

**[Day #27] Part 1: Watch Your Mouth! – Job**  
**Read: Matthew 15:18; Job 38:2; 40:8; Eccl. 4:2**

Job must have been struck dumb before God, when at the end of his ordeal God calls him to task for foolish words he exchanged with his three “comforters.” God says to Job, “Who is this that obscures my plans with words without knowledge...Would you condemn me to justify yourself?”

Job didn’t sin with his mouth when he lost his wealth, servants, or even his precious children. He was still above reproach when he lost his health. Even when his comforters first arrived he was fine. It wasn’t until he opened his mouth that he got into trouble with God.

At the core of the argument between Job and his friends is the claim that God is too holy to allow the righteous to suffer. If suffering is the result of sin, Job must have committed a big one.

Job argued rightly that his trials were not due to sin. In fact, though he didn’t know it, it was exactly because of his *righteousness* – not sin – that he was targeted for trouble. But, as so often happens in arguments, each frenzied attempt to make a point can leave one leaning slightly farther from the truth. Before long, Job was sounding way better than he really was, and God was sounding unjust.

The wise adage says, “Too much talk leads to sin. Be sensible and keep your mouth shut.” (Proverbs 10:19 NLT)

There was another dynamic that contributed to Job’s incremental movement toward error. It has to do with the power of a word once it is spoken. Have you noticed the sudden power a thought takes on *the moment it is spoken*? So the more Job heard himself talk, the more he believed his increasingly extreme hyperbole.

Working in three languages through the years has given me deep experience in mispronouncing words. After being corrected, sometimes I’ve thought, “I know I’ve heard it pronounced the other way.” Upon further reflection, I realize that I *had* heard it the other way; when I myself had said it! A harmless example, but it illustrates the power that a word takes on once it is spoken.

Once Job realized his error, one can imagine him cradling his head saying, “What was I thinking?”

The point is not that God cannot handle hearing our faithless thoughts; but that *maybe we cannot*. We must be careful with the spoken word.

### **WHAT DO YOU THINK?**

Have you noticed the sudden power a thought can take on the moment it is spoken? Describe an experience you have had or observed where, the more something is said out loud, the more powerful and even true it seems to become.

Does this mean we can never express out loud our honest questions, “edgier ponderings”, and even doubts?

How can we guard against being led astray when expressing genuine thoughts and ponderings we have about our faith?