

Servants Meeting

1.25.15

Taming the Tongue

Overview

- General Facts
- Words that Condemn
- Words that Justify

“For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”
(Matt. 12:37)

Verse in Context

- A tree is known by its fruit (Matt. 12:33-37)
- “But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.” (vs. 36-37)



Notable Bible Verses

- "Death and life are in the power of the tongue,
And those who love it will eat its fruit."
(Prov. 18:21)
- "A wholesome tongue is a tree of life, But
perverseness in it breaks the spirit." (Prov. 15:4)
- "He who guards his mouth preserves his life, But
he who opens wide his lips shall have
destruction." (Prov. 13:3)
- "No man can tame the tongue. It is a restless
evil, full of deadly poison." (Jam. 3:8)
- "Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to
those who put their trust in Him." (Prov. 30:5)

General Facts

- We must speak
 - Created with the gift of speech
 - We are able to form complex sounds which help describe certain ideas or feelings
- It's a good thing
 - God created it – shows His likeness in us
 - We sing praises & preach the good news
 - Holy Spirit descended like tongues of fire

General Facts

- Expresses the heart of a person
 - A deceitful mouth is the product of a sick heart
 - “For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.”
(Matt. 12:34-35)
- We will be judged by our words
 - We cannot be justified and condemned

General Facts

- The tongue is POWERFUL



James 3:2-8

- 1 My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. 2 For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. 3 Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. 4 Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires.

James 3:2-8

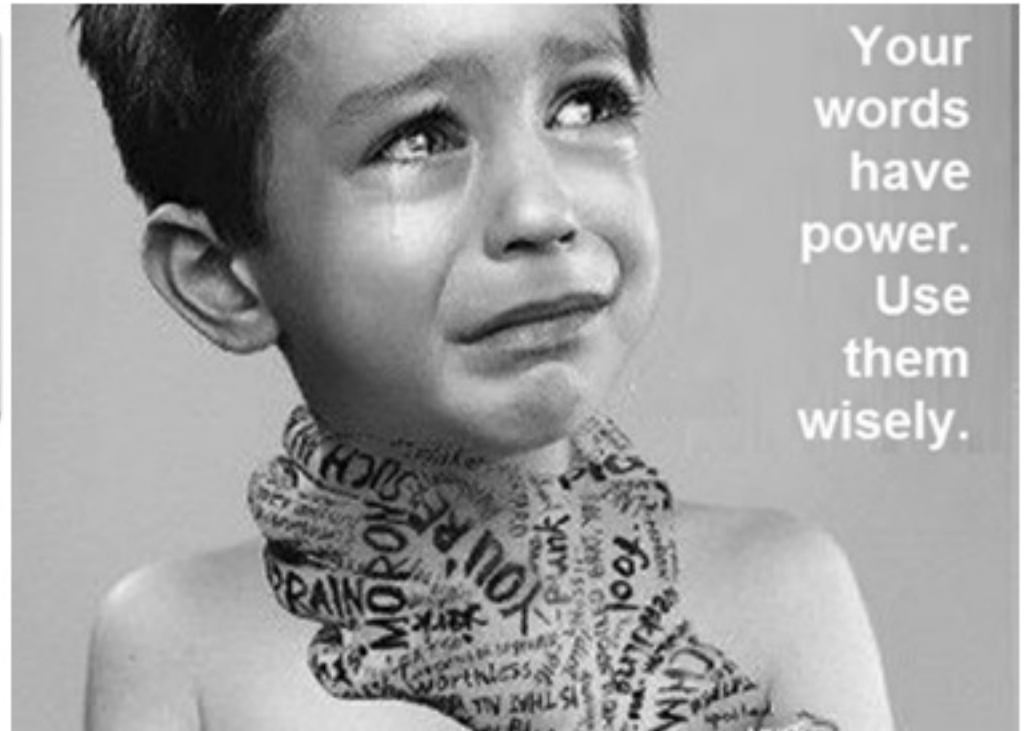
- 5 Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! 6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. 7 For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. 8 But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

Power of the Tongue

- Every word we speak has the power to hurt or heal.
 - Uplift, inspire, or laugh
 - Fear, hatred, jealousy, hopelessness
- Words can change lives
 - “Change Your Words, Change Your World”

Power of the Tongue

- Words from those in positions of influence or authority generally carry greater impact



General Facts

1. We must speak
2. It's a good thing
3. Expresses the heart of a person
4. Words are powerful
5. The effects of words are based on the perception of the recipient not the intent of the deliverer.
6. Our words will EITHER justify us or condemn us
 - "For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."
(Matt. 12:37)

Words that Condemn

- Idle
 - Definition - of no real worth, importance, or significance
 - "Idle chatter leads only to poverty." (Prov. 14:23)
- Destructive
 - Verbal violence
 - Done in front of a person and directed towards them
 - Carries the intent to injure or hurt
 - Slander
 - a malicious, false, and defamatory statement or report about another
 - Effects of slander are more related to murder than robbery

Words that Condemn

- Speaking negative truths
 - Pointing out the negative attributes or weaknesses
- Talebearer
 - “You shall not go about as a talebearer among your people...” (Lev. 19:16)
 - Repeat rumors
 - Should I tell the victim?
 - We are called to be peacemakers

Words that Condemn

- Deceptive tongue
 - Uses verbal manipulations to deceive someone of our intentions.
 - Ex: Eve & Satan's dialogue
 - How often do our words not match our intention?
 - It is considered a lie
- Gossip
 - Combo of many destructive tongues
 - Why is gossip delightful?
 - Feeds our need for power and control

Gossip (cont.)

- “A talebearer reveals secrets, but he who is of a faithful spirit conceals a matter.” (Prov. 11:13)
- *And let not men, therefore, spend their time in barbers’ shops and taverns, babbling nonsense. And let them give up hunting for the women who sit near, and ceaselessly talking slander against many in order to raise a laugh.* (St. Clement of Alexandria).
- It is a state of emptiness

Gossip (cont.)

- How is it destructive to oneself?
- Socially
 - “A perverse man sows strife, And a whisperer separates the best of friends.” (Prov. 16:28)
- Spiritually
 - “Then Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married; for he had married an Ethiopian woman.”
 - “So the anger of the Lord was aroused against them, and He departed.” (Num. 12:1, 9)
 - “And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; 29 being filled with all unrighteousness...backbiters...who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them. (Rom. 1:28-32)

Gossip (Cont.)

- How is it destructive to others?
 - Socially
 - Spiritually
 - To those who complete trust in God – none (Ex: Moses' reaction – Num. 12)
 - Distress about how to answer
 - Inability to concentrate during prayer

Words that Justify

- Apologize / Repent
 - Mend the damages
 - May be shameful but necessary
- Flee from those who have a destructive tongue
 - “He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets; therefore do not associate with one who flatters with his lips.” (Prov. 20:19)
- Edify with love
 - We are called to lift one another – even our enemies
 - “Let nothing be done through selfish ambition, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.” (Phil.2:3)

Words that Justify

- Be positive
 - Penn State University study found that there are more words in our vocabulary that express negative emotions instead of positive.
 - “Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.” (Eph. 4:29)
 - Positive words attract positive change
 - Being positive is a choice

Words that Justify

- Be positive (cont.)
 - Surround yourself with positive people
 - Listen to positive music
 - Read positive books (e.g. Bible, spiritual books)
 - Compliment
 - Give thanks

Conclusion

- Ask these questions:
 - Is it true?
 - Is it necessary?
 - Is it kind?
 - Is it beneficial?

Questions or Comments?