

THE DARK SIDE OF OUR WORDS

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We've been talking for a few weeks about our words ...our tongues ... our speech — how important and influential they are.

Our capacity to use words appears to be a God-like characteristic. Animals ... birds ... don't have anything similar.

And ... of course ... we use words every day. (The average might be round 15,000 words a day).

So ... being mindful of our words is a very practical topic. Mostly ... we might be on "auto-pilot" ... but we should pay some attention to what we're saying and be aware of some of the dangers.

Matthew 12:34-37 (NKJV)

34 Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

35 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.

36 But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment.

37 For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

By your words you will be justified and by your words you will be condemned. Might we regret some of our words at The Judgment? The time is NOW to be aware.

Proverbs 18:21 (NKJV)

21 Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit.

Our words are of "life and death" importance:

- Encourage ... build up ... calm and bring peace into a situation
- Discourage ... criticise ... argue ... start wars

There are lots of instructions in the Bible about how to use our tongues ... things to watch out for ... to be alert to. The Bible is often very practical to give us warnings and how to use our tongues.

James 1:26 (NKJV)

26 **If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless.**

Do you think you're religious? A good example of a Christian? A follower of Jesus Christ. One of the answers is: What do your words show? Do you "bridle" or control your tongue ... especially under pressure?

There is a saying:

"If you speak out when you're really angry ... you might make the best speech you'll ever regret!"

When we're angry ... upset ... emotional ... frustrated ... might not be the best time to "blast away"?

James 1:19-20 (NKJV)

19 So then, my beloved brethren, **let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath;**

20 for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

BE SLOW TO SPEAK!

James 3:1-10 (NKJV)

1 My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.

2 For we all stumble in many things. **If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.**

3 Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body.

4 Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires.

5 Even so **the tongue is a little member and boasts great things.**

See how great a forest a little fire kindles!

6 And **the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.**

7 For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind.

8 But **no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.**

9 With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God.

10 **Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing.** My brethren, these things ought not to be so.

Bearing in mind how short a letter James is ... there's quite a lot of attention devoted to controlling our tongues — because the tongue is so important.

Psalms 39:1-2 (NKJV)

1 I said, "**I will guard my ways,**

Lest I sin with my tongue;

I will restrain my mouth with a muzzle, (KJV "bridle")

While the wicked are before me."

2 I was mute with silence,

I held my peace even from good;

And my sorrow was stirred up.

Restrain your mouth ... especially around "wicked" or unconverted people.

The obvious solution before you speak is to think first ... before pouring out everything you think.

Proverbs 15:28 (NKJV)

28 **The heart of the righteous studies how to answer, (if at all?)**

But the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil.

Proverbs 29:20 (NKJV)

20 **Do you see a man hasty in his words?**

There is more hope for a fool than for him.

Proverbs 29:20 (NLT)

20 **There is more hope for a fool**

than for someone who speaks without thinking.

Don't forget we can always hit the pause button!

We need to consider:

- What to say
- How to say it
- When to say it
- IF to say it?

Today I'd like to focus on the "dark-side" of our words. The negative aspects of thoughtless ... harmful words ... to ourselves and to others.

"Sticks and stones can break my bones but words will never hurt me" ... is COMPLETE RUBBISH! Words can destroy!

Psalms 52:1-4 (NKJV)

1 Why do you boast in evil, O mighty man?
The goodness of God endures continually.

2 **Your tongue devises destruction,**
Like a sharp razor, working deceitfully.

3 You love evil more than good,
Lying rather than speaking righteousness.

Selah

4 **You love all devouring words,**
You deceitful tongue.

A tongue like a sharp razor ... wounding ... leaving scars.

Psalms 64:1-4 (NKJV)

1 Hear my voice, O God, in my meditation;
Preserve my life from fear of the enemy.

2 **Hide me from the secret plots of the wicked,**
From the rebellion of the workers of iniquity,

3 **Who sharpen their tongue like a sword,**
And bend their bows to shoot their arrows—**bitter words,**

4 That they may shoot in secret at the blameless;
Suddenly they shoot at him and do not fear.

They sharpen their tongues like a sword ... like arrows.

Swords are used close-up. Arrows can be fired from a distance ... you may not even know who started a rumour or painful gossip.

Notice the language scripture is using ... razors ... swords ... arrows ... hurtful weapons.

You and I should not be adding to the problem of hurtful words flying around!

We may not be perfect at bridling our mouths ... but should be something we're aware of ... and working on.

Psalms 57:1-4 (NKJV)

1 Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me!
For my soul trusts in You;
And in the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge,
Until these calamities have passed by.
2 I will cry out to God Most High,
To God who performs all things for me.
3 He shall send from heaven and save me;
He reproaches the one who would swallow me up.
Selah
God shall send forth His mercy and His truth.

4 My soul is among lions;
I lie among the sons of men
Who are set on fire,
Whose teeth are spears and arrows,
And their tongue a sharp sword.

Spears ... arrows ... sword. These are weapons that hurt ... wound ... KILL!

Proverbs 12:17-21 (NKJV)

17 He who speaks truth declares righteousness,
But a false witness, deceit.
18 **There is one who speaks like the piercings of a sword,**
But **the tongue of the wise promotes health.**
19 **The truthful lip shall be established forever,**
But **a lying tongue is but for a moment.** (*Often gossip?*)
20 Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil,
But counsellors of peace have joy.
21 No grave trouble will overtake the righteous,

But the wicked shall be filled with evil.

Proverbs 12:18 (GOD'S WORD)

18 **Careless words stab like a sword,**
but the words of wise people bring healing

No question but that words can hurt. Even years afterwards.

Some people seem to have thick skins ... almost impervious to insults and harsh words ... but most people are upset and hurt by careless words.

Even in Church ... some people are very quick to go to others and offer advice ... give words of "necessary correction" (at least in their minds) ... and have scarred and wounded.

(If using a razor to shave ... you'd take great care ... especially a cut-throat razor).

Scriptures repeatedly tell us to take care!

Proverbs 15:1-2 (NKJV)

1 **A soft answer turns away wrath, (calming?)**
But a harsh word stirs up anger. (critical ... upsetting)
2 **The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly,**
But the mouth of fools pours forth foolishness.

We choose!

If we're conscious that our words can hurt and wound ... hopefully we'll take more care?

Study how to answer ... be slow to speak ... guard and muzzle our tongues ... avoid hasty words.

Ephesians 4:17-18 (NKJV)

17 This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that **you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind,**
18 having their understanding darkened, **being alienated from the life of God,** because of the ignorance that is in them, **because of the blindness of their heart;**

DON'T IMITATE THE WORLD.

Ephesians 4:22-24 (NKJV)

22 that you **put off**, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,

23 and **be renewed in the spirit of your mind**,

24 and that you **put on** the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

Put off ... put on.

Ephesians 4:29-32 (NKJV)

29 **Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.**

30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

31 **Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.**

32 And **be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.** (referring to the words that we use)

Ephesians 4:29 (NASB)

29 **Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth,**

Ephesians 4:29 (NLV)

29 **Watch your talk! No bad words should be coming from your mouth.**

Replace bad with good.

Ephesians 5:2-4 (NKJV)

2 And **walk in love**, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.

3 But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints;

4 neither filthiness, **nor foolish talking**, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

"Walk in love" ... includes words.

Ephesians 5:4 (AMP)

4 **Let there be no filthiness (obscenity, indecency) nor foolish and sinful (silly and corrupt) talk, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting or becoming;**

Colossians 3:1-11 (NKJV)

1 **If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above,** where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.

2 **Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.**

3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

4 When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

5 Therefore **put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. (Put to death ... eliminate)**

6 Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience,

7 in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.

8 But now you yourselves are to **put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. (Bad language ... harsh ... obscene)**

9 **Do not lie to one another,** since you have put off the old man with his deeds,

10 and have **put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,**

11 where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

Our words ... way of speaking ... should reflect that we are Christians. Building up ... encouraging ... kind and thoughtful.

Not hasty ... harsh ... critical ... judgmental ... prone to gossip ... tearing down others ... using words carelessly — like razors ... swords or arrows.

Proverbs 6:16-19 (NKJV)

16 **These six things the Lord hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him:**

17 A proud look,

A lying tongue,

Hands that shed innocent blood,

18 A heart that devises wicked plans,

Feet that are swift in running to evil,
19 **A false witness who speaks lies,**
And one who sows discord among brethren. (*Our words again*)

Three things in this list refer to the use of our tongues.

It seems that God is aware of our words and how we are using them. He hates certain words ... we'll be accountable at the Judgment.

Psalms 19:14 (NKJV)

14 **Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart**
Be acceptable in Your sight,

O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.

Our words are a Godly-characteristic. We should be aware that death and life are in the power of the tongue.

We should make some attempt to avoid the dark side in our speech and ensure our words are words of encouragement.