



26 April 2024

Our words

Our words are important.

The Bible frequently addresses the importance of our speech, both positively and negatively.

Jesus said that God holds us accountable for every word, even every careless word (see Matthew 12:26-27).

And so we should join king David in praying

“May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, LORD, my rock and my Redeemer” (Psalm 19:14).



Our words also have a powerful impact on others for good and for bad. Proverbs tells us

“pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and bring healing to the bones.”
(16:24)

There are also some pointed contrasts between the effects of good and bad speech. Consider just a handful.

- “A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger” (Proverbs 15:1).
- “A soothing tongue is a tree of life, but perversion in it crushes the spirit” (Proverbs 15:4).
- “The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life, but the mouth of the wicked conceals violence” (Proverbs 10:11).
- “The tongue of the righteous is like choice silver, the heart of the wicked is worth little” (Proverbs 10:20).
- “One who guards his mouth and his tongue guards his soul from trouble” (Proverbs 22:23).

Yes, our words can both help and hurt.

Some years ago a number of believers told me that they were no longer willing to serve in their church because of the whip or lash of one person’s tongue. I encouraged them to address the

problem Biblically, trusting God, and yet I could feel their intense pain from the attacks. The Bible pictures that.

- “Your tongue devises destruction, like a sharp razor, you worker of deceit” (Psalm 52:2).
- “My soul is among lions; I must lie among those who devour, among sons of mankind whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue is a sharp sword” (Psalm 57:4).
- “They [evil people attacking David] sharpen their tongues like a snake; the venom of a viper is under their lips” (Psalm 140:3).

You may have experienced that, felt the sharp razor, spears, arrows, poison of someone’s tongue.

Because our words are important, we need to guard our heart, mind and so then our tongue. Consider two key, familiar passages which should be firmly planted in our minds and hearts. Read these several times, slowly.

- “Let no unwholesome word come out of your mouth, but if there is any good word for edification according to the need of the moment, say that, so that it will give grace to those who hear. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. All bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and slander must be removed from you, along with all malice” (Ephesians 4:29-32).
- “Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. Your speech must always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person” (Colossians 4:5-6).

These verses lived out will lead to giving hope, encouragement and love to others, will build up both ourselves and others.

Yes,

“pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and bring healing to the bones” (16:24).

Your words are important!

Pastor Lyle