

November 7-11, 2016

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Communications Coordinator / IT Specialist



5 MINUTES / 5 DAYS

Wise Words

Words are powerful, no doubt. It's amazing to think that God "spoke" the world into existence. Likewise, our speech can be used to accomplish and communicate great things, but it can also be destructive. This week we will look at a few ways, both positive and negative, in which our speech affects our lives and relationships.

MONDAY

Words can crush our testimonies *Prov. 17:28, 18:6-8, 4:23*

Before small children learn to speak, it can be frustrating to figure out what they want. But, as they learn to talk, the challenge shifts from teaching them to speak to teaching them to exercise self-control in their speech. The latter is a challenge that doesn't disappear with age. We've all had that "open mouth, insert foot" experience, haven't we? And, in an instant, our words can mar what we've spent years trying to build—our testimony. Proverbs tells us that our words can destroy us—they're like a noose! The effects of foolishness, lying, gossip and slander are deep and widespread. Thoughtless, careless speech is both dangerous and hurtful. It reveals what is truly in our hearts.

Think before you speak. How will your words affect your testimony? What changes need to take place in our hearts? 

TUESDAY

Words can crush our spirits *Prov. 15:1-4*

Isn't it true that we tend to remember the most hurtful things people have said to us? Sometimes the sting of hurtful or untrue words feels sharper than the blessing of good words. We all probably know friends or family members who no longer speak to each other—or someone who won't associate with "churchy" people due to past hurt. Even a careless comment made in passing can (dis)color someone's reality for years.

Not only do words crush our spirits, but they also grieve the Holy Spirit (Eph 4:29-31). He tells us to let go of the bitterness, anger, rage and slander—and calls us to the same kindness He has shown to us.

Decide to edify with your words, and choose kindness. If you've been on the receiving end, ask the Lord to heal your heart from pain caused by hurtful words.

Glorifying God by producing more maturing followers of Jesus.

WEDNESDAY

Words can crush our relationships *Prov. 18:4, 18-19; Eph. 4:29*

Sometimes it's so easy to blurt something out before we've given it much thought. Sometimes the people with whom we're most comfortable—friends and family—are more aware of our tendencies to do that than anyone else. They've been on the receiving end. And, how difficult is it to repair those relationships after harsh words have been spoken? Even after apologies and forgiveness, the hurt is rarely forgotten—and it may even rear its ugly head again in a later conversation. Or, what about the good words we never say? Do we nitpick and criticize but neglect to express appreciation and love?

Proverbs states that *an offended friend/brother is harder to win back than a fortified city*. Wow! May we be more mindful of how our speech affects others.

Ask God to help you to "bring grace to the hearer" with your speech.

THURSDAY

Words can heal *Prov. 12:18, 25:11*

 Have you ever had someone say the right thing at just the right time? Probably so, and it may have been followed by this response: "How did s/he know I needed that today?!" Or, maybe it was that one teacher in elementary school who told you that you could make it! Or the person who supported you when it seemed like no one else would. When we choose to edify and encourage, we may make someone's day, help them take a giant step in healing their hurting heart—or even play a major role in shaping their future. *Life and death are in the power of the tongue* (Prov. 18:21). How rewarding it is to give life, hope, healing, and reassurance with the words we choose to say!

Intentionally speak hope into someone's life today by offering a word of encouragement.

FRIDAY

Words can change you *Prov. 12:25, 16:23, 24*

Studies have shown that negative words and thinking affect our brains much differently than positive words. They release stress hormones and can even affect sleep and behavior.

Negative words reveal what's inside of us. Matt. 12:34  says *out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks*. But, what if we replaced those words with kind and gracious words, which *"bring healing to the bones?"* Not only would it  would it start to reshape our own life, but it would also positively impact those with whom we come into contact. It's not realistic to think we will never utter an unkind or hurtful word, but we can strive to minimize them by being conscious of our thoughts and intentional with our speech.

Train your brain. What heart-work needs to be done in order to communicate with more gracious speech?

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