

The Weight of Our Words: Measuring the Impact of What We Say

Introduction

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- Ephesians 4:29-31
- Corrupt--rotten, putrefied, 2) corrupted by one and no longer fit for use, worn out, 3) of poor quality, bad, unfit for use, worthless
- Edifying—building up, the act of one who promotes another's growth in Christian wisdom, piety, happiness, holiness
- Evil Speaking--slander, detraction, speech injurious, to another's good name, 2) impious and reproachful speech injurious to divine majesty

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- Job 19:2
- Matthew 12:36
- Idol words come from the following sources:
- Stress of everyday life, causes of the say things we don't mean
- Learned behavior for parents
- Exposure to negative speech patterns: angry boss, crude language in TV, Music, and movies
- Sarcastic Conversation and Idle chatter.

Principle 1: Controlled Speech is a Measure of Maturity

- James 3:2
- Offend--means to cause one to stumble or fall, to stumble i.e. to err, make a mistake, to sin, to fall into misery, become wretched
- Perfect—literally means complete or mature.
- The implication is clear; we are never spiritually mature until we no longer trip people up with our words.
- Proverbs 10:32
- Matthew 12:34
- Luke 6:45—how we talk and what comes out of our mouths is a reflection upon the condition of heart and our inner man.

Principle 2: The Tongue is Small but Significant

- James 3:3-5
- Small words have started wars, resulting in thousands of lives lost. How many marriage and relationships that once set sail on a joyous adventure had been steered onto the rocks by a faulty rudder?
- We tend to think that small things are insignificant. How can a few words do serious damage? But ignoring the problem is like ignoring termites nesting in your house.

Principle 3: Our Words Are Potentially Combustible

- James 3:6
- Iniquity—injustice, uprightness
- Setteth on fire—to ignite, to burn up, to operate destructively, that of which the destructive influences are kindled.
- Course—is defined as a wheel
- Matthew 15:11-20

Principle 4: The Tongue is Like a Wild and Deadly Beast

- James 3:7-8
- What type of animal has mankind not sought to tame?
- Yet we have not been able to tame our tongues. If we don't bring our speech habits under the Spirit's control, our tongues will be "full of deadly poison."
- Psalm 140:3
- Romans 3:13-14

Principle 5: The Tongue Tends to Promote a Double Standard

- James 3:9-12
- Someone once said that most tongues are tied in the middle, wagging at both ends.
- It is amazing how we can verbally poison other people all the way to church, but as soon as we pull into the parking lot we begin to speak out of the pious side of our mouths.
- II Corinthians 5:17
- Ephesians 5—this type of communication is to be put off and out of the believer's life.

Conclusion

- In these five principals James categorizes the dark and shifty potential of the tongue. The first step toward victory is to permit these truths to penetrate our minds and hearts.
- A transformed tongue must be a top priority for those committed to spiritual growth.
- We often excuse one another with a number of rationalizations.
 - “Well, it’s the truth, isn’t it?”
 - “If they didn’t want people to talk, they never should have done it.”
 - “Let me share this with you so we can pray more intelligently.”
 - “I heard this from a reliable source, or I wouldn’t be repeating it.”