



RCC Phoenix – 9.6.20 – The Power of Words

The want to speak is one of our first innate desires. From the time we are born we strive to communicate in some way to let others know what we want or need. As a small child our words are often the purest as we use words to understand the world around us. Around the age of two and a half to three, we begin to understand that words have power and they can be used to gain something we want or to tear someone else down.

1. It is at this early age that we understand that words are _____.

Words That Destroy

Proverbs 10:11

The mouth of the righteous is a well of life, but violence covers the mouth of the wicked

2. The scripture tells us that words used to glorify Christ can give life, but an evil tongue can bring _____.

Why do so many of us choose to use our words for violence. Why is it so much easier to throw harsh words at our enemies rather than healing ones? Is this because it is convenient for us to use words first? You don't have to buy words or carry them around with you and they are readily available. Maybe it's because they are easy to hide behind. What is our thinking? You'll never see that punk that cut you off in traffic again so go ahead and tell him exactly how you feel, or you'll never talk to that telemarketer that interrupted your dinner so really let her have it. You'll never run into that store clerk again so make sure to walk away satisfied that you let her have it. Now ask yourself, are these the words of Life or the words of violence?

Proverbs 10:19

In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, but he who restrains his lips is wise.

3. Knowing when to _____ our mouths and _____ our ears shows wisdom.

Restraint is something that is very hard for us in this country. We are an opinionated people and we are quick to let others know when we think they are doing wrong. Once we get started with our words, they pour out of us so easily, yet they are so hard to take back.

4. The dictionary defines restraint as a measure or condition that keeps someone or something under _____ or within limits.

The word “limits” implies words can be used but with certain boundaries or in certain contexts. God certainly wants us to use our words to let others know when they have wronged us, to provide forgiveness and start the healing process, but are we using our words in a healing way or a hurtful way? 25 years ago we had to pick up a phone and speak voice to voice with someone if we wanted to tell them exactly how we feel or we had to write them a letter and wait days or weeks until they received it for them to understand how upset we were. Now we just use text messages that eliminate the need to talk and take away the waiting time of a letter. We can send “instant daggers” to someone. This allows us to have even less restraint than we did before, and now there is an electronic record for everything that was said.

Proverbs 12:19

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

5. The sword is chosen as a metaphor because a sword cuts _____. It is meant to maim and kill and once the sword pierces the flesh it is very hard to recover from.

In modern terms, words are like grenades. We toss them out everywhere hoping they will explode and hurt our intended target, yet they usually blow up hurting everyone around us including ourselves.

You might be feeling that you have pretty good control on your tongue and the words that you say to others. God bless you because it is a hard skill to master and one that takes a lifetime of wisdom to perfect, but have you ever told a lie. Some would argue that a lie is as much or more damaging than an evil word.

Proverbs 17:20

He who has a deceitful heart finds no good, And he who has a perverse tongue falls into evil

Proverbs 19:5

A false witness will not go unpunished. And he who speaks lies will not escape.

6. Proverbs 19:5 uses the words “will not escape” because your lies will _____.

We tell the truth when it’s convenient but when it can affect us or the ones, we love we easily use a deceitful tongue. Those lies, no matter how small they may be will stick to us and follow us where we go. It will eventually begin to weigh us down and change our heart with the only relief coming from confessing the truth to those we have offended and God himself. Even when forgiveness is granted, the residuals from those lies may last for weeks, months, years or a lifetime. He who restrains his lips is wise.

Words That Heal

We have the power to heal with our words through encouragement, forgiveness, and the courage to speak up for others. We can use the other side of the hammer “positive words” to rebuild the things that we or someone else may have torn apart. Words that heal are not always easy and they may put us in uncomfortable situations, but they have the power to change lives.

Proverbs 17:9

He who covers a transgression seeks love, But he who repeats a matter separates friends

7. Sometimes the most healing words are the ones _____.

When a person sins against us and we truly forgive them, the scripture says it is wrong for us to bring up the matter over and over. Talking about what that person has done to wrong you again and again is as if the forgiveness has never occurred and the judgement shifts from the one who has sought forgiveness to the one that has feigned forgiveness but will not let the matter go. If we truly forgive, we will address the situation with the one that has hurt us then restrain our tongues in wisdom. This helps us heal our relationships with friends, family, spouses, work, and even the church.

8. It is our duty as followers of Christ to be a _____ for those who don’t have one.

Proverbs 31: 8-9

Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.

This scripture is a call to action. We are told to be a voice for those that are poor, hungry, in need. When we see someone treated in a way that defies God's spirit of love and peace, we need to use our words for change. There is a time to restrain our tongue but there is also a time to use it to bring about change. If you see someone being mistreated, say something. Just as your tongue can be used as a sword to hurt, it can also be used as a sword to defend! However, make sure that the words you choose to defend others come from a spirit of love and the wisdom of God.

Words can help heal a person's view of the

Words can keep someone from making a terrible choice

Words can make someone live another day

9. There is also a time when the most powerful words are the ones _____.

Matt 26: 62

Then the high priest stood up and said to Jesus, "Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?" But Jesus remained silent

Jesus understood the power of words. He used his words to bring scores of believers to God. He used his words to heal, and teach, and reprimand when necessary but never to destroy. When the opportunity came to defend himself against the countless false accusations that were being railed against him, he opened not his mouth. This is wisdom through restraint. He knew he had a job to do, and in doing so he would fulfil the prophecy and bring salvation to all man. Arguing against the lies that others brought against him would only serve to delay this inevitable but beautiful sacrifice.

Proverbs 17:27

He who has knowledge spares his words, And a man of understanding is of a calm spirit.

10: The two most powerful words in the English language are _____ _____.

May God always give us the strength to use these two simple words. They can change lives, they can restore friendships and they should always be readily on our lips.

Words are a tool. They have the power to destroy or the power to build up. They are easy to say and hard to take back. They can save a life and they can take one, but all of us have the choice of which side of the hammer, “words” we use.