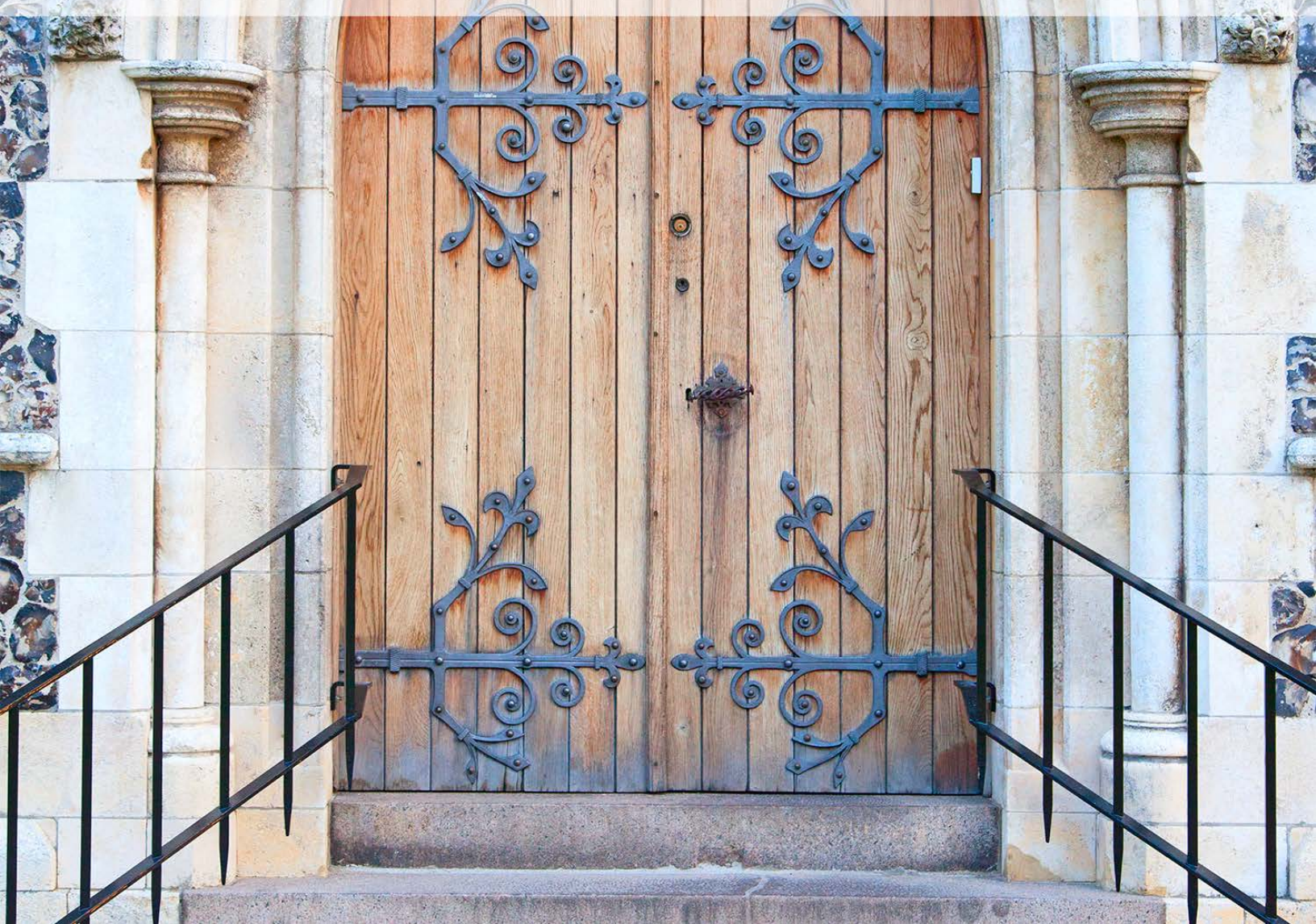




*"Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth;
keep watch over the door of my lips!" Psalm 141:3*





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Written by Carrie Fernandez and Jeannette Tuionetoa

The Keep Quiet Challenge

Learning How to Manage Your Mouth

This 12-week challenge will equip you to effectively glorify the Lord with your lips by sharing real-life stories, practical tips, and encouragement on your journey to managing your mouth.

Each week you will focus on one area and learn how to:

- Tame your tone of voice
- Stop nagging
- Quit grumbling & complaining
- Build up, not tear down
- Avoid being negative
- And more!

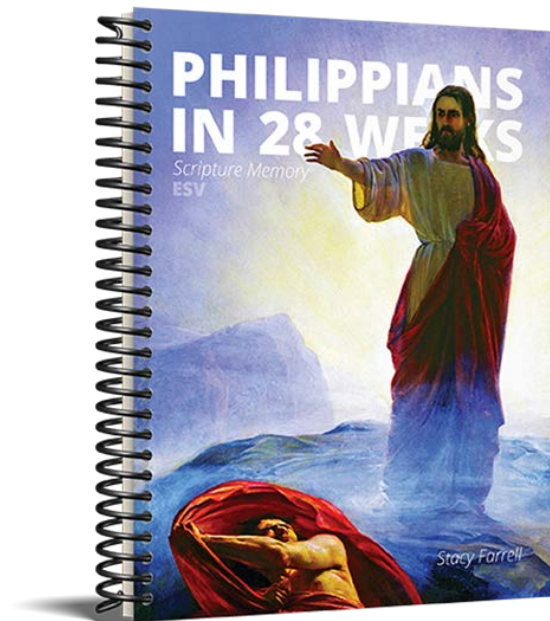
Throughout the Challenge, you will find printables to use alongside your study that include Scripture look-up, prayer requests, reflection questions, your weekly action steps and a devotional.

Be sure to print the weekly flashcards (separate file) to help you along the way with your action steps and memory verses.

How to use this study

The Keep Quiet Challenge is a self-paced study intended to be spread out over 12 weeks. When we launched The Keep Quiet Challenge online as a group in 2019, around 1,000 moms participated and several stayed on course while others spent more than one week on a particular Challenge. Use it however it works best for you!

Recommended Resource: *Philippians in 28 Weeks* (ESV or KJV)



MEMORIZE THE ENTIRE BOOK OF PHILIPPIANS IN 28 WEEKS!

Nothing compares to the Bible. It contains the answers we need to successfully navigate life.

Philippians in 28 Weeks presents a painless way to commit the entire book of Philippians to memory.

This streamlined approach is carefully constructed to present Philippians thought by thought using **five simple steps**:

1. READ 2. RECORD 3. REPEAT 4. REVIEW 5. RECITE

It contains memory cards, copywork verses, journal questions, weekly reflections, recitations charts, and an optional tracking tool.

Visit www.homeschooladventure.com for samples and more info.

"Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; Keep watch over the door of my lips." Psalm 141:3

Meet the best friends behind The Keep Quiet Challenge

Carrie and Jeannette have been best friends since the late 90's, way before knowing their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Once getting to know Jesus, their lives were radically transformed and blessed through repentance within months of each other.

For over twenty years now, Carrie and Jeannette have walked with each other through many of life's ups and downs. With a No-holds-barred approach to their friendship, they have truly seen each other at their very worst and their best.

Carrie and Jeannette have joined together on this raw examination of their hearts to work towards the goal of glorifying the Lord with not only their hearts, **but their mouths too!** Many times they thought about giving up. Many times they felt unworthy, yet knowing the Lord has put this in their hearts, they continued onward.

They well know that time and time again the Lord has used people who felt unworthy. He used people who didn't deserve to be used. He used people who failed over and over. They definitely fit that standard, and went into this knowing that if this challenge could even help one person, *even one of them* – it was worth it.



Carrie Fernandez

I grew up in a dysfunctional home around women who ruled the roost. Through learned behavior and a dreadfully sinful heart, I developed the terrible habit of having a harsh tone of voice and snapping at the people I loved the most. Thank God for His mercy-FULL redemption!

The **Keep Quiet Challenge** is a project born out of desperation to once and for all tame my beast of a mouth. I look forward to growing in the Lord with you!



Jeannette Tuionetoa

I grew up in the Bronx, New York and had a pretty tough upbringing. Some of it was circumstance, some was self-inflicted. After being hurt over and over by people that came into my life, I learned to trust no one and to form a wall between me and – well, everyone else I met.

I was suspicious of everyone and felt as if I needed to defend myself, because no one else ever did. Years later, I would grow to know the Lord and Him know me. I brought along my baggage, including a mouth that often tore down. I am ready to lay it at His feet.

Carrie's Introduction

My husband and I have been together since I was 19 years old. I have literally had him in my life as my mate longer than I haven't (you can do the math). Early on he used to talk to me about my "tone of voice" and my strong desire to "have the last word." Of course, I thought he was nuts and had no idea what he was talking about.

In 2012 I went back home to Michigan, the place where I grew up. For the first time, I really heard the women in my family talk to their husbands - aunts and cousins. I REALLY heard them and thought, "Is this what I sound like to my husband?"

The Lord opened my eyes and showed me how damaging my tone of voice had been. I was appalled and disgusted with myself. This is what my husband meant all those years!

So, was I able to get a grip of my lifetime of learned behavior from all the women in my life? I would like to say yes, but sadly, no. It's like my tongue has a mind of its own.

I have prayed, read Scripture, talked to my Titus 2 mentors and my girlfriends, and I still cannot keep quiet. That's when I figured I am probably not the only one who struggles with this and the Keep Quiet Challenge was beginning to form in my heart and mind. As much for me as for you - maybe more!

I plan to get very raw with you. I am not going to lie; I have selfish motives for doing the Keep Quiet Challenge - I desperately NEED it. I don't think I am the only one because you are here too!

Jeannette's Introduction

Sometimes I wonder why struggles seamlessly come my way, then other times, I wonder how God even puts up with me in the manner with which I choose to respond to those struggles. Quite frankly, I am tired of myself and I don't know how He isn't. I am tired of fighting, getting me nowhere. I am tired of sinning with my mouth, then regretting it almost instantly afterward.

I have been with my husband for 14 years. Much of that time we have spent at odds with each other. We met at church, and the truth is, only a month after we were married everything changed; he was not the man I thought I had married.

I spent so much time resenting him for that, feeling deceived yet again by someone I trusted. The more I realized who he was, the more I argued and pushed him even further away.

Now, I am just tired. I am tired of being bitter. I am tired of my mouth making things worse. I am tired of blessing and cursing with my mouth. I am sick of myself for disobeying the Lord.

That's why this Challenge is important to me. I need to hear the truth. I need to see myself because it's so easy to forget the person who I just saw a reflection of in the mirror. I want to be free from the prison that has kept me repeating the same cycle over and over.

Weekly Challenges

Challenge One: Tame Your Tone of Voice

Challenge Two: Think Before You Speak

Challenge Three: Avoid Being Negative

Challenge Four: Be Wise with Integrity

Challenge Five: Stop Nagging

Challenge Six: Stop Grumbling & Complaining

Challenge Seven: Stop Gossiping & Mind Your Own Business

Challenge Eight: Practice Being Slow to Anger

Challenge Nine: Build Up, Not Tear Down

Challenge Ten: Avoid Being Boastful

Challenge Eleven: Revere What is Holy

Challenge Twelve: Don't Wear Your Words on Your Face

Challenge One: Tame Your Tone of Voice!

I often feel like my mind is moving a million miles a second. I have so many thoughts and ideas, and any type of interruption to my thoughts is often met with an *unintentional* irritated tone of voice.

When I started working on and praying for the Keep Quiet Challenge, I started to observe other moms around me. I saw how they interacted with their children and responded to their husbands. I recall thinking on numerous occasions, "are they always so sweet and patient in their responses?"

Maybe yes, maybe no. We all put on our best performances when around other people, right?

Has anyone ever told you they want to record you so you can listen to how you actually sound? My husband has, on numerous occasions (thankfully he has never followed through!).

The truth is, most often I am not upset or even in a bad mood; I just happen to have a sharp tone of voice. I am a very matter-of-fact, to-the-point, tell-it-like-it-is kind of person. That can be good sometimes, but not all the time, and definitely not in my everyday speech.

There are many reasons we might become snappy and speak with a sharp tone, but that doesn't make it okay. I know this; I need to learn how to tame my tone of voice.

"The wise of heart is called discerning, and sweetness of speech increases persuasiveness." Proverbs 16:21

"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 4:29

Challenge One Action Steps:

- Take a moment before you respond to make sure you are not responding rashly.
- Breathe before answering or making a request.
- Clear your mind of your recent thoughts so you are not still thinking about them when you respond.
- Focus on being kind with your words

Memory Verse

Look up Psalm 141:3 and write it on the lines below. Repeat this verse to yourself every morning when you wake up using your flashcards.

Do you struggle with your tone of voice? If so, who bears the brunt of it?

Seek repentance from the Lord for your harsh tone of voice and seek to honor Him this week as you work towards softening your tone.

What I hope to get out of this week's Challenge

Specific prayer requests

My successes this week

When we are really working hard to make a change to our behavior, *we know* when we have a success. It's the moment when you go to open your mouth, but you catch yourself and soften your tone.

I had self-control when:	I needed grace when:

Look it up & write it down!

Proverbs 16:21

Ephesians 4:29

Weekly Devotion: Anxious Hearts and Fiery Tones

Read over our devotion for Challenge One, written by Bonnie Rose Hudson and answer the following application questions.

Luke 10:38-42 ESV

Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to His teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me." But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her."

I have always loved the story of Mary and Martha, as I imagine many of us have. My default behavior is much more Martha than Mary. Martha was focused on everything that needed done, and she was probably fearful it would not be accomplished—or accomplished to her satisfaction. So, she hustled and bustled, worried and fretted, all the time missing the most incredible of wonders. The Lord was in her home.

I always cringe a little when I hear her question to the Lord. I wish she would have said, "Lord, could You please tell Mary to help me out?" That would not have been the best question to ask, but it would have been better than her fiery question.

"Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone?"

"Do You not care?" Of course, we know the answer. No One in the universe ever cared for Martha more than Jesus did. No One could know her heart and cherish her the way He did. And yet, she asks Him if she cares. But that's what worry does. It leads us to question if the Lord truly cares.

One of my favorite stories in the entire Bible is the story of Mary and Martha when their brother Lazarus died. I love it for many reasons, but one of them is because we see Martha learned from her missteps and from the Lord. In John 11:27, she declares to Him that she believes He is the Messiah, the Savior of the world. In John 11:39-41, we see her trusting in Jesus's care for her completely, doing what was certainly unexpected and very much against the social norms. She ordered her brother's grave be opened because Jesus said so.

Martha took her eyes off herself and put them on Jesus. Focus fuels faith and extinguishes fiery tones.

1. What distracts you the most?
2. How can you practice focusing on the Lord in all things?
3. Our fiery tones often spark fires in relationships. What fires could you help extinguish or avoid by focusing on Jesus instead of yourself?

For more encouragement, read Jeannette's blog post: [The "Tone of Voice" Struggle & How to Tame Your Tongue](#)

