

Daily Devotional, January 14, 2021 Choosing Our Words Wisely

“Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit. You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of. A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.”
Matthew 12:33-37 (NIV)

Communication is essential to the everyday life of any human being. We tend to communicate through our actions, however it's through our words that we interact with each other the most. Did you know that the average woman speaks about 7,000 words a day, while the average man speaks approximately 2,000 per day. That is quite a difference between genders, but still a significant amount of words spoken even by a man! That is, of course unless it has to do with sports!

In the book of James, the Bible tells us, “but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.” ([3:8](#)). We know that the tongue, the words we speak, can be dangerous. “Out of the same mouth come blessing and cursing” ([James 3:10](#)). Growing up in church, I have always been taught about the effects of our words and why they were important. I was taught to watch the way I spoke to others, not permitting gossip or slander to take control of my tongue.

Rather recently, God revealed more about the tongue to me. Not only should we have self-control when it comes to the words we speak (being positive and life-building vs. negative and life-destroying), but we should also be cautious about the neutral words that we speak.

If we read these verses from Matthew, in verse [36](#) it tells us that we will “give an account on the day of judgment for every empty word” that we speak. Empty is defined as not giving sufficient attention to or avoiding harm or errors. Verse [37](#) says that “by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned”. This means that not only will we be judged on the words that we speak against Christ and His church, but also on every neutral word that comes out of our mouths. This means not only every word that is not negative, but every word that has no impact at all.

This is something that I have been greatly challenged by lately. Even though I am not one to be negative, or speak malicious words to others, I often tend to speak *many* neutral words. How is that impacting the kingdom? It's not. One thing God has been pushing me to do recently is to speak more intentionally about Him. To look for ways to bring Him up in conversation, not just with strangers but also with my family and friends.

Even though there is nothing overly wrong with neutral or *careless* words, if they are said more often than words about Christ then what impact are we making? Today, ask God to help you guard your tongue—not only against negative and evil words, but also against those careless and thoughtless words. Ask Him to give you words that can be used for building His kingdom, words that will breathe life into others, and words that will encourage and not destroy. God delights in us, and it pleases God when His children are obedient and thoughtful, caring for one another and building each other up. Let us be a people, the body of Christ, who intentionally speak light and life and the truth of who our God is.

Father, thank You for the privilege we have to communicate with each other. I pray You will quickly convict me when I am out of line in my speech. Help me to speak words that are a benefit to those who hear. I pray I will routinely speak words of kindness and that my words will never harm. In Christ's name I pray, Amen.