12:36 | 11.2 John 1:12 |
| 4. Colossians 4:6 | 8. Proverbs 16:23 | |

CURRICULUM RESOURCES:

- > PowerPoint® Slides for Lesson 23
- > Phrase Cards (one set per small group, cut and folded)
- > Parent Memo for Lesson 23 (oner per student)
- > "Facebook Turns Five..." article (one per student)
- > "Does Your Child's Cell Phone Preach..." article (one per student)

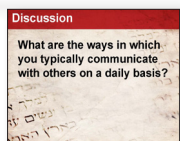
OTHER VISUALS:

- > Bible
- > Blank sheets of paper (one per student)
- > Cell phone



(DISPLAY **LESSON 23.**)

Small Group Discussion (6-8 minutes)



(DISPLAY **DISCUSSION.**)

PHRASE CARD AND
BLANK SHEET OF
PAPER

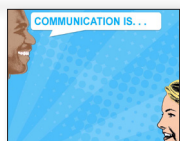
Hand each student a folded **Phrase Card** and a blank sheet of **paper**. Explain that there is a different phrase printed on each card. Each student should open his card and look at the phrase without letting the other students see it. Next, each student should use the paper to draw a depiction of the phrase, using no words, letters, or numbers. The goal is to make the drawing in a way that will allow the other students to guess the phrase correctly, as quickly as possible. Give the students a time limit (not more than two minutes) to complete their drawing. When they are done, have them place their drawings face down on the table. One by one,

have each student display his drawing and have the other students attempt to guess the phrase. The small group leaders may want to keep track of the time to see which phrase is most quickly guessed. If you have a larger group of students, you may need to limit the time allowed to guess the phrase to 20 or 30 seconds, or you may need to limit the number of phrases you illustrate.

Do you think that drawing pictures would be the best means of daily communication? Why not?

What are the ways in which you typically communicate with others on a daily basis?

Large Group Lesson



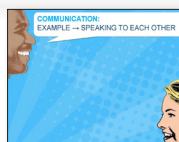
(DISPLAY **COMMUNICATION.**)

Direct the students to this definition to complete in the journal.

- ☞ Communication is the process in which people convey information to one another.

Remind the students that God created us to be His image bearers so we would be like Him in certain ways. One of the important ways in which we are like God is that we are relational—we are meant to interact and communicate with one another. We communicate things like basic information—a simple phrase—but we also communicate thoughts, ideas, desires, and emotions. The most common means of communication is through the use of words and speech in personal communication. That is why the beginning activity may have been a little frustrating. When words and speech are removed as a means of communicating information, the results may not be what we mean to convey.

Have you ever thought of your words and speech with others in terms of biblical worldview? In other words, is there a biblical view of how we are to talk with one another?



(DISPLAY **EXAMPLE 1.**)

Direct the students to the “Speech Activity” portion of the journal. Choose a student to quickly read each text. After each text is read, ask the students what kind of speech the verse is affirming or forbidding. Instruct the students to circle (or draw a rectangle around) the words or phrases that state the type of speech we are to have and underline the type of speech in which we are not to engage. Then display the slides with the correct answers shown.

Note: Depending on the needs of your particular class, this activity could be extended with a brief discussion about the meaning of each verse. In this case, shorten the lesson in the discussion of cell phones, texting, and Facebook. However, if the majority of your students use those technologies, you may want to spend only a minimal amount of time on this activity.

☞ *Ephesians 4:15—Rather, speaking...*

☞ *...the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,*

☞ *Ephesians 4:29—Let no...*

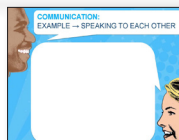
☞ *corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is...*

☞ *...good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.*

☞ *Ephesians 5:4—Let there be...*

☞ *...no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there...*

☞ *...be thanksgiving.*



(DISPLAY **EXAMPLE 2.**)

☞ *Colossians 4:6—Let your speech always...*

☞ *...be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.*

☞ *Titus 3:2—to speak...*

☞ *...evil of no one, to avoid...*

☞ *...quarreling, to...*

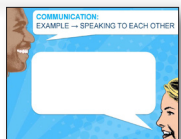
☞ *...be gentle, and to show perfect...*

☞ *...courtesy toward all people.*

☞ *Romans 16:18—For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by...*

☞ *...smooth talk and...*

☞ *...flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive.*



(DISPLAY **EXAMPLE 3.**)

☞ *Matthew 12:36—I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every...*

☞ *...careless word they speak,*

☞ *Proverbs 16:23—The heart of the wise makes his speech...*

☞ *...judicious and adds...*

☞ *...persuasiveness to his lips.*

Point out that there are hundreds more verses in the Bible that address the issue of personal communication—how we talk to one another. Some address the type of words we use: “true,” “encouraging,” “foolish,” and “crude.” Others address the manner or tone in which we express these words: “in love,” “gracious,” and “courteous.”



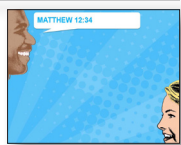
(DISPLAY **ADDRESSES.**)

The Bible addresses the TYPE of words we use and the MANNER in which we use them.

Explain that the Bible repeatedly draws attention to our words and manner of speech for two main reasons. First, our conversation serves as a type of thermometer for our hearts.

Illustration:

Explain that a thermometer measures your body's internal temperature to detect whether or not you are suffering from some form of illness. In a similar way, our words and manner of speech often are a measure of our internal “heart temperature,” detecting sinful attitudes and desires.



Direct the students to the related questions in the journal.

(DISPLAY **MATTHEW 12:34B.**)

🗨️ *Matthew 12:34b—[Jesus said,] ...For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.*

What does this verse mean? [Allow students to briefly respond.]

For example, if your speech is often crude and angry, it is not just “words” but serves as an indication of what is going on in your heart. Unhealthy sinful desires and attitudes are being expressed in your words and manner.

Listen to your words and manner of speech. They are an internal thermometer for your heart. Do they indicate health or sickness?

🗨️ Conclusion: Our words and manner of speech flow out of the desires of our heart.

Explain that the second main reason that the Bible repeatedly draws attention to our words and manner of speech is because of the effect that our speech has on others.

Have the students turn to **James 3:4-10**, and choose one or two students to quickly read the text:

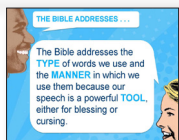
James 3:4-10—Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot di-

rects. ⁵So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! ⁶And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell. ⁷For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, ⁸but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. ¹⁰From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so.

These verses are to give us a vivid picture of how strong and powerful our speech can be. Even seemingly little comments can “set a forest ablaze.”

Can you give a real-life example of how a short, careless, or nasty comment could “set a forest ablaze”? (Be prepared to share your own example, such as gossip, in case the students do not respond with an example.)

God does not want us to view our words and speech in a casual manner. The type of words we use to communicate with others, and the manner in which we use those words are very important. Our words will either do good or do harm.

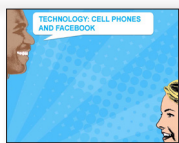


(DISPLAY **TOOL.**)

The Bible addresses the TYPE of words we use, and the MANNER in which we use them because our speech is a powerful tool, either for blessing or cursing.

But what about the means we use to convey those words? For example, in Bible times there were only two basic means available: face-to-face conversations and writing letters. Is this still the case today?

What other ways do you speak to people? [e.g., telephones, e-mail, texting, Facebook] Does God care about the means we use to communicate? And what about the new technologies that we use?



(DISPLAY **QUESTIONS.**)

Ask the following quick questions:

☞ *How many of you own a cell phone?*

How many of you don't have one, but would like one?

Can you give me a few specific ways in which a cell phone is helpful in your ability to communicate with others? (Briefly give examples: Cell phones are great to have if you are lost, late, or in an emergency. Facebook is a quick way to ask others for information, or to RSVP for an event.)

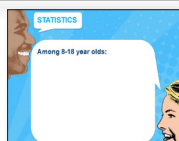
☞ *How many of you have been, or are currently on Facebook, MySpace, or something similar?*

How many of you are not on any of these, but would like to be?

Can you give me a few specific examples in which Facebook could be helpful in your ability to communicate with others?

How does it affect the nature of your “friendships”?

Explain that you are going to examine two means that are now commonly used in personal communication.

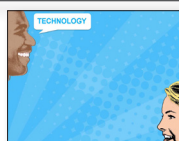


(DISPLAY **STATISTICS.**)

Read the following facts concerning cell phones and social networking among 8- to 18-year-olds in the United States¹:

Among 8- to 18-year-olds:

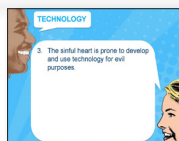
- ☞ Sixty-six percent own a cell phone.
- ☞ These spend an average of 33 minutes talking on a cell phone every day.
- ☞ Forty-six percent send text messages on a given day.
- ☞ On average, 7th-12th graders spend about 1½ hours texting every day.
- ☞ The most popular computer activities are social networking sites, such as Facebook and MySpace.



(DISPLAY **TECHNOLOGY 1.**)

Use the slide to give a summary of the previous lesson's main points:

- ☞ 1. Man is able to create technology, because we are made in God's image and reflect His divine ability to create.
- ☞ 2. Technology often assists man in exercising rightful dominion over creation, and is a means of God providing for the needs of people.



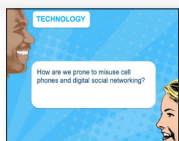
(DISPLAY **TECHNOLOGY 2.**)

- ☞ 3. The sinful heart is prone to develop and use technology for evil purposes.
- ☞ 4. The sinful heart is prone to trust and find its satisfaction in technology, and not in God.
- ☞ 5. Technology can be used as a means of glorifying God, or glorifying man.

1. From "Generation M²: Media in the Lives of 8-to-18-Year-Olds," A Kaiser Family Foundation Study, 2009.

Technologies such as cell phones and computer social networking sites demonstrate all of the main points discussed in the previous lesson. They provide many opportunities for good, expanding our ability to communicate with others. So, in and of themselves, cell phones and social networking sites are not necessarily wrong means or tools in communicating. However, our sinful hearts are prone to misuse them.

Direct the students to the questions in the journal for the following part of the lesson.

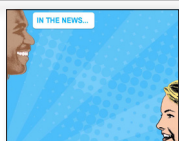


(DISPLAY **MISUSE.**)

How are we prone to misuse cell phones and digital social networking?

☞ Destructive cravings and Satan's counterfeits

God has made each of us with good God-given cravings. Our craving for communicating with others is an example of this. It is a good craving meant to draw us into relationships with both God and others. But the sinful heart distorts these good cravings and they become destructive. Here's an extreme example of this:



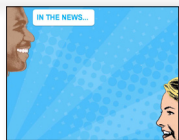
(DISPLAY **NEWS.**)

☞ In September of 2008, a passenger train crashed into a freight train killing 25 people. Cell phone records of the driver of the passenger train showed that he had sent a text message about 22 seconds before the crash.

Why would he be texting instead of fully paying attention to his job? What kind of destructive craving was at work here? [the craving to have the ability to instantly communicate with someone, no matter when, where, or in what circumstance]

Though this is an extreme example, consider the following: many people talk on the phone or even text message while they drive; students text message during church services and class; students can send wrong words or pictures to each other's phones. The average teenager sends more than 2,000 text messages a month, and for some young people the first thing they do every morning is check their phones for text messages from friends. These realities reflect a destructive craving for constant communication with people, especially our friends.

If you use a cell phone, ask yourself the following questions: Do you wake up in the morning craving contact with your friends right away? Do you feel "lost" without a cell phone? Does your cell phone distract you from personal conversations with God, parents, and others? Is the ability to immediately connect with others an idol in your life?



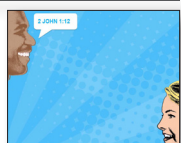
(DISPLAY **NEWS 2.**)

☞ A mother purposely created a fake MySpace identity named "Josh" in order to befriend

a 13-year-old girl. The girl thought she had found a true friend. After time, however, “Josh” told the girl that the world would be better off without her. She later committed suicide.

The 13-year-old girl had a God-given craving—the craving for a friend. But what did she receive instead? [a counterfeit, an unreal, deceitful friendship] This is the work of Satan, who is a liar and has been a murderer from the beginning.

Though this, too, is an extreme example, Facebook can be used to cultivate “false” friendships, to compare popularity according to the number of “friends” one has, and to spread gossip or slander about others through the internet. Satan very subtly offers counterfeits for true friendship. The technology involved in Facebook and MySpace offers opportunities for Satan to present us with counterfeits for true, genuine relationships. The Bible continually emphasizes and gives preference to face-to-face conversations and relationships. This is reflected in the following verse (read the following Scripture passage to the students):



(DISPLAY **2 JOHN 1:12.**)

2 John 1:12—Though I have much to write to you, I would rather not use paper and ink. Instead I hope to come to you and talk face to face, so that our joy may be complete.

There are at least two reasons to care about the means or mode of communication:

- ☞ 1. There is a greater joy that can be experienced with face-to-face communication. (See **2 John 1:12.**)

God designed us to live in fellowship with one another, enjoying one another's physical presence. That is why “being there” with your best friend and doing things together is more enjoyable than only using the phone or Facebook.

- ☞ 2. Face-to-face communication helps to guard us from the temptations and dangers of sinful communication.

Illustration:

CELL PHONE

Quickly pose and act out the following scenario: A friend calls you. She is crying, because she just got cut from the soccer team. She is just looking for a shoulder to cry on, someone to sympathize with her. And this is what you do:

(Hold your **cell phone** to your ear, and say and do the following):

I am really sorry that you got cut from the team. (Roll your eyes in exasperation.)

Yeah. It really doesn't seem fair. (Look at your watch as if you can't wait to get off the phone.)

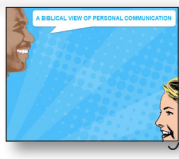
*Sure, I would love to get together tonight and do something together.
(Shake your head as if to communicate "I really don't want to do this.")*

Face-to-face communication encourages and challenges us to be more sincere, truthful, and loving. It is much easier to hide behind the “screen” of a phone, text message, or Facebook. When we do this, we can create our “image”—appearing to care when we don't, appearing happy when we are really sad. These types of communication may also give us a false sense of not suffering the consequences of unloving words: gossip and cruel words sent out with a fast click of a button don't feel as wrong or vicious compared to if we were to say these things to someone face-to-face.

Ask yourself the following questions if you use Facebook or MySpace:

What makes someone your “friend”? The simple click of a button? Do you know all of these friends personally? Are these friends counterfeits for the real thing?

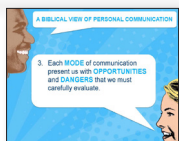
(DISPLAY **BIBLICAL VIEW 1.**)



Direct the students to the “Biblical View...” portion of the journal to complete the following statements:

- 1. Our words and manner of speech flow out of the desires of our heart.
- 2. The type of words we use and the manner in which we use them can be a powerful tool for either blessing or cursing.

(DISPLAY **BIBLICAL VIEW 2.**)



- 3. Each mode of communication presents us with unique opportunities and dangers that we must carefully evaluate.

We have been created to be in relationship with one another, and communication is a gift God has given us to convey our thoughts, desires, and emotions to one another. God cares about the words we use, and the manner in which we communicate with one another. Therefore, we need to evaluate our words and speech through the truth of Scripture. But we must also be careful about the means by which we communicate, and we must use technology to improve personal relationships in God-honoring ways, while guarding against destructive cravings and Satan's lies.

Small Group Application

The following examples are possible discussions for the Small Group Application time. Select the topics that are most applicable to your group. (See Introduction for more information.)

- **Truth Statement:** Our words and manner of speech flow out of the desires of our heart.

Think about it: Read **Matthew 12:33-37**. *What would Jesus have you understand by these words? Can you give examples of what Jesus means by “good” speech and “evil” speech”? Have you had a casual attitude toward your speech? (e.g., “They’re just words, no big deal.”) Does Jesus take this attitude?*

Examine your heart: *Examine your speech from the last few days and think about your words and manner as a type of thermometer for your heart. Think to yourself about the answer to this question: Would your speech indicate sickness or health? Would your parents agree with your assessment? Would your friends, classmates, or siblings? Would Jesus?*

Live it: Encourage the students to spend time this week thinking and praying about the above questions. Encourage them to talk with their parents and other mature Christians about areas of concern and struggle. Remind them that superficial changes (e.g., not using crude language or speaking in anger) are not the main goal, but rather heart change reflected through their words and manner.

- **Truth Statement:** The type of words we use, and the manner in which we use them can be a powerful tool for either blessing or cursing.

Think About It: Have the students review the verses from the “Speech Activity” portion of the journal. Discuss any difficult words (e.g., judicious) and, if appropriate, ask the students to give specific examples of each type and manner of speech. *Why are there so many biblical guidelines regarding our words and speech?*

Examine Your Heart: *How would you evaluate your type and manner of speech? Does it change according to your mood? Does it change according to who you are talking to? Does your speech change based on whether you’re talking to your parents or your friends? Would your parents be pleased with how you talk to your friends? Why or why not? If so, in what ways does it change? Why does it change? Do you see your speech as no big deal—it’s just talk and doesn’t really mean anything? Read and discuss **Luke 6:45**.*

Live It: From the list of verses, encourage the students to choose one or two areas of speech in which they see a need for improvement. During the week, they should take these areas to God in prayer, asking for His power to change their hearts and words. Have them ask their parents to hold them accountable.

- **Truth Statement:** Our speech is a powerful tool, either for blessing or cursing.

Think About It: *How have the words you used in the last week blessed others by encouraging and building them up? Can you give some specific examples? Encourage them to think about any words they have used that served to set “a forest ablaze”? Was this intentional, or can even careless words do this? How can saying true words in an unloving manner also do this? What were the consequences of these words? How might they have harmed another? Can that harm be undone easily?*

Examine Your Heart: *Have your words harmed someone? Have you gossiped about anyone this week, or spoken harsh words to your parents? Have you confessed this to God and asked His forgiveness? Are there any further steps you need to take? Do you care about the effect your words may have on others? If not, why not?*

Live It: Encourage the students to talk to their parents about any areas of concern regarding their speech. Also, encourage them to ask a good friend to help point out any areas in which their speech is hurtful to others, and pray together about it.

- **Truth Statement:** Each mode of communication presents us with unique opportunities and dangers that we must carefully evaluate.

Think About It: *How would you rate the means of communication you use in terms of the most used to least used? Which do you prefer over the others? Why? Do you equate the most recent technology with the “best”? Why do you think that the Bible promotes and encourages face-to-face communication? How does talking to someone face-to-face better foster genuine relationships? However, how could these technologies be used to foster God-honoring relationships? Can you give specific examples?*

Examine Your Heart: *If you use all the latest technologies like texting and Facebook, have you carefully evaluated why and how you are using these? Are they helping you to have real and God-honoring relationships, or are they a means to promote destructive cravings? Are they serving you well, or have they become your master? Would your parents approve of your conversations? Would God? What dangers must you avoid in these technologies? Is there a way in which these technologies could be used to glorify God?*

Live It: Send home the following articles for parents to read and discuss with their students (articles included in the Curriculum Resources):

"Facebook Turns Five: Thoughts on Social Networking"

"Does Your Child's Cell Phone Preach Another Gospel"

Note: Encourage all students to complete this last “Live It” activity, as it is part of the In Home section of the journal for this lesson.

Also, encourage students to apply one thing from the discussion to their lives this week. Try to follow up with them next week.

Send Home

Parent Memo for Lesson 23

As listed above:

"Facebook Turns Five..." article

"Does Your Child's Cell Phone Preach..." article

Discussion

SAMPLE LESSONS


What are the ways in which you typically communicate with others on a daily basis?



SAMPLE LESSONS

COMMUNICATION IS...

Communication is the process in which people convey information to one another.



COMMUNICATION:

EXAMPLE → SPEAKING TO EACH OTHER

EPHESIANS 4:15

Rather, speaking the **truth in love**, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ.

EPHESIANS 4:29

Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is **good for building up**, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

EPHESIANS 5:4

Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there **be thanksgiving**.

COMMUNICATION:

EXAMPLE → SPEAKING TO EACH OTHER

COLOSSIANS 4:6

Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

TITUS 3:2

to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people.

ROMANS 16:18

For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive.

COMMUNICATION:

EXAMPLE → SPEAKING TO EACH OTHER

MATTHEW 12:36

I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak.

PROVERBS 16:23


The heart of the wise makes his speech judicious and adds persuasiveness to his lips.



SAMPLE LESSONS

THE BIBLE ADDRESSES . . .

The Bible addresses the **TYPE** of words we use and the **MANNER** in which we use them.



MATTHEW 12:34b

[Jesus said,] “For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.”

Conclusion: Our words and manner of speech flow out of the desires of our hearts.



THE BIBLE ADDRESSES . . .

The Bible addresses the **TYPE** of words we use and the **MANNER** in which we use them because our speech is a powerful **TOOL**, either for blessing or cursing.

TECHNOLOGY: CELL PHONES AND FACEBOOK

- How many of you own a cell phone?
- How many of you have been, or are currently on Facebook, MySpace, or something similar?

STATISTICS

Among 8-18 year olds:

- 66% own a cell phone
- Spend an average of 33 minutes talking on their cell phone every day
- 46% send text messages on any given day
- On average, 7th-12th graders spend about 1.5 hours texting every day
- The most popular computer activities are social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace

TECHNOLOGY

1. Man is able to create technology because we are made in God's image and reflect His divine ability to create.
2. Technology often assists man in exercising rightful dominion over creation, and is a means of God providing for the needs of people.

TECHNOLOGY

3. The sinful heart is prone to develop and use technology for evil purposes.
4. The sinful heart is prone to trust and find its satisfaction in technology, and not in God.
5. Technology can be used as a means of glorifying God, or glorifying man.

TECHNOLOGY

How are we prone to misuse cell phones and digital social networking?

1. **Destructive cravings**
2. **Satan's counterfeits**



IN THE NEWS...

In September of 2008, a passenger train crashed into a freight train killing 25 people. Cell phone records of the driver of the passenger train showed that he had sent a text message about 22 seconds before the crash.



IN THE NEWS...

A mother purposely created a fake MySpace identity named “Josh” in order to befriend a 13-year-old girl. The girl thought she had found a true friend. After time, however, “Josh” told the girl that the world would be better off without her. She later committed suicide.



2 JOHN 1:12

1. There is a greater joy that can be experienced with face-to-face communication. (2 John 1:12)
2. Face-to-face communication helps to guard us from the temptations and dangers of sinful communication.



A BIBLICAL VIEW OF PERSONAL COMMUNICATION

1. Our words and manner of speech flow out of the **DESIRES** of our **HEARTS**.
2. The **TYPE** of words we use and the **MANNER** in which we use them can be a powerful **TOOL** for either for blessing or cursing.

A BIBLICAL VIEW OF PERSONAL COMMUNICATION

3. Each **MODE** of communication present us with **OPPORTUNITIES** and **DANGERS** that we must carefully evaluate.

Lesson 23

In Class

Communication is...

Speech Activity

Circle the words that affirm how we are to speak to one another, and underline the words that demonstrate how we are not to speak to one another.

Ephesians 4:15—Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,...

Ephesians 4:29—Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

Ephesians 5:4—Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving.

Colossians 4:6—Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

Titus 3:2—to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people.

Romans 16:18—For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive.

Matthew 12:36—I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak,...

Proverbs 16:23—The heart of the wise makes his speech judicious and adds persuasiveness to his lips.

Why is our speech so important?

1. Examine Matthew 12:34b.

What does this verse mean? How do our words and speech serve as a "thermometer" for the heart?

Why is our speech so important?

2. Examine James 3:4-10.

What do your words have the ability to do?

Give one or two examples that demonstrate this:

**Communication + Technology Cell phones and Social
Networking Sites**

How are we prone to misuse cell phones and social networking sites?

Destructive _____

Satan's _____

Give some examples of this:

Summary: A Biblical View of Personal Communication

> Our words and manner speech flow out of the desires of our _____.

> The _____ of words we use and the _____ in which we use them can be a powerful tool, either for blessing or cursing.

> Each _____ of communication presents us with opportunities and _____ that we must carefully evaluate.

Small Group Notes

This week, I plan to apply the following truth to my life in this way:

Lesson 23 Review—Communication

Main Ideas:

- > God created us to be relational.
- > Our words and manner of speech flow out of the desires of our heart.
- > The type of words we use and the manner in which we use them can be a powerful tool for either blessing or cursing.
- > Each mode of communication presents us with unique opportunities and dangers that we must carefully evaluate.

At Home

Think About It

With your parents, review the verses listed in the “Speech Activity,” and carefully evaluate the type, manner, and amount of time you spend communicating with God, family, and friends this week. What should your priorities be?

Examine Your Heart

Slowly and carefully read Psalm 16:11, Psalm 27:4, and Psalm 42:1-2. Do these verses express the desire of your heart? If yes, how can you establish communication priorities this week that allow time for this?

Are there areas in your type and manner of speech with others that you need to address? What seems to be at the root of your speech? Anger? Pride? Fear? Pray and ask God to reveal any sin in your heart. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide and strengthen you. Pray Psalm 141:3.

Think About It

If you use a cell phone or something like Facebook, talk with your parents and carefully evaluate why and how you are using it.

Examine Your Heart

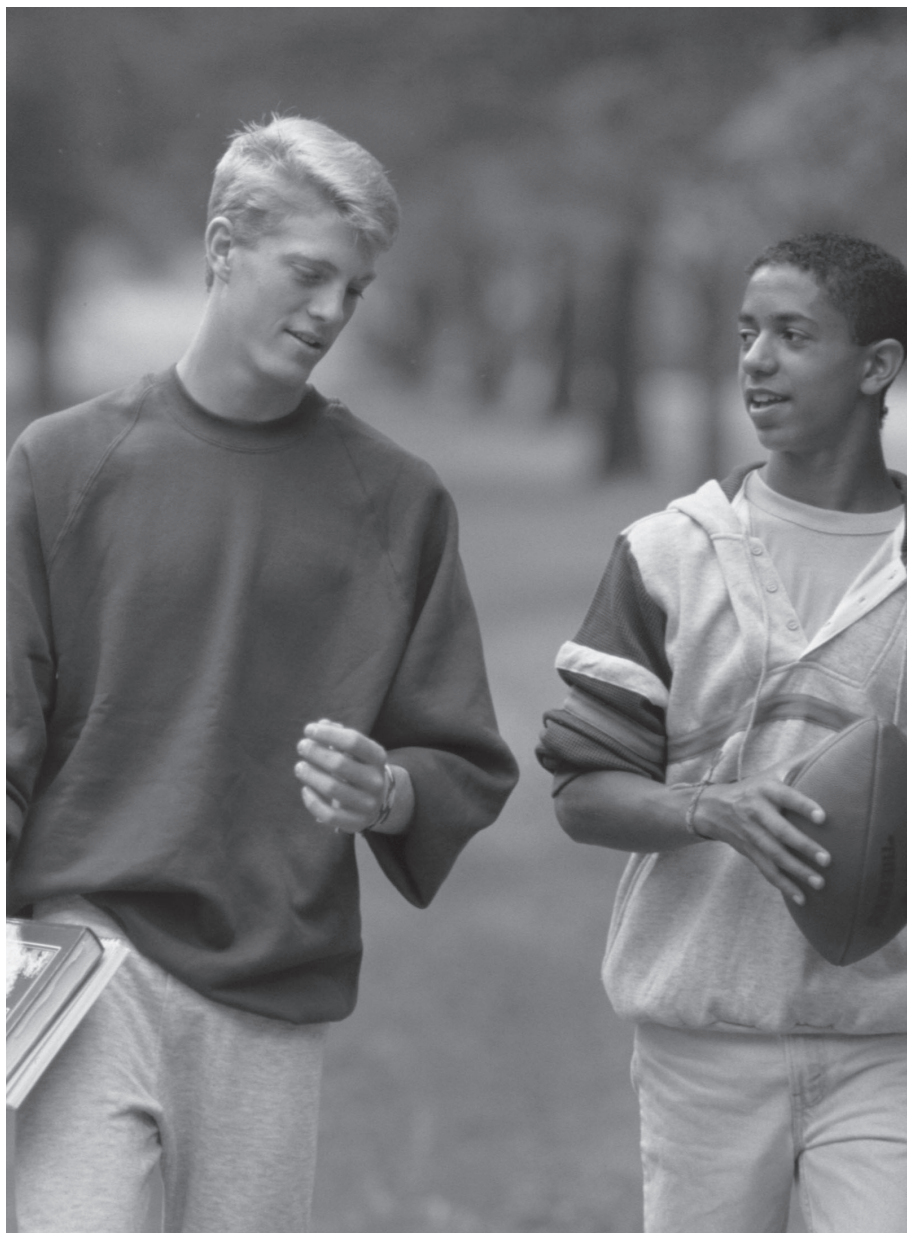
Are these technologies helping you have real God-honoring relationships, or are they a means to promote destructive cravings? Are they serving you well, or have they become your master? Would your parents approve of your conversations? Would God? Pray and ask God to reveal whether you are rightly understanding and using these.

Parents

Review the Scriptures from the “Speech Activity” toward the start of this lesson in the journal. Read the following short and helpful articles, which were sent home with your students. Carefully reflect on each and, if applicable to your son or daughter, use them as a means to discuss the topics.

"Facebook Turns Five: Thoughts on Social Networking" by Dr. R. Albert Mohler, Jr.

"Does Your Child's Cell Phone Preach Another Gospel?" by Dr. Russell Moore



The Bible addresses the TYPE of words we use and the MANNER in which we use them.

Communication

MAIN IDEAS

God created us to be relational, which includes being communicative. Our words and manner of speech flow out of the desires of our hearts, and reveal what is in our hearts. Our words and the manner in which we use them can be a powerful tool for either blessing or cursing. Thus, each mode of communication presents us with unique opportunities and dangers that we must carefully evaluate.

A Biblical View of Communication

1. Our words and manner of speech flow out of the desires of our heart. (**Matthew 12:34**)
2. The type of words we use and the manner in which we use them can be a powerful tool for either blessing or cursing. (**James 3:4-10**)
3. The sinful heart is prone to misuse cell phones and digital social networking because of destructive cravings and Satan's counterfeits. (**Jeremiah 17:9**)
4. Each mode of communication presents us with unique opportunities and dangers that we must carefully evaluate. (**2 John 1:12**)
 - There is greater joy that can be experienced with face-to-face communication.
 - Face-to-face communication helps to guard us from the temptations and dangers of sinful communication.

ARTICLE

In "Facebook Turns Five: Thoughts on Social Networking," Dr. R. Albert Mohler Jr. reflects on advantages and dangers of social networking sites. He ends by giving eight reminders/tips to guide Christian interaction in online communities.

Dr. Russell D. Moore looks at another popular mode of communication—cell phones—in his blog post, "Does Your Child's Cell Phone Preach Another Gospel?"

Read and discuss these articles with your student.

INTERACTING WITH YOUR STUDENT

Your student has been asked to apply one truth learned from this lesson to his/her life this week. Ask about this, and pray with your student to encourage him/her in this application. Ask God to work in your student's heart, and encourage your student to grow in God's truth.

Encourage your student to complete the "At Home" section of the Student Journal and discuss it with you. Your student will be asked to review the verses listed in the Speech Activity with you.