

Words – 4

Proverbs 18:21 (The Message)

²¹ Words kill, words give life; they're either poison or fruit—you choose.

Even though there are about 800,000 words in the English language the average person knows only about 10,000 words, and uses only about 5,000 of those in everyday speech!

That is not many words to choose from to communicate every idea, emotion, event or desires

Each of the words we choose to use carry enormous power with them

- Power to heal or wound
- Encourage or discourage
- Speak the truth or tell a lie
- To praise or to criticize

The words we choose when opening our mouth are extremely important

Words are connectors, in fact they are our God connection

He connects with us – Genesis 1, 2; John 1:14; Psalm 107:20

We are created in His image – “speaking spirit” – Genesis 2:7

We connect with Him and others through our words

Ten symptoms of a sick tongue

Proverbs 12:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ There is one who speaks like the piercings of a sword, But the tongue of the wise *promotes* health.

#1 – Telling an untruth

#2 – Stirring up division

#3 – Being a Gossip (digging up dirt)

#4 – Don't pass along false judgement (Slander)

Slander is gossips close relative

Proverbs 10:18 (NIV)

¹⁸ Whoever conceals hatred with lying lips and spreads slander is a fool.

5 – Breaking a confidence

Proverbs 11:13 (NKJV)

¹³ A talebearer reveals secrets, But he who is of a faithful spirit conceals a matter.

#6 – Speaking curses instead of blessings

Romans 3:13–14 (NLT)

¹³ “Their talk is foul, like the stench from an open grave. Their tongues are filled with lies. “Snake venom drips from their lips.”* ¹⁴ “Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.”*

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.”

- If we have a mouth problem, we have a heart problem
- Hurt, bitterness, unforgiveness
- We need to ask God to give us a new heart – **Ezekiel 36:26**

#7 – Using God’s name in a vain, self-serving way

Exodus 20:7 (NKJV)

⁷ “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold *him* guiltless who takes His name in vain.

- Two ways to take Gods name in vain
- #1 – using His name as a curse word
- #2 – using His name in a self-serving way – God told me

#8 – Filthy talk

Colossians 3:8 (NLT)

⁸ But now is the time to get rid of anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander, and dirty language.

We live in a generation that thinks nothing of speaking regularly with a foul, filthy mouth

#9 – Contentious speech

Thesaurus

Contentious: belligerent, argumentative, combative, quarrelsome, cantankerous

Proverbs 21:9 (NKJV)

⁹ Better to dwell in a corner of a housetop, Than in a house shared with a contentious woman.

Proverbs 26:21 (NKJV)

²¹ *As charcoal is to burning coals, and wood to fire, So is a contentious man to kindle strife.*

- Contentious speech becomes a habit
- Some people simply fall into a habit of arguing
- Do you always have to be right?
- Do you have to have the last word?
- Do you love to say – “I told you so!”
- No one wants to be around a person who argues all of the time
- You may be like this and unaware
- Ask your close friends
- Ask your spouse
- You do not have to always be right!

Swish, Swish, Swish

#10 Being pessimistic

“A pessimist sees a glass half empty an optimist half full an opportunist will drink the water”

Pessimism is unbelief

Hebrews 3:12–13 (NKJV)

¹² Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; ¹³ but exhort one another daily, while it is called “*Today*,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

- An unbelieving heart is “evil”
- Antidote – exhort one another – daily
- How do you exhort others? – your mouth!
- Unbelief is contagious and it spreads through negativity
- If you have a negative mouth you have a mouth of unbelief

“Negativity is simply the devil’s language spoken by those who have his perspective” – Jimmy Evans

Romans 10:8 (NKJV)

⁸ But what does it say? “*The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart*” (that is, the word of faith which we preach):

- Yes, and Amen – **2 Corinthians 1:20**

James 3:1–2 (NKJV) The Tongue

3 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.

- If we can control the tongue, we bridle the whole body
 - The answer to the perfect diet
 - The answer to an addiction problem
 - The answer to lust

Even though small the tongue is powerful it has greater influence than any other part of the body

- It's like a **bridle** that controls a horse
- It's like a **rudder** that steers a ship
- It's like a **spark** that can burst into flames and start a forest fire

The Tongue as a Bridle:

- A “wild horse” runs in any direction they wish
- Virtually **aimlessly** arriving at no specific destination
- Doesn't provide any useful service or able to carry a person
- A wild horse has **no purpose, no direction, and no helpful value**

The same is true if we fail to bridle our tongue

- We will never accomplish the full purposes of God
- We'll never experience true, lasting success

James 1:26 (NKJV)

²⁶ If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but **deceives his own heart**, this one's religion **is useless**.

- Is it possible we are spending time and energy working for God but because we don't control our tongue we are "useless" in God's kingdom?
- Am I wandering aimlessly?
- Do I think I am serving God yet deceived?

Our tongue can truly help us to achieve God's plan and purposes for our life

- Or not!

The Tongue as a Rudder:

James 3:4–5 (NKJV)

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. ⁵ Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things.

- The rudder is also disproportionately small in comparison with the rest of the ship
- Cruise ships have stores, restaurants, movie theatres, bowling alleys, climbing walls, ice-skating rinks

The “Titanic” was the first of its kind even larger than many modern ships

- 882 feet long and 11 stories tall
- The rudder a mere 78 feet long

The rudder controls the direction of the ship

- Essential in all kinds of weather
- Vital in foul weather
- In a storm you want to turn into the direction of the wind or you will capsize

When facing a storm in life it matters what you say

- Do you meet the crisis with the Word of God?
- Or do you verbally fret about your circumstance?
- One wave could capsize you

Even in good weather the rudder steers you where you’re going

- If your rudder doesn’t work, you won’t be landing at that nice sandy beach
- You are at the mercy of the wind and current

Ephesians 4:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,

- People who can’t control their tongues can’t control their lives
- What you say today will steer you toward tomorrow
- There is destiny in your words!

Your tongue is a spark

James 3:5–6 (NKJV)

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.

- All it takes is a spark to start a forest fire
- The devastation of a forest fire is immense
- Wipes out virtually everything in its path
- Estimated that it takes 11 years for a forest to “begin” to grow back
- Decades to completely restore the damage
- A cigarette carelessly flicked out a window

The little spark has the power to cause massive ruin that can be felt years down the road

James says our tongue is a “world of iniquity” inherently evil from birth

- You don’t have to teach a toddler to lie or say mean things to his sister
- It comes naturally
- Our “default” setting of the tongue is “evil”

Remember some of the hurtful things that were said by you or about you in elementary and high school?

- Maybe you wore glasses or braces
- Maybe you were shorter, skinnier or heavier than everyone else
- Fatty, fatty 2 by 4 can't fit through the kitchen door
- You're so skinny if you stood sideways and stuck out your tongue, you'd look like a zipper

*“A joke is a very **serious** thing.” – Winston Churchill*

The Tongue is Humanly Untamable

James 3:7–8 (NKJV)

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.

- Haven't we all tried to not say something “again”?
- You might do good for a couple weeks at best
- Eventually you will make up for the dumb things you didn't say
- The tongue is unruly – its evil!
- It's impossible to tame – humanly
- Only God can do that! – more to come on that