

## How Important Are Your Words?

The majority of the population speaks hundreds, if not multiple thousands, of words daily. We need words to communicate our thoughts. **These same words which are spoken are vastly more significant and revealing than most would ever tend to recognize.** What you are about to read are some very sobering facts about words, as God sees them. Now is the time to adjust and make vital changes where changes are needed. **For your own sake, as well as for others around you,** take to heart what the Bible declares about the *importance of words that you have been, presently are and will yet be speaking.*

The Bible speaks of two types of people—the *wicked* and the *righteous*, which at times are described with different terms. You might be surprised to know that the words spoken by these two types of people are vastly different. **First let's notice some facts about the wicked.**

### Wicked and Deceitful Words

David, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, described unsaved people. Notice what he wrote, especially about their *words*:

An oracle is within my heart **concerning the sinfulness of the wicked**: There is no fear of God before his eyes. For in his own eyes he flatters himself too much to detect or hate his sin. **The words of his mouth are wicked and deceitful**; he has ceased to be wise and to do good. Even on his bed he plots evil; he commits himself to a sinful course and does not reject what is wrong (Psa. 36:1-4).

Regarding the *wicked*, David said: (1) They have no fear of God, (2) The reason why they don't hate or detect their own sin, (3) **Their words are wicked and deceitful** and (4) They plan evil and chose not to reject wrong.

Here are more details about the words of the *wicked*:

In his arrogance the wicked man hunts down the weak, who are caught in the schemes he devises. He boasts of the cravings of his heart; he blesses the greedy and reviles the LORD. In his pride the wicked does not seek him; in all his thoughts there is no room for God. His ways are always prosperous; he is haughty and your laws are far from him; he sneers at all his enemies. He says to himself, "Nothing will shake me; I'll always be happy and never have trouble." **His mouth is full of curses and lies and threats; trouble and evil are under his tongue** (Psa. 10:2-7).

But to the wicked, God says: "What right have you to recite my laws or take my covenant on your lips? You hate my instruction and cast my words behind you. When you see a thief, you join with him; you throw in your lot with adulterers. **You use your mouth for evil and harness your tongue to deceit. You speak continually against your brother and slander your own mother's son**" (Psa. 50:16-20).

A scoundrel plots evil, and **his speech is like a scorching fire** (Prov. 16:27).

**Let their lying lips be silenced, for with pride and contempt they speak arrogantly against the righteous** (Psa.

31:18).

They close up their callous hearts, and **their mouths speak with arrogance** (Psa. 17:10).

### The Mouth of the Righteous

In contrast, the *righteous* speak differently:

**The mouth of the righteous man utters wisdom**, and his tongue speaks what is **just** (Psa. 37:30).

**The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life**, but **violence** overwhelms the mouth of the wicked (Prov. 10:11).

**The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom**, but a perverse tongue will be cut out. The lips of the righteous know what is fitting, but **the mouth of the wicked only what is perverse** (Prov. 10:31, 32).

**The tongue of the righteous is choice silver**, but the heart of the wicked is of little value (Prov. 10:20).

**The lips of the wise spread knowledge**; not so the hearts of fools (Prov. 15:7).

### By Your Words!

**Again, words help to identify a person as wicked (or righteous) and not just one's actions.** All through the Bible this truth is declared, that is, we can indeed identify who is saved and who is not saved, even though we cannot see their heart. (This Biblical fact, however, is flatly denied by the eternal security teachers who want us to think the elect can behave and speak just like the unsaved yet remain a *Christian*.)

**Words, which come from the heart, reveal the present-tense spiritual condition of that heart.** Jesus spoke to wicked people, whom he called *brood of vipers*, and disclosed some of the most profound and fearful truths about words found in the Bible:

You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? **For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks.** The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. **But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned** (Mat. 12:34-37).

Imagine giving an account on Judgment Day for your *words*. The Bible clearly teaches this:

**Speak** and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, because **judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful.** Mercy triumphs over judgment! (James 2:12,13)

Jesus taught words proceed **from the heart**. Hence, words are a **byproduct of one's heart revealing its spiritual condition**. Have you ever noticed the disturbing words of the unsaved around you, especially when they blaspheme the precious, holy and saving name of *Jesus*? Few godly people haven't. The Bible

declares the wicked misuse God's name:

They speak of you with evil intent; your **adversaries misuse your name** (Psa. 139:20).

While God's enemies misuse his holy name, **the righteous praise his holy name**.

## **Nabal, a Wicked Man**

Notice how Nabal was described by some who knew him well:

He [Nabal] is **such a wicked man that no one can talk to him** (1 Sam. 25:17).

To be more precise Nabal was *insulting* (verse 14), as well as *surlily and mean in his dealings* (v. 3). But there is even more which reveals his evil heart—**he was a drunkard**:

When Abigail went to Nabal, he was in the house holding a banquet like that of a king. **He was** in high spirits and **very drunk**. So she told him nothing until daybreak. Then in the morning, when Nabal was sober, his wife told him all these things, and **his heart failed him** and he became like a stone. About ten days later, the LORD struck Nabal and he died (1 Sam. 25:36-38).

Nabal had a wicked heart and it was revealed by his actions and **words**. God killed Nabal.

## **Sinning in Word**

Since sinning is such a serious issue, if for no other reason, one should **speak less to avoid sinning**. Have you ever thought about the various ways one can sin with words? Here are some of the ways: discord, slander, lying, filthy language, strife, blasphemy and disowning Jesus. **Our own words can be our spiritual downfall**. Perhaps that is why Christians are told:

But now you must **rid yourselves** of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips (Col. 3:8).

Therefore, **rid yourselves** of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind (1 Pet. 2:1).

The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. **I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God** (Gal. 5:19-21).

Our words can most definitely hurt and even destroy us spiritually:

A fool's lips bring him strife, and his mouth invites a beating. A fool's mouth is his undoing, and **his lips are a snare to his soul** (Prov. 18:6,7).

Hence, we are told truths like the following:

When words are many, sin is not absent, but **he who holds**

**his tongue is wise** (Prov. 10:19).

Two extremely important truths are found in this last passage: (1) We can sin with words and will if *many* words are spoken and (2) A person is spiritually *wise* to speak less (and sometimes not at all). Similarly, we also read in the NT the importance of being *slow to speak*:

My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, **slow to speak** and slow to become angry, for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires (James 1:19,20).

**Be slow to speak** and slow to get angry. Furthermore, you can actually prevent trouble (and disaster) for yourself in the future by *guarding* your words now:

He who **guards his mouth and his tongue** keeps himself from calamity (Prov. 21:23).

Notice how your words (and behavior) steer the way your life goes. To alter the words that proceed from your lips will **change your life for the better**, if you modify them, according to Scripture:

Whoever would love life and see good days **must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech**. He must turn from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil (1 Pet. 3:10-12).

**Hold your tongue, be slow to speak, guard your mouth and keep your lips from evil and deceitful speech is the repetitive language of the Bible**. But that is not all—we should also **pray regarding our future words as well**:

**Set a guard over my mouth, O LORD; keep watch over the door of my lips**. Let not my heart be drawn to what is evil, to take part in wicked deeds with men who are evildoers; let me not eat of their delicacies (Psa. 141:3,4).

May **the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart** be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer (Psa. 19:14).

**One of David's personal spiritual goals was to conquer his tongue and he prayed to God for help. Have you ever prayed like he did for such?** Obviously, he was taking his own words very seriously, as we should likewise do:

A prayer of David. Hear, O LORD, my righteous plea; listen to my cry. Give ear to my prayer—it does not rise from deceitful lips. May my vindication come from you; may your eyes see what is right. Though you probe my heart and examine me at night, though you test me, you will find nothing; **I have resolved that my mouth will not sin** (Psa. 17:1-3) ....

**The remainder of this article can be found online at <http://www.evangelicaloutreach.org/words.htm> or purchased through our catalog.**