

Be Careful With Your Words!

Introduction

Welcome to My Thoughts and the first of six segments in our Words are Powerful series. We all heard the saying, “**watch what you say,**” at one time or another. Some of us have heard this phrase more times than we would like. One thing we do not hear is why being careful what you say is important. Our words are extremely powerful and can have a lasting memory for people, good or bad.

The book of Proverbs has more verses on this topic than any book in the Bible. Our foundation verse for our series is Proverbs 18:21, “**Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit.**” Think about it for a minute. Our words are so powerful, they can produce either life or death. For example, a witness in court, by their words, either set a person free or condemns them to prison.

Our words, also called “**the fruit of our mouth**” or “**the harvest of our lips,**” can be of great benefit to us when our words are positive and uplifting. In this passage, “**those who love it**” refers to talkative people, either positively or negatively. The last part of this verse, “**eat its fruit,**” refers to you will either prosper from good words or suffer the consequences of your negative talk.

Defile From Your Heart

Another well-known saying is, “**Stick and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me.**” True, sticks and stones may break my bones, but names or words that will never hurt me are a lie. Your words can hurt not just yourself, but others, intentionally or not. Those words coming from your mouth also come from your heart and can defile you. The word defile means to make unclean, impure, or unpleasant.

If you have your Bible, turn to the Gospel of Mark, chapter 7, starting at verse 14 and ending at verse 23. In this passage, Jesus discusses what defiles a person.

¹⁴ When He had called all the multitude to *Himself*, He said to them, “Hear Me, everyone, and understand:

¹⁵ There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that defile a man.

¹⁶ If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!”

¹⁷ When He had entered a house away from the crowd, His disciples asked Him concerning the parable.

¹⁸ So He said to them, “Are you thus without understanding also? Do you not perceive that whatever enters a man from outside cannot defile him,

¹⁹ because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, *thus* purifying all foods?”

²⁰ And He said, “What comes out of a man, that defiles a man.

²¹ For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

²² thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness.

²³ All these evil things come from within and defile a man.”

He starts to explain in verse 15 that nothing outside a person that by going into them can defile them. It is true that when you eat food, it cannot defile you as a person. Jesus explained in verse 19 that what enters into us goes into our stomachs and not into our hearts.

Going Out vs. Coming In

Jesus contrasts this in verses 16 and 20 that what does come out of our mouths will defile us as a person, and because it comes from within our hearts and not our stomachs, we now have a heart condition.

Jesus announced to the whole crowd that the source of holy living is from within, not from the outside of us. He declared the entire Mosaic system of “**clean and unclean**” foods is null and void; but at that time, He did not explain this radical truth to the crowd. Later, He did explain it in private to His own disciples.

Right vs. Wrong Relationship

In every period of history, true holiness has always been a matter of the heart, a right relationship with God by faith. Ceremonial purity was a matter of external obedience to the law as evidence of that faith. Psalm 51:16-17, “**For you do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; you do not delight in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart, these O God, you will not despise.**” The word “**contrite**” means the feeling or expressing remorse, affected by guilt. The offering God needs is your heart.

Moses made it clear in Deuteronomy 10:12, God wants love and obedience to come from the heart, and not merely outward obedience to rules. Just being outwardly obedient to rules is a wrong relationship with God and that’s why He sent Jesus to place us in a right relationship.

Works of the Flesh vs. Fruits of the Spirit

Going back to Proverbs 18:21, I talked about “**eating its fruit.**” In verses 21 and 22 of the Gospel of Mark chapter 7, Jesus mentions what comes from within a person defiles them, such as evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, deceit, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness. The human heart is sinful and produces all of these manners. Jesus had no illusions about human nature. He realized that man is a sinner, unable to control or change his own nature; and that is why He came to earth—to die for our sins.

Look at Galatians 5:19-21 as more heart issues defile a person and they are all works of the flesh. You should be speaking words that are good and uplifting to everyone. Look at Galatians 5:22-23 and you will see what your Christian character looks like and how we should be speaking so that we do not defile ourselves.

Conclusion

In conclusion, you ask, “How do I eat good fruit or speak good words?” You should be asking, “How do I get my heart right?” Simple, ask the Lord Jesus Christ to come into your heart and accept Him as your Lord and Savior. Matthew 12:35-37, Jesus said, “**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. 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.**” So, be careful what you say, and remember that your words are more powerful than you think, Amen!

I am Dale Van De Bogart and I approve of this message!

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