THE POWER OF THE TONGUE

Do you realize that each of us go through life with a remarkable power right under our nose? It is a power so great that it is capable of producing life or death depending on how it's used. The Bible tells us that our words are so powerful that they can bless or curse, encourage or discourage, hurt or heal, tear down or build up. Our words can even influence the way we act and feel as well as determine our attitude and outlook on life. That's right, this powerful weapon is the tongue and its ammunition is the words we speak. The Bible tells us in James 3:8-9: "But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude (image) of God."

Yes, the Bible says that nobody can tame the tongue; however, with the help of the Holy Spirit, you and I can be saved from the destructive power of our own words. We can purposely order our conversation and speak carefully chosen words of God that will not only produce victory in our own life but in the lives of others as well.

We read in Proverbs 18:21a that "Death and life are in the power of the tongue." An example of how words can bring forth death and destruction can be found in Mark 11:13-14, 20: "And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he (Jesus) came, if haply he might find anything thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet. And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter forever. And his disciples heard it. And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots."

On the other hand, an example of words bringing forth life can be found in John 11:43-44: "And when he thus had spoken, he (Jesus) cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth,
bound hand and foot with grave clothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, loose him, and let him go."

We can see from these two examples just how powerful our words can be. It is our privilege and responsibility as Christians to speak forth positive life-giving words in a world immersed in negativity. After all Proverbs 12:25 says that "Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but a good word maketh it glad." and "pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones" (Proverbs 16:24).

Prophets of Our Own Lives

The words of our mouth have control over our lives, whether we like it or not, or whether we believe it or not. What comes out of our mouth will determine our future. As a rudder controls the direction of a ship, your tongue controls the direction of your life. God made man to be a steward not only over the earth but over his own mouth as well. We are our own prophets. What we say today impacts our tomorrow.

You and I are where we are right now as a result of the words we spoke yesterday and the day before that and so on. That is simply the way God created us. And, like God, our words carry power. Actually, within the realm over which God gave us authority, the words we speak day after day carry the same degree of force behind them as the words God Himself speaks - even the same force as the Word that came out of God's mouth when He created the universe. Jesus said in Luke 21:33: "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away." Yes, God's Word and the words we speak "shall not return void" (Isaiah 55:11).

When reading the Gospels, you will notice that everything surrounding Jesus' entire life (His birth, ministry, death, burial, and resurrection) was a direct fulfillment of what God's prophets had spoken. God had
set everything in place for the birth of Jesus. Yet, had it not been for a few men speaking under the anointing of God, it never would have happened.

"Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying..." (Matthew 1:22)

Then in Matthew 2:15 and 2:23 we see the same thing written: "that which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet". You see, just as God Himself spoke the world into existence, we as believers in Christ Jesus speak forth our future.

**Take up the Sword of the Spirit**

Too possess healing, or anything from God, we must first lay hold of the Word as ours. We lay hold of the Word by receiving it by faith, and then confessing it. That's the process that got us saved, and it's the process that will enable us to receive the blessings God has promised us in His Word.

The Bible tells us in Ephesians 6:17 to arm ourselves with "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." We must take up the sword of the Spirit and use it as a base on which we operate our minds.

As we go through life, we will have several decisions to make. We must rely on God's Word when making these decisions. Jesus said to his disciples: "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63b). God's Word is a compass that will guide us in making right decisions. His Word is "a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path." (Psalm 119:105)

God's Word is victory, so believe the Word, pray the Word, meditate on the Word, and speak the Word.

**Confess the Word**
The Bible encourages us in Hebrews 10:23: "Let us hold fast the profession (confession) of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised." You see our confession is our profession. Just as a doctor would be termed a professional in his field, we as Christians should strive to be professional believers. A Christian's faith in the Word of God should be his very livelihood.

In Hebrews 3:1, we are instructed to "consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." God appointed, anointed, and then sent Jesus to be High Priest over our confessions (words of faith). He is responsible for bringing our words to pass. However, it is our responsibility to speak forth the Word of God and claim the promises God has spoken to us in His Word. You see positional all things are ours, but we must bring them into manifestation by confessing them in the physical world. Once we speak forth faith-filled words, the Bible tells us in I Corinthians 1:4-5 that Jesus will then enrich them with His anointing.

Just listen to what the Bible says in Mark 11:23-24: "For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, what things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."

Notice in verse 23 that there is one "believe" and three "says" in some form or another. Romans 10:10 says: "With the heart man believeth... and with the mouth confession is made...” Whatever you and I receive from God, we receive it by confession. Our confessions (words we speak every day) determine all that we will ever receive from God, whether it's salvation, healing, peace, or prosperity.

You see Jesus did not instruct us to talk about the mountain but rather
talk to the mountain. Faith will move mountains when and only when it is released with the words of your mouth.

**Watch Your Thoughts**

In order to control our mouth, we must first control our thoughts. Right and wrong thinking is the basis for controlling our words. It's the simplest principle, yet it's the most difficult area in our lives to discipline. No wonder the enemy tries to bombard our minds with evil thoughts of doubt, fear, and discouragement. He wants to prevent us from receiving all that God has for us.

The Bible tells us in *II Corinthians 10:5* that we are to "Cast down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;"

The Bible speaks of thoughts, imaginations, and strongholds. The thought coming into one's mind is the initial data or original idea. After the thought arrives, one must decide what to do with it. If the person continues to dwell on the thought, it turns into an imagination or image. And if this person imagines too long, the imagination turns into a stronghold and starts controlling his life.

Where do thoughts come from you might ask. Well, thoughts can come from one of three places: from your five senses, from the devil, or from the Holy Spirit. The devil and your five senses operate through your mind while God operates through your spirit. *Romans 8:7* says that the natural mind alone cannot know God, for God speaks to you through your spirit and your spirit speaks to your mind. Whether or not your mind can utilize these thoughts is dependent upon whether or not one's mind is renewed by the Word of God.

We as Christians face a constant power struggle. While we have the
Word of God coming into our hearts, the devil is putting thoughts into our minds against the knowledge of God. It is our job to cast down this wrong thinking. Perhaps you've cast them down so many times that you feel your caster's worn out. Well, the good news is that you don't have to keep wrestling with these bad thoughts, but instead replace them with good thoughts. You can reprogram your mind with the Word of God, then anything that comes against the Word of God will be cast down.

The Bible says in Proverbs 23:7: "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." This is a spiritual principle which can never be broken; it always works, much like the law of sowing and reaping. God has a great plan for your life; He tells us in Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end."

Even though God's plan for you is good, you must believe it to receive it and then confess it. We must be careful not to thwart these plans by what we think. If you allow the devil to occupy your mind with his thoughts for you, then he is able to build up a stronghold against the good plan that God has for you.

Thoughts are the seeds planted in the garden of the mind. We need to be good stewards and sow good thoughts in order to reap the full harvest of what God intends for us to have according to His Word.

What should we be thinking about you might ask? Well the Bible tells us in Philippians 4:8:
"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."
You can't just pick one word out of this verse such as "whatsoever things are true" and not walk in line with the rest of the verse. We need to take all of it. Our thoughts should meet all of the godly attributes listed in this verse.

Many Christians will become victorious in life when they change their thinking or their thought life. Some Christians are praying and waiting for God to change what they think about, but it's up to them to change their own thinking by reading and digesting the Word of God and avoiding harmful worldly influences. Remember, we can't stop the enemy from bringing thoughts to our mind, but we can control what we dwell on. We need to choose to think God's thoughts. As Christians, we are to be thinking on what is true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous, and praiseworthy.

We must not let frustration, fear, or anger rule our hearts, but rather let "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:7).

Our minds are like a computer. They know nothing except what they have been fed. And, just like a computer, our mind can be affected by bad data or viruses. Fortunately, we have access to top-notch antivirus software - the Word of God.

We need to get our minds thinking scripturally. We have to be very selective as thoughts continue to bombard our minds. Your mind will accept or reject thoughts according to what it knows about the Word of God. For when we read the Word of God, are minds will become transformed and renewed "that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:2). We need to pay attention to every word and phrase that comes out of our mouth because each word will affect your future. Your future (good or bad) is in you, right now. It's in your mouth and it's determined by the words you speak.
Man was created in the likeness of God and given the right to choose his own words, speak them, and thereby declare his eternal destiny.

Even God's mighty Word or the words of a prophet can have little or no effect over our lives until we put His Word in our mouths and speak them in faith.

**Watch Your Mouth**

If you think about it, believing God and His Word is not nearly as hard as disciplining our tongues to speak in line with the Word.

We must guard the words we speak. The Bible tells us in Colossians 4:6: "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man."

Furthermore, Ephesians 4:29-30 says:
"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:"

The book of Proverbs has a lot to say about our mouths. They are, after all, the keys to life. However, what comes out of our mouths is the result of what we have put in our hearts. Just listen to a few choice scriptures from the book of Proverbs:

"The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips." (Proverbs 16:23).

"A man's belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth; and with the increase of his lips shall he be filled" (Proverbs 18:20).

"Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles" (Proverbs 21:23).
The more Word we put inside us, the more Word will come out of our mouths and the more life will flow through our bodies. All God asks is that we believe and say what He has already said so we can prosper and be in health. After all, Proverbs 14:30 says that "a sound heart is the life of the flesh."

The mouth, at one moment, will be controlled by the abundance of the heart, and at the next moment, controlled by the unstable emotions and the mind. The Bible says in Matthew 12:34-37: "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment. For by the words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

When is the heart good or bad? Well, a good heart must be a combination of a regenerated Spirit, a renewed mind, and a living sacrificed body.

The words proceeding from us should be directed in a way that they will agree with God's Word at all times. As we get our complete heart obeying God's directions, we will produce God directed words.

Many people go from day to day hoping nothing bad will happen to them that they can't handle. Then, when the problem arises (because of what they've been saying and thinking), they try to change things in a few moments of prayer and tears, not realizing that over a period of years, their words actually caused what happened. You see, meditating continually on the lies of the devil builds doubt and unbelief in your spirit until it overflows in abundance into your mouth. Then it is released in words of fear and takes action.
In the Bible we read that David while shepherding sheep had built himself up by singing words of the Holy Spirit to himself. The Bible tells us in **Colossians 3:16** to: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." That is why when he faced a giant (or as in our case, a crisis), he knew that the Word hid in his heart granted him victory. He knew deep within his spirit that he was more than a conqueror through Christ Jesus (**Philippians 4:19**). He didn't have to have a quick boost, because he was fueled up already, for he "studied to shew himself approved unto God. (II Timothy 2:15). He took the Word of God" and deposited it in his heart just like one would deposit money in the bank, and he was able to make withdrawals on it when needed.

We as Christians must determine in our hearts to confess the Word of God over any and every situation, regardless of what the situation looks like. But we must not speak negative or against God's Word because what you say is what you get.

**Let Your Words Be Few**

Sometimes God has a plan to fill and he cannot afford people to talk to hinder the working of the plan. We see this in **Joshua 6:10** as instructions were given to destroy the walls of Jericho. The men were instructed not to make any sound with their mouth until the seventh day on the seventh round when there were commanded to shout. They could not speak a word. In **Luke 1:18-20** we see that Zacharias could not be trusted to speak because he did not believe that his wife could give birth to John the Baptist. The angel Gabriel told Zacharias that the words he spoke were to be fulfilled. Because of his unbelief, he became mute for a season.
Even Jesus kept his mouth shut to bring pass the plan of God for his crucifixion. Acts 8:32 says: "Like a lamb, dumb (silent) before His shearers, He opened not His mouth." At the arrest of Jesus the soldiers asked if it was He that they should take, Jesus answered, "I AM." At the pronouncement of that name, the soldiers fell backwards under the power of the spoken name (John 18:5-6). At the trial Jesus could not even speak his name because it would have freed Him. That is why He remained silent.

When we are young we are trained by society to fear snakes and bugs. In a similar way, we are trained by society to speak our mind. However, the Bible tells in Ecclesiastes 5:2 to "let our words be few." Proverbs 13:3 says: "He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction."

The Bible also says in James 1:19 to "let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:" Proverbs 17:28 says that: "Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding."

Proverbs 10:19 says: "In the multitude of words there wanteth (lacketh) not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise."

Sure, it is sometimes difficult to say the right things when you feel totally wrong. When you are extremely emotional for better or worse it's easy to say just what you are feeling. But it is important to allow wisdom to rise above emotions. Losing your temper and venting your frustrations through angry words can lead to bitter grief and torment and can even ruin relationships. You would be wise to use self-control and discipline your mouth.
If we ask God for help, He will remind us how we should talk by prompting us to use our mouths for His purposes.

Since we are anointed to be the prophets of our own lives, then why are we lacking in so many areas? The Bible says in Psalm 23:1 that "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want (lack)."

Be Single-Minded

The reason why many Christians don't receive from the Lord is that they are often double-minded. Proverbs 6:2 tells us that these people are "snared with the words of their mouth, and are taken with the words of their mouth." James 1:8 says that: "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways." and James 3:10 says that "Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be." "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." (James 1:26).

The Bible goes on to say that we shouldn't let anyone who wavers in his faith (a double-minded person) think that he will receive anything from the Lord (James 1:7). A person might pray about his or her finances one day, get up from his or her place of prayer and say, "Praise God!" I believe and receive all my financial needs met." But the very next day, if a friend asks, "How are you doing?" that person might answer: "Oh, it doesn't look as though we're going to make it." This person is double minded.

We must hold fast to our original confession of faith right in the face of seeming defeat. We must call those things which be not as though they are (Romans 4:17) and walk by faith and not by sight (II Corinthians 5:7). After all, faith rests while unbelief wallows in restlessness.
Live by Faith

The Bible tells us in **Habakkuk 2:4** that "*the just shall live by faith.*" The Apostle Paul told Timothy in **II Timothy 4:6-7** that "*words of faith*" nourish, but idle words starve the spirit and make it weak.

Satan operates through fear while God works through faith. It is a constant power struggle in our lives. Fear (the opposite of faith) will prevent you from speaking the correct things. Fear means flight, dread, terror. The Bible says in **Deuteronomy 28:13** that we are the "*head and not the tail.*" It is interesting to note that when someone tackles a project he or she is often referred to as approaching the task "head on."

It is a principle of nature for animals when a possible confrontation arises to either fight or take flight. We as Christians must fight our battles with the Word of God and not run away from our problems. We want to see the tails of our enemies flee as we speak the Word of God in faith. We are the head and the enemy is the tail. We are more than conquerors and God will never leave us or forsake us.

We cannot allow our minds to stay in fear, for if we do, we will not allow ourselves to pray the prayer of faith. We cannot afford to give the accuser any words to use against us. We have to give our lawyer, Jesus, good faith-filled words to use in our plea before the Father.

We're told in **I John 4:18** that "*perfect love casteth out fear.*" How can we get perfect love? Well, **I John 2:5** tells us that "*Whoso keepeth (God's) word, in him verily is the love of God perfected.*" In other words, the more we keep the Word, or act on it, the more the love of God is perfected in us. Fear will then be overtaken by faith. For
Romans 10:17 says that "faith comes by hearing the word of God."

Avoid Jesting

Ephesians 5:4 prohibits jesting (joking) and foolish and silly talking. Jokes are statements that can be easily turned to mean something else, to adapt to moods and conditions of those it is dealing with at the time. Jesting is polished and witty speech; an instrument of sin; refined versatility without Christian flavor or grace, lodged in a sly question; a smart answer; a hint; an insinuation; sarcasm; exaggeration; figurative expression; acute nonsense; unaccountable and inexplicable but answerable in numberless roving's; fancy windings of language convenient at the moment regardless of being exactly true.

Jesus tells us in Matthew 5:26 to "Let you yea be yea and your nay be nay, whatever is more than this comes from evil."

Jesus said in Mark 4:24 to be careful of what we hear also, because, what you hear will be multiplied unto you. Hear the words of life and receive life multiplied; hear the world and you have zero. So as we consider words, they have power when you speak them and they have power when you hear them.

Conclusion

Satan has instilled certain bad habits into this world many of which have creeped into the church. As a result, our words have been stout against God, keeping Him from doing all that He is anointed to do on our behalf. In effect, our words have limited God's blessings. The challenge for us is to break out of those old habits by changing from negative words of death to positive words of truth and life. We accomplish this by keeping the Word of God going into our hearts and
our ears and flowing out of our mouths until the Word eventually begins overflowing in our lives.

If you are facing difficulties in your life, perhaps it might be a good time to take inventory of what and how you are speaking. The way you talk to and about yourself can make all the difference in your happiness. Today, make a deeper commitment to the Lord in being responsible for your words. Ask for God's help daily by praying a prayer of David, "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD" (Psalm 19:14).

If you would like to see positive changes in your life by mastering your mouth, it's time to realize that the answer is right under your nose!