

# The words of my mouth

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[ 0 : 00 ] Shall we turn now for a few moments to the book of Psalms, chapter 19. The book of Psalms, chapter 19, and the last verse, verse 14.

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.

We live in a society today in which the number or the quantity of words is constantly multiplying. We are experiencing a communications revolution and explosion, which is multiplying words by the million almost by the day.

We think not only of the communications that are made on paper. We think also of the communications by telephone.

The number of people with telephones is multiplying every year around the world. The number of people with computers who can communicate through telephone lines with one another.

[ 1 : 14 ] The communication that takes place through satellites all over the world. The result is that the number of words which are being used today has multiplied into quite an extraordinary degree.

And so we live in an age of a large quantity of words. But the psalmist here reminds us that quality is more important than quantity.

As far as words and as far as many other things are concerned. God has created us as a race able to speak and to talk.

In order that we might be able to communicate with one another. Words and the capacity to articulate them and to understand them have been given to us in order to help us to have fellowship.

In order to help us to relate. In order to help us to understand one another. And also in order to help us to have fellowship with God. Because the God who has created us and given us the gift of speech is a God who himself has spoken and who speaks.

[ 2 : 29 ] He is a God who has given us his word in the Lord Jesus Christ. And we have the witness to that word with a capital W in the scriptures which are the word of God.

So words play a vital role in our human existence. They are very powerful things. They are capable of influencing the nature of our relationships with others as we have seen.

James in his epistle tells us, you will recall from our reading in the third chapter. That words are like the bit which guides a horse.

Or the rudder which guides a ship. What we say with our tongue. And how we say it. Is a key element. In the.

Not simply the. Creating and maintaining of our relationships with others. But also. In the forging. Of our. Destinies. Now this does not.

[ 3 : 36 ] Mean to say this emphasis on words that motives don't matter. In our reading from Matthew chapter 5. You will recall that Jesus said that thoughts. Are crucially important.

That thoughts will be judged. As well as deeds. And as well as words. He warned very sternly that those who use pious words to conceal evil thoughts.

Will receive. An even greater. Condemnation. Some of his. Harshest strictures. Were directed to those.

Who blasphemously. Blasphemously used religious rites. As a camouflage. To. A life. And to a thought life especially.

Which. Was unclean. But in general. I think it can be said that words are related to our character. That generally. What we say.

[ 4 : 33 ] And how we say it. Reveal. What. We are. I think it was. Thomas Brooks. Who said. We know metals by their tinkling.

And men. By their talking. Remember our Lord tells us that we shall be called to account for every. Idle word.

Or every careless word. And I think that that. The significance of that saying of our Lord. Is that it is the careless words. Which reveal what we are. The Freudian slips.

As we have. Come to call them today. It is these idle words. Words which are not premeditated. Which reveal us.

As we are. And we will be called to give an account of these. Not simply the carefully studied statements. But the idle words.

[ 5 : 29 ] The Freudian slips. Now the Bible has a great deal to say about words and about speech. It condemns. The scorn. The liar. And the slanderer.

By contrast. It commends the mouth. Of the righteous. It reminds us. As we have seen in our readings tonight. That the tongue. Has a. It has a tremendous potential for good.

Or. For evil. And not only does the Bible. Present to us precepts. Concerning. The tongue. It also presents to us a model.

Of the perfect use. Of the tongue. In our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The Bible tells us. Not only that he did no sin. But that no guile.

Was found. In his mouth. These words. Are told us by Peter. Peter is someone. Who knew Jesus intimately.

[ 6 : 31 ] And it is significant. That he himself. Was someone. Who found it particularly difficult. To control. His tongue. And so if we take the teaching of the Bible.

And the example of Jesus. Together. We discover. That the Bible. Has a considerable amount. To say. About. How we should use words.

About the type of speech. Which is condemned. And the type of speech. Which is commended. And for a few moments. This evening. I would look. I would like us to look. At. Each of these categories. The speech. Which the Bible. Condemns. And the speech. Which the Bible. Commends. If we look at.

The teaching of Jesus. And the sermon on the mount. Part of which we read. We will discover that. There are three types. Of speech. That is. Use of words. Which Jesus. Condemns.

[ 7 : 29 ] First of all. He condemns. Destructive. Words. He tells us. In Matthew chapter 5.

At verse 21. He have heard. That it was said. By them of old time. Thou shalt not kill. But whoever shall kill. Shall be in danger.

Of the judgment. But I say unto you. That whoever is angry. With his brother. Without a cause. Shall be in danger. Of the judgment. And whosoever shall say. To his brother. Racka. Shall be in danger. Of the counsel. But whosoever shall say. Thou fool. Shall be in danger. Of hell. Fire. Jesus is here. Talking about. People who. Use words like. Racka. And fool. It's difficult. For us to. At first. At first. To appreciate. The significance. Of what Jesus is saying.

[ 8 : 24 ] Because we do not know. Or at least. Because our background. Today is different. From his. But apparently. Racka. Was a term of scorn. It was often spoken.

Against people. Who lacked. Ability. They were scorned. As being. Ignorant. Or. Being dads. And Jesus is here.

Saying that. This is something. Very serious. He is condemning. Those. Who use words. Of scorn. To destroy. The confidence. Of men.

And women. Who in. Some aspect. Of life. May have. A lesser ability. Than in others. Us. But also. The word fool.

Is used here. In a sense. Which we don't use it today. In the time of Jesus. It was used. In. With reference. To someone. Who. Was immoral.

[ 9 : 21 ] It was a term. Of. Of slander. At least. In this instance. Here. Someone. Who's a. Life. A lacked. Moral fiber. War. And Jesus.

Says that. If we. Use words. In these ways. Use words. As instruments. Of scorn. And of slander. Then we're in danger. Of the fire.

Of hell. Now what Jesus. Is doing here. Is that he is warning us. Against the vicious. Use of words. In the. His commentary. In the sixth commandment.

He says that. We don't. Simply need to. Use a knife. To kill someone. Words can kill. Words can be vicious.

Words can be destructive. And words are frequently used. To hurt. And to humiliate. And Jesus is saying that. In. According to the laws.

[10:15] Of his kingdom. Such use of words. Is condemned. And all of us. Have to confess. I fear that. We have used words. And we still use words.

In a destructive way. And we need to recognize. That the destructive. Use of words. Is not. Permitted. In the kingdom of God. Now Jesus reminds us.

How very serious it is. That such use of words. Can place us in danger. Of hell fire. The second category.

Of words. That Jesus. Condemns. In this. Chapter. Of the sermon. On the mount. Are what we might call. Deceptive. Words. We look at verse. Say.

Thirty-three. Of the sermon. On the mount. Again you have heard. That it hath been said. By them of old time. Thou shalt not. Forswear thyself. But shalt perform. Unto the lord. Thine oaths. But I say unto you.

[11:11] Swear not at all. Neither by heaven. For it is God's throne. Nor by the earth. For it is his footstool. Neither. By Jerusalem. For it is the city. Of the great king. Neither shalt thou swear.

By thy head. Because thou canst not make. One hair white or black. But let your communication. Be yea, yea. Nay, nay. For whatsoever is more. Than these.

Cometh. Of evil. Jesus is here. Referring to the. Background. Of.

Pharisäic. Casuistry. Concerning. Oaths. They use. Oaths. In order. To. Say something.

And to mean. And communicate. A. Something quite different. Normally an oath. Was recognized. To be binding.

[12:06] And if someone said something under oath. Then it had to be true. But. In order to get around this. The Pharisees apparently had the custom. Of the.

Swearing. In the name of the earth. Or in the name of the city of Jerusalem. Their capital city. And if they. Made a statement. Under oath. Which. Referred to the earth. The oath referred to the earth. Or to Jerusalem. Then that. Statement need not be true. And it was a way of. Of. Of. A. Excusing themselves. From the obligation of the oath. And to use words deceitfully.

In order to deceive. Other people. The scriptures remind us. Constantly about the danger of using. Words deceitfully. The psalmist has a great deal to say about this.

He was the victim. Of the deceitful use of words. The scriptures have a great deal to say also about. Half truths. Truths. And how half truths.

[13:04] Can communicate untruths. Abram you remember when he went to Egypt. Said that Sarah was his sister. Rather than his wife.

In a sense. It was true. But the purpose was to deceive. We have half truths constantly being put before us.

By the advertising industry. And we have to beware. Of them. And we have to constantly to remind ourselves that.

We must not use words deceptively. We have to let our yes be yes. And our no be no. As Jesus says. Here.

Here. We must communicate in a way which is clear. Rather than ambiguous. And deceitful. And so Jesus warns us against the destructive use of words.

[14:00] And the deceptive use of words. And he also warns us against what we might call devalued words. He warned his disciples in the following chapter.

Against the practice of using vain repetitions. Or empty phrases in their prayers. Our Lord was referring to a mechanical repetition of words.

A mechanical repetition of words. While one's thoughts are miles away. And the words of the prayers that our Lord was describing.

Were being produced like washers. In on an assembly line. In a factory today. A worker will churn them out. By the thousand.

While his thoughts. Are a hundred miles away. And it's significant that Jesus here is using this phrase. Vain repetitions in the context of prayer.

[14:59] Because often it is easy. For us to devalue words in prayer. And to use. A jargon. Or to devalue words to the level of jargon.

In our prayers. Especially in our public prayers. We are constantly reminded. Of the need of sincerity.

In our prayers. Prayer can often be. An exercise. In. Empty phrases.  
This has been a problem. In many generations. Spurgeon. The great. Baptist preacher.  
In London. Of the last century. Used to complain. Of the way in which. Words. In his prayer  
meeting. Were devalued. Let me quote. A. From him.  
[ 15 : 53 ] I can. He said. That the prayer meetings. Readily tell. When the brother is praying. And  
when he's only performing. Or playing. At prayer. You know how it is. With some prayers. They are  
like an invoice.

As per usual. Or a list of goods. With ditto ditto. Every here and there. And then Spurgeon goes on.  
Oh for a living groan. One sigh of the soul.  
Has more power in it. Than half an hour's recitation. Of pretty pious words. Oh for a sob from the  
soul. Or a tear. From the heart.  
God. And so the speech. Which the scriptures. Condemn. Includes. The. Devalued. Use of words.  
In prayer. In that prayer. Particularly public prayer. And public worship. Can become. A  
performance. Rather than. An exercise. In worship.  
[ 16 : 48 ] In leading others. In worship. So the speech. Which is condemned. Is then. Destructive  
words. Deceptive words. And devalued words.

But the Bible. Of course. Is a book. Which is positive. As well as negative. God has given us. His  
word. Not. To. Analyze. Us.  
And our need. But also. And above all. To point us. To the remedy. For that need. And so we have.  
Not only speech. Which is condemned. But speech. Which is commended. The Bible.  
Tells us. That first of all. Our words. Should be wise. In Psalm 37. Verse 30. We read. The mouth.  
Of the righteous. Atters. Wisdom. One of the features.  
Of the life. Of the righteous. Person. Says the psalmist. Is that that person. Will speak. Wisely. And  
that is. To be a feature. A characteristic.  
[ 17 : 49 ] Of the words. Of those. Who belong. To the kingdom. Of God. Our words. Ought. To be  
wise. Now in order.

For our words. To be wise. We obviously. Have to think. Before. We speak. Because all of us.  
Know. Perhaps. Some of us. From bitter experience. How unthinking.  
Speech. Can carry us. Further than we intend. Or desire. To go. Wisdom. Wisdom. Wisdom.  
Wisdom. In speech. Requires. Not only thinking. Before speaking. It also requires. Listening. As  
well as speaking. We need to listen.  
To what others say. Wisdom does not. Is not generated. In our hearts. We receive. That wisdom.  
From others. And above all.  
[ 18 : 41 ] From the word of God. And we need to listen. To what God is saying. To us. And what  
others are saying. To us. Someone said. That we have two ears. And one mouth. Which indicates.  
That we should listen. Twice as much. As we speak. We certainly ought. To. We need to learn. To  
listen. In order to be wise. When we speak wisely.  
Our words will be. Fit. And appropriate. To the situation. The book of Proverbs. Reminds us. That a  
word. Fitly spoken. Is like. Apples of gold. In a setting.  
Of silver. But secondly. The scriptures tell us. That our words. Ought to be just. Not simply wise. But  
just.  
In Psalm 37. Verse 30. We read. Of this person. Whose words. Are wise. That his tongue. Speaks.  
Justice. In other words.  
[ 19 : 43 ] When we speak. We must seek. To be fair. We must seek. To be just. In our verdict. Of  
others. It's very easy.

But very cowardly. To speak. Behind. To speak unfairly. Behind someone else's back. It's easy. To  
be critical. Of someone. When they are not there.  
To defend themselves. Similarly. We have to be. Aware. Of the danger. Of flattery. The danger. The  
danger.  
Of. Saying things. Which are not true. And which are unjust. In order. Simply to please. Others. So  
on the one hand. There's the danger. Of slander. And on the other.  
There's the danger. Of flattery. And the answer. Lies. In following. The path of justice. Of being fair.  
We need to be.  
[ 20 : 37 ] Constantly. Aware. Of the danger. Of venting. Our. Prejudice. And our emotions. We  
need to.

Recognize. That. Others. Have the right. To their opinion. And that our. Prejudices. Whether they be. Religious. Political.

Cultural. Or racial. Cannot be. Imposed. Upon others. Many of us.

Say what we want to say. Rather than what. Is strictly just. And as we approach. A period. Of political elections. When where there will be.

A battle of words. We need to recall that. We need to remember that. Words must be used. Fairly. In the kingdom of God. By people. By the citizens. Of the kingdom. And so we're able to.

[ 21 : 34 ] Recognize the difference. Between. Our own prejudices. The way we see things. And the way we like to see them. And we can have our prejudices. There's nothing wrong with. Being. With having. A point of view.

But we need to know. The difference between. A point of view. And that which is true. And that which is fair. And that which is just. And so our words must be wise.

They must be just. And also. They must be kind. In the last chapter of the book of Proverbs. We have.

A. Picture of the features. Of a worthy woman. And one of these characteristics. Of a worthy woman. Is that she. When she opens her mouth. She opens it with wisdom.

And the teaching of kindness. Is on her tongue. The teaching of kindness. Is on her tongue. Our words.

[ 22 : 37 ] Ought to be kind. In order to encourage the downhearted. In order to comfort the distressed. In order to reconcile.

The antagonistic. One of the translations. Of the book of Job. Renders. The verdict. Of one of Job's friends.

Who came to him. And reminded him. Of what he was. He said. Your words. Put men. On their feet. And our words.

As citizens of the kingdom of God. Ought to put people on their feet. They ought to be kind. Without being flattering. And without being deceitful. They ought.

To be kind. And to give an. To give expression. To the love. Of which Paul. Spoke when he wrote. First Corinthians chapter 13. That love.

[ 23 : 35 ] Which looks. For what is best. In someone else. That love. Which is genuinely kind. Paul writing to the Colossians.

Said. Let your speech. Always be gracious. That is full of grace. And the word grace. May there be. Being used. In the sense of beauty. May your speech.

Always be attractive. Seasoned with salt. He said. Now. Salt. Was used. As a figure. For wit.

And what. What. What Paul is saying here. Is that our speech. Should be attractive. And should be. Should be. To some extent. Memorable. In that.

We should. We should. Encourage other people. Perhaps scintillating. Is too strong. It should help. A situation. Just as salt. Was. Was. A corrective.

[ 24 : 32 ] Which kept. You know. It kept meat. From. From. From. From decomposing. It was a preservative. So. Our speech. Should be kind. In that sense.

And should be beautiful. In that sense. Of preserving. A situation. Not making it worse. But making it better. Or at least. Keeping it from getting worse. Our speech. Should be seasoned. With salt. So that we may know. How we ought. To answer. Everyone. Now Paul is there. Thinking of. A Christian. Having to answer.

For his faith. And in that situation. He says. Our speech. Our conversation. Should be. Attractive. Should be gracious. It should be beautiful. And it.

Should. Preserve. The situation. Rather. Than be confrontational. And destructive. And so.

[ 25 : 27 ] The word of God. Gives us this. Practical advice. About how we should speak. Our words. Ought to be wise. Our words. Ought to be just. Our words. Ought to be kind.

And we ought. In accordance. With the teaching. Of our Lord. To. Avoid the use of. The destructive. Use of words. And the deceptive. Use of words. And the devalued. Use of words.

All of which. Are so common. In our fallen. Society. There's great potential. In the tongue. The tongue.

Is a fire. Says James. It is a world. Of iniquity. It can give expression. To the. Original sin. That lurks. Within our heart. One of the Puritans.

