

We Own Our Lips

The title of this article comes from a statement written by King David as a description of ungodly men. It is found in Psalm 12. Listen to the boast of the ungodly:

“We will triumph with our tongues; we own our lips – who is our master?”

Just prior to this boasting, David described the one who “lies to his neighbor” through flattery and deception.

We are surrounded by the same kind of flattery and deception in our present-day society. It breeds mistrust and shallow relationships.

Curiously, it is empty speech, lies, and boasts that King David uses to describe the ungodly and faithless person.

Jesus said to let “Yes” be “Yes” and let “No” be “No.” This was in response to the way in which the people would make a claim or a promise. To swear by the temple was a strong vow. But to swear by the ‘gold’ in the temple was even stronger. Jesus taught us to speak truth with no disclaimers or qualification.

How often have you rationalized a ‘white lie’ in order to avoid the embarrassing truth? We call it ‘tact’ and reason that it is good to be tactful (though the word is misunderstood). We own our own lips. Aren’t we clever?

We greet each other with words of warmth and interest. But they are empty greetings. We own our own lips. Aren’t we clever?

How often have you twisted the truth to keep someone from getting hurt? It actually made things go better. We own our own lips. Aren’t we clever?

How often have you made a bold claim or promise without really thinking about whether you could keep your promise? People are impressed and perhaps even encouraged. We own our own lips. Aren’t we clever?

Have you ever told the truth, but in such a way as to intentionally give yourself an advantage? One

might say that you are manipulative or that you have ulterior motives. We own our own lips. Aren’t we clever?

It wasn’t adultery; it was an affair. She isn’t rebellious; she has a free spirit. He needed the money for his family; he intended no harm. I am not being deceptive; it is a more gentle way to say things. We own our own lips. Aren’t we clever?

How many times have you showered someone with complements . . . so you would appear encouraging? Flattery gets you everywhere. We own our own lips. Aren’t we clever?

The joke is a little ‘shady,’ but it was really funny. We own our own lips. Aren’t we clever?

How many times have you used a word that rhymes with an obscene word or ‘suggested’ something of a sexual nature? You didn’t say the actual word! We own our own lips. Aren’t we clever?

We live in a country that guarantees ‘Free speech.’ It is our first amendment right. We own our own lips. Aren’t we clever?

We argue over logic and intellectual conclusions. We split hairs wrangling over words; and we split churches. We own our own lips. Aren’t we clever?

Help, Lord, for the godly are no more; the faithful have vanished from among men. Everyone lies to his neighbor; their flattering lips speak with deception. May the Lord cut off all flattering lips and every boastful tongue that says, “We will triumph with our tongues; we own our lips – who is our master?”

Psalm 12:1-4 (NASB)

**The Lord is our Master.
Be truthful or be quiet!**

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