

Proverbs 15:4 tells us, "**A gentle tongue is a Tree of Life; but perverseness therein is a breaking of the spirit.**" A gentle tongue is one that speaks with that speaks truthfully and courteously, as opposed to a deceitful and lying tongue. God's word tells us that this is one of the things that He hates: **16. There are six things which the Lord hates, seven which are an abomination to Him: 17. haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, 18. a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil, 19. a false witness who breathes out lies, and a man who sows discord among brothers.** (Proverbs 6:16-19 [RSV]) And why would not God hate a lying tongue, considering the fact that Jesus says Satan is the father of lies? **"You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies"** (John 8:44 [RSV]). James, the Lord's brother, also gave warning for Christians to control their tongues: **"If anyone thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this man's religion is vain"** (James 1:26 [RSV]). He also adds some very sage and wise advice, good advice that should still be heeded today: **5. So the tongue is a little member and boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire! 6. And the tongue is a fire. The tongue is an unrighteous world among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the cycle of nature, and set on fire by Hell. 7. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by humankind, 8. but no human being can tame the tongue--a restless evil, full of deadly poison. 9. With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who are made in the likeness of God. 10. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brethren, this ought not to be so.** (James 3:5-10 [RSV]) The Apostle Peter adds a warning to Christians everywhere, saying, **"He that would love life let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking guile"** (1 Peter 3:9 [RSV]).