

Power of Words: Part 3

The Destructive Power of the Tongue

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Matthew 16:21–23 NLT

21 From then on Jesus began to tell his disciples plainly that it was necessary for him to go to Jerusalem, and that he would suffer many terrible things at the hands of the elders, the leading priests, and the teachers of religious law. He would be killed, but on the third day he would be raised from the dead. 22 But Peter took him aside and began to reprimand him for saying such things. “Heaven forbid, Lord,” he said. “This will never happen to you!” 23 Jesus turned to Peter and said, “Get away from me, Satan! You are a dangerous trap to me. You are seeing things merely from a human point of view, not from God’s.”

Peter is most likely the most well known disciple of Jesus. And Peter thought it would be wise to give Jesus advice. But it would be one thing if Jesus had asked but Peter took it upon himself to offer counsel. Peter really thought that He was doing the right thing by what he said. And as we said last week from the book of Proverbs, that there is a way that seems right but the end leads to death. Peter thought his reprimand was needed but Jesus enlightened Peter that his speech happened because of his view.

How often have we gave advice or even reprimanded someone based off of communicated knowledge? And we genuinely thought that what we spoke was sound and correct. How many times have we been in Peter’s shoes? What if verse 23 wasn’t read this morning? We would possibly think that Peter did a good thing. We have often viewed this in reality as talking someone off the ledge. But verse 23 is recorded in red letters and we all know this to be the words of Jesus. Jesus immediately stopped Peter in his tracks and spoke to the source of the one speaking. Yes He was addressing Peter but He was addressing the one speaking through Peter.

Romans 6:16 ESV

16 Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?

And Peter momentarily surrendered His tongue to the flesh. And the flesh's desire is to sin. And sin is contrary to God's nature and character.

It was this split moment that Peter operated in the flesh and his flesh gave way to Satan. But Jesus recognized Satan even though he was dressed as an angel of light. How was Jesus able to recognize the adversary? Because Jesus constantly communed with the Father. He allowed God to write His word on His Heart. He was always placing Himself in the position to become one with the Father. As this is far fetched for us because Jesus said that the works He did, we shall do and greater. We must allow God to write His word on our heart and we must stay in constant communion with God. This is how we will recognize and know the enemy when he shows up.

Jesus was quick to silence Peter's tongue of destruction. Jesus understood the vitality of the creative force and duality of words. He knew that Peter could create doubt in His mind. He knew that death and life was in the power of the tongue. This shows how in tune Jesus was with the words of God and the tactics of Satan.

Although Peter spoke this in innocence with an understanding of loyalty and protection but he still spoke from the understanding of man and not of God. Jesus even said that you are a dangerous trap. Two things we must hear from this.

1. Words are seeds. And seeds give way to fruit.
2. Words are a snare. Snares or traps hold us captive.

Proverbs 6:2 NKJV

2 You are snared by the words of your mouth; You are taken by the words of your mouth.

Jesus knew and He called out the source and dealt with it immediately. But what is so astonishing about what Peter just spoke is how he spoke a few verses earlier. Turn with me:

Matthew 16:13–19 NLT

13 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" 14 "Well," they replied, "some say John the Baptist, some say Elijah, and others say Jeremiah or one of the other prophets." 15

Then he asked them, "But who do you say I am?" 16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." 17 Jesus replied, "You are blessed, Simon son of John, because my Father in heaven has revealed this to you. You did not learn this from any human being. 18 Now I say to you that you are Peter (which means 'rock'), and upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it. 19 And I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. Whatever you forbid on earth will be forbidden in heaven, and whatever you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven."

Does this sound like the same Peter that we just read from in verses 21-23? It is the same Peter physically but Peter under the influence of the Spirit of God. We are hearing two different messages coming from the same mouth. How can this be? As we read in Romans 6 that who we surrender our members to is who our master is.

We are all so familiar with the passage that we just read because we just spoke about it in our last series of "I Am". But here again we see Peter speak under the inspiration of God. He spoke what man had never declared. He spoke absolute truth prophetically. Jesus emphasized where this knowledge came from and where it did not come from. This declaration could only be revealed by the Father. And as we sit here today under the sound of His voice we can only make this declaration as the Son of God is revealed to us. This revealing is only possible by the Holy Spirit.

John 14:17 NLT

17 He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth.

John 16:13 NLT

13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future.

This is the working of the Holy Spirit. It is not a working or doing of man and man made knowledge. This is coming to the realization by conviction of wronging the one who agapes us.

And Peter just experienced first hand what so many people deny. It was by this revelation that Jesus declared LORDSHIP over the powers of hell. And when we receive and operate within this same declaration we have been given the Keys to the kingdom. But we know that there is more than one key. We all have keys that open different things. So this tells me that revelation from God is the power that hell cannot prevail against.

But let me ask you something...have you ever misplaced or lost your keys? Without those keys are we able open to open locked doors? If we are not exercising the authority over Satan then we have misplaced our revelation and are prone to have a change of words 3 sentences later. James 3: 10 reminds us of this.

James 3:10 TPT

10 Out of the same mouth we pour out words of praise one minute and curses the next. My brothers and sisters, this should never be!

The irony of this whole thing with Peter is that Jesus had already equip him with instructions. Turn with me to Matthew 15:10-20

Matthew 15:10–20 NLT

10 Then Jesus called to the crowd to come and hear. “Listen,” he said, “and try to understand. 11 It’s not what goes into your mouth that defiles you; you are defiled by the words that come out of your mouth.” 12 Then the disciples came to him and asked, “Do you realize you offended the Pharisees by what you just said?” 13 Jesus replied, “Every plant not planted by my heavenly Father will be uprooted, 14 so ignore them. They are blind guides leading the blind, and if one blind person guides another, they will both fall into a ditch.” 15 Then Peter said to Jesus, “Explain to us the parable that says people aren’t defiled by what they eat.” 16 “Don’t you understand yet?” Jesus asked. 17 “Anything you eat passes through the stomach and then goes into the sewer. 18 But the words you speak come from the heart—that’s what defiles you. 19 For from the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, all sexual immorality, theft, lying, and slander. 20 These are what defile you. Eating with unwashed hands will never defile you.”

We could read verse 10 alone and stop there. Our words defile us. How do they defile us...by speaking them. We declared last week that the wages of sin is death. The is pay we receive if we do not obeying God’s word.

But I want us to look closely at verse 15. Who spoke up and needed further insight? Peter...the same Peter that spoke by revelation of God then turned around and spoke from the view of man. Jesus didn’t beat around the bush, He always addressed the source. And in verse 18 Jesus tells us where our words come from. Our hearts. And Solomon understood this as well. We literally just addressed this last week.

Proverbs 4:23–25 NLT

23 Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life. 24 Avoid all perverse talk; stay away from corrupt speech. 25 Look straight ahead, and fix your eyes on what lies before you.

So how do we guard our hearts? Our eyes and ears are gates that lead to our hearts. And if we protect those gates then we are fortifying and keeping safe the very thing that determines the course of our lives.

Matthew 15:19–20 NLT

19 For from the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, all sexual immorality, theft, lying, and slander. 20 These are what defile you. Eating with unwashed hands will never defile you.”

Let’s look at the list Jesus mentions. Evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, lying, and slander. These are oftentimes considered actions and that is true but what are they first? Jesus said it...they are thoughts. We always have a thought before we act or react. It’s when these evil thoughts come that we must decide if we are going to entertain them. If they are entertained then they bring forth defilement. And defilement is simply defined as unclean.

And all thought the book of Leviticus and Numbers, God was calling the Israelites to be separated from the things that He called uncleaned. Paul even addressed this with the Church of Corinth.

2 Corinthians 6:14–18 NLT

14 Don’t team up with those who are unbelievers. How can righteousness be a partner with wickedness? How can light live with darkness? 15 What harmony can there be between Christ and the devil? How can a believer be a partner with an unbeliever? 16 And what union can there be between God’s temple and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God said: “I will live in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they will be my people. 17 Therefore, come out from among unbelievers, and separate yourselves from them, says the LORD. Don’t touch their filthy things, and I will welcome you. 18 And I will be your Father, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the LORD Almighty.”

God has called us to be a Holy people that is separated for His Kingdom. We are to display His holiness by the way we live and in this case...the way we talk. Peter asked the right questions and allowed God to write on his heart then Jesus had to rebuke his

words because he misplaced the revelation and allowed what was inward to defile him by speaking the understanding of man.

If we guard our hearts by what we see and what we hear then the inward thoughts will not manifest with destructive words. Let me pray with you today!