

Speak Life

Lakewood Family Church | Pastor Jonathan L. Vorce | October 5, 2025

Scripture Focus: **Proverbs 18:21** (NIV) - "The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit."

Theme Message: Just as God spoke the world into existence; Our words carry creative or destructive power.

Introduction

- **Hook:** Begin with a personal anecdote or illustration about the impact of words—e.g., a kind word that changed someone's day versus a harsh one that caused lasting hurt. Ask the congregation: "Have you ever spoken words you wish you could take back?"
- **Transition to Theme:** Connect to God's example in Genesis 1, where He created the universe simply by speaking (e.g., "Let there be light," **Genesis 1:3**).
 - Emphasize that as beings made in God's image (**Genesis 1:27**), our words hold similar, though limited, power to build up or tear down.
- **Purpose Statement:** Today, we'll explore how our words reflect God's creative power and how we can harness them for life-giving purposes in our relationships, communities, and faith.

I. Words as Creators – The Divine Model

Scripture Reference: **Genesis 1:1-31; Hebrews 11:3** "By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible."

A. **Explanation:** God didn't use tools or materials; His words alone brought order from chaos.

1. This shows words aren't neutral—they shape reality.

Illustration: Compare to modern examples like a coach's encouragement sparking a team's comeback or a parent's affirmation building a child's confidence.

B. **Application:** Challenge the congregation to speak life into situations this week—e.g.,

1. affirming a spouse,
2. encouraging a coworker,
3. affirming your child...

II. Words as Destroyers – The Danger of the Tongue

Scripture Reference: **James 3:5-10** “The tongue as a small spark that can set a forest on fire; blessing and cursing from the same mouth.”

A. **Explanation:** Just as words create, they can destroy relationships, reputations, and even self-worth.

1. Reference **Proverbs 12:18** (“The words of the reckless pierce like swords, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.”)

Illustration: Share a story from history or current events where harmful words (e.g., gossip, slander, or online bullying) led to division or tragedy.

B. **Application:** Encourage self-reflection: “What words have I spoken lately that might be destructive?”

1. Suggest practical steps like pausing before speaking: **James 1:19:** “Quick to listen, slow to speak”.

III. Words as Redeemers – Speaking with Grace and Truth

Scripture Reference: **Ephesians 4:29** “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.”

Colossians 4:6 “Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt.”

A. **Explanation:** Through Christ, our words can be transformed to reflect His redemptive power.

1. Jesus used words to heal, forgive, and invite (e.g., "Your sins are forgiven," Mark 2:5).

Illustration: Use a biblical example like Peter's denial and restoration (Luke 22:54-62; John 21:15-19), showing how words can wound but also restore.

B. **Application:** Invite the congregation to commit to "grace-filled speech."

1. e.g., daily prayers for wisdom in words,
2. a friend who will tell you the truth...

Conclusion

- **Recap:** Summarize the points: Words create like God's, destroy like fire, and redeem through Christ.
- **Call to Action:** Urge everyone to align their speech with God's will, perhaps with a prayer of commitment or a challenge to memorize [Proverbs 18:21](#).
- **Benediction:** Close with a blessing from [Numbers 6:24-26](#), emphasizing God's spoken blessing over us, and invite response.

24. The LORD bless thee, and keep thee:

25. The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:

26. The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.

Altar Call

For those needing healing from words or to repent of harmful speech.