

## **Trash Talking**

### **Ready:**

“For the mouth speaks from the overflow of the heart.” — Matthew 12:34b

### **Set**

In 1998, the Ohio State Buckeyes beat Northwestern 36–10, but personal fouls and unsportsmanlike conduct tainted the win. OSU’s coach at the time, John Cooper, made a point to his number-one ranked team, emphasizing that there is no place in football for trash talking and taunting and that it can be a distraction more than a help. Guard Rob Murphy said, “He got his point across.”

Discussing the numerous flags that were thrown during the game, Cooper demanded that the trash-talk behavior stop. Again Murphy said, “I agree. We need to play more and talk less.”

“You can have a good, tough, hard-nosed football game without all that stuff,” Cooper continued. “I think college football would want to do more to prevent trash talking. It seems like we’re more worried about a guy celebrating in the end zone after a touchdown than with what else is going on during the game.”

Is there a place in sports for trash talking? I don’t think so, and I agree with coach Cooper that it is a distraction.

Jesus said, “For the mouth speaks from the overflow of the heart” (Matt. 12:34). As Rob Murphy said, “Play more and talk less.” Play with the character that’s reflective of a heart surrendered to the Lord. It is not our accomplishments that influence others, but our character. Trash talking means we must belittle our opponents in order to build ourselves up as greater and better than them. That type of behavior is both unsportsmanlike and unworthy of a follower of Christ.

### **Go**

1. Is it easy for you to trash talk?
2. If so, why?
3. How do you think the Lord wants you to change such behavior?

### **Workout**

Matthew 12:34; James 3:1–12

### **Overtime**

Lord, I need help with my mouth. Take total control of my heart. I pray this in Jesus name.  
Amen.

**Bible Reference:**

James 3



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