



## MESSAGE THEME

*“Your speech is to only edify and release grace”*

*Mike Riches D. Min.*

November 5, 2023

**SERIES THEME** – *Infinitely More Than . . .*

### INTRODUCTION

- Life is shaped by words, personal lives, families, cultures, nations, the world.
- Words are fundamental to life, both spoken and written.
- Words have the power to create and to destroy, to empower and to demolish.
- Words are powerful that they have the potential for great harm and fortune.
- Due to social media, our culture and world has lost discretion and control regarding words.
  - Too often words now release anger and damage rather than peace and edification.
- Social media originally was looked upon as bringing people together, and in some ways it has. It also has divided and isolated.

### CORRUPT SPEECH – GOOD SPEECH

*Ephesians 4:29 (ESV) Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.*

#### Restrain Corrupt Speech

*Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, . . .*

*Corrupting* = Saprois – rotten, putrid, foul, corrupt

- Used of rotten fruit, rotten trees, rotten meat, etc.
  - Think spoiled, rancid, maggots, salmonella, botulism.
  - Dangerous, make ill, can kill.
- Don't let any talk come out of your mouth that tears down, disparages, and denigrates.

#### Release Good Speech

*. . . but **only** such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.*

- Being saved unto good works (*Eph. 2 10*) would include speaking good words.



## Harborview Fellowship

- Grammatical structure indicates that never is a single word to be permitted out of the mouth of the believer that would be corrupting, but only that which is good.
- Our Words are to have **3 characteristics**: to be 1) edifying, 2) appropriate, and 3) gracious.

1. **Edify** = to help, to build-up, be constructive, encouraging, instructive, uplifting, even if corrective.

- We are only to speak a word that edifies—to build up versus damage or destroy that comes from the unwholesome words of rot—there are words that are like cancer.

2. **Appropriate** = according to the need of the moment.

*Proverbs 15:23 A man has joy in an apt answer, And how delightful is a timely word!*

- It is to be appropriate to the occasion, the situation, circumstance, the people involved.
- We must be situationally aware, always ask ourselves what is appropriate, and not only what is appropriate to say, but how should the word be spoken.
  - Is it appropriate for the moment—how do we speak it—will it build up or tear down, even if it is true.

2. **Grace** = for other's benefit, so that your words can be received.

- We are not to brutalize with the truth!
- Instead of speaking with our own good in mind, I primarily speak with the good of others in mind, to demonstrate grace, and give grace.

**Ephesians 4:15** (ESV) *Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,*

*Colossians 4:6 Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, as it were, with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person.*

- Salt is a preservative and helps retard spoilage, that cancerous destructive work of the enemy.
- We are to encourage, strengthen, comfort, exhort, to appropriately challenge.
- My words are for building up, edifying, providing grace to another.
  - Just like I am to work to give to those in need.

**Proverbs 15:1** (ESV) *A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.*

*Proverbs 15:4* (ESV) *A gentle tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit.*

*Proverbs 12:18* *There is one who speaks rashly like the thrusts of a sword, But the tongue of the wise brings healing.*

- Grace is connected to truth and truth to grace. Speaking grace does not mean we avoid truth.



# Harborview Fellowship

- A most gracious thing you can do is speak truth into someone's life.

## PRACTICAL LOOK AT THE TONGUE

### It Demands Our Attention

- A lot of time is spent adorning the body, whether it is hair, face, physique, clothes, fragrance, etc.
- The tongue does more to determine the beauty and attractiveness of a person than does the outward features of a person.
- The picture of tongue might be ugly, but it can be the source of true beauty no matter the physical characteristics.
  - encourage or dishearten
  - soothe or inflame
  - heal or injure
  - give hope or demoralize
  - strengthen or debilitate
  - to honor or destroy
  - create peace or strife

*Proverbs 18:21 Death and life are in the power of the tongue, . . .*

- We must determine how we are going to use our tongue; to speak truth, edify, and bless, or promote falsehood, destroy, and curse.

### It is Powerful

- James illustrates the power of that which is small.
  - The size of a rudder, to the size of a ship.
  - The size of a horse bit, to the size a horse.
- So, the tongue can set the direction of life.

**James 3:3–5** (ESV) *If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. 4 Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. 5 So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire!*

- James tells us it is small but carries great influence and power.
- Like a bit in a horse's mouth and a rudder on a large ship.
- Lives, marriages, families, churches, communities, and countries can be destroyed because of the tongue.
- Is your tongue energized as an instrument of heaven or hell?
- The tongue controlled and energized by heaven and used as an instrument of God can do powerfully beautiful things.



## Harborview Fellowship

- build-up, encourage, strengthen, comfort, console, instruct, give hope, minister peace, promote unity.
- A tongue set on fire by hell and used as an instrument of Satan can do powerfully destructive deeds.
  - destroys, defiles, divides, curses, disheartens, brings discord, and destroys.
- Does your conversation bless or curse?

**James 3:9–10** (ESV) *With it [tongue] we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. 10 From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so.*

- Words of blessing have real impact and word curses have real consequences.
- Words are spiritually empowered.

**Numbers 6:22–27** (NLT) *Then the LORD said to Moses, 23 “Tell Aaron and his sons to bless the people of Israel with this special blessing: 24 ‘May the LORD bless you and protect you. 25 May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you. 26 May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.’ 27 Whenever Aaron and his sons bless the people of Israel in my name, I myself will bless them.”*

- **NOTE:** Human words of the priests, *divine blessing* of God! It is the same for us!

### It Reveals

#### The State of Our Hearts

**Matthew 12:33-35** *“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. 34 You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. 35 The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him.*

- We are measured not by how we measure up to others (**Gal 6.3-5**), but by how we measure up to the standard of Jesus Christ’s character (**Eph. 4.12**).
  - Do our words reflect the character of God and fruit of the Spirit or that of Satan in his confusion, chaos, harm, destruction, etc.
  - The battle for the tongue is a battle of the heart.
    - Our heart controls our tongue.
    - If my talk is all about me, it reveals my heart and my insecurity.
    - If my talk is coarse and angry it reflects that I have anger.
    - If my talk berates, it reveals that I am carrying wounds or jealousy.
  - The focus is not the external fruit but the internal root.

#### Our Spiritual Maturity

- James says the spiritually perfect or mature person controls their tongue and uses it for God’s purposes.



## Harborview Fellowship

**James 3:2** *For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect (complete or mature) man, able to bridle the whole body as well.*

- God, through James, is saying that if you can control your tongue, you have the capacity to control yourself in every other manner, or you are mature.

### **It Must Be Tested – 4 Tests**

1. Does it pass the truth test?

2. Does it pass the love test?

- Love is kind, not jealous, not arrogant, does not seek its own, is not easily provoked, does not receive an offense, rejoices in righteousness, and truth, it believes, hopes for, and forbears.

3. Does it pass the bless test?

4. Does it pass the Jesus test?

- Do your attitudes and values line up with that of Jesus Christ? Would He freely enter your conversation with you?
- Remember that we are modelling Jesus Christ and His kingdom values.

### **FINALLY**

*Matthew 12:36 But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken.*