



INSTRUCTIONS IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

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Entry 7 - 11

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Healing Your Tongue

When God heals your tongue you stop gossiping, speaking foul language, and worry mongering and you begin to speak life. Words are powerful! Children get away with saying negative words when they do it innocently. Negative words from adults, even if they are truthful, are poison-tipped arrows. When our children were young, we hosted many ministers. On one occasion, a pastor was visiting and over dinner our children asked questions. Our 6-year-old asked if he was married and he replied, “No”. Then she said, “**You know what the Bible says? It is better to marry than to burn!**” The man was embarrassed and we corrected our daughter, but we could not stop laughing. Similar words from an adult would have been judgmental and offensive. Many people, advanced in years, have experienced a lot of life, yet they still fail to control their tongues. If your words are Holy Spirit-led they will produce life and not death and your character will become Christ-like.

All of us have cast out words that we wish we could pull back. We realize later how hurtful they were. Sometimes we repent and reel our words back in. At other times, our pride interferes and we wait too long to apologize. Then our words bring permanent damage and even an apology will not pull the hooks out. Marriages fly apart, friends become strangers and families are dysfunctional because of misspoken words.

The Apostle James says that the tongue is a forest fire and man, who can tame every animal, cannot tame his tongue. It is a deadly evil (See James 3:1-18).

Some folk do a good job of controlling their words when things go well in life, but when all hell breaks loose, unrighteous words slip out. Their words bring much damage to themselves and to all who hear them. Jesus said, “**Nothing outside a man can make him unclean by going into him. Rather, it is what comes out of a man that makes him unclean.**” *Mk. 7:15*

Your spoken words can destroy your well being, bring lots of trouble to your life, and ruin your future.

Jesus also said, “***Out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks.***” *Mt. 12:34*

Jesus says that our words reveal who we are. To control our tongue requires a change of heart and not just a skillful watching of our words. If the heart is unclean, sooner or later evil will spill out of our mouths. Then we know that we need more of Christ.

This is more serious than we may think. Jesus said, “***Men will ... give account on the day of judgment for every careless [or idle] word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted and by your words you will be condemned.***” *Mt. 12: 36-37*

It is as if God is reading between the lines (of our lives). We think we should be judged only by the words we craft and calculate when we engage in a purposeful conversation, but the Lord says that all conversation is important and powerful, even that which is spoken privately or casually. If we let the Holy Spirit heal our speech, it will change our lives. The process is called sanctification.

Here are 5 keys of wisdom from God's word that will help us cooperate with the Holy Spirit so that our tongue may be healed.

1. Give God Your Whole Heart

Healing your tongue happens only by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. Only God can tame your tongue. So, surrender completely and rededicate every detail of your life to the Lord. If your heart is undivided your words will produce life and not death. This principle works in the opposite direction as well; as your tongue is being tamed your heart becomes pure. Scripture says, the pure in heart will see God.

2. Be Slow To Speak

This is a universal teaching that even unbelievers subscribe to. The Bible says, *"Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry."* *Js. 1:19*

A fool has an undisciplined mouth and an ungodly person becomes angry quickly and easily. It is difficult to anger a godly person. If, however, you become angry, it is usually best not to speak. Obey God's word, be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to anger.

3. Ask For a Holy Spirit Guard

Take note of one of David's prayers. *"Set a guard over my mouth, O Lord; keep watch over*

the door of my lips." *Ps. 141:3*

If you are Christ's disciple, then the Holy Spirit will correct you. He will whisper in your spirit and warn you not to speak the words of reaction that rise up within you. It is easy to ignore the gentle warnings of the Holy Spirit and to charge, full speed ahead. If you pray this prayer of David's regularly, then the Holy Spirit will speak to you louder and you will become more obedient. The Lord will guard your mouth and keep a watch over the door of your lips.

4. Ask for Heavenly Wisdom

God makes His wisdom available to His children. It is not like the wisdom of man. Listen to the words of James; *"The wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness."* *Js. 3: 17-18*

The wisdom from above is not human intelligence, rather, it is the release of God's character in us. It changes the way we live, the words we speak and the way we treat people. Scripture teaches us that the tongue of the wise brings health, and that it is a tree of life (Pro. 12:18). Ask the Lord for wisdom, and he will change the way you speak.

5. Practice Speaking Grace

Paul teaches; *"Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to*

answer everyone." *Col. 4:6*

Grace is God's kindness extended to us even though we do not deserve it.

Every time we have a conversation we should extend kindness, even when the person we are speaking to does not deserve it. That is the grace that Paul is talking about. Many of us need to change because we do not always speak to every person with grace and kindness.

Giving the cold, hard truth is not God's general design for personal conversations. Truth at the wrong time or given in the wrong way will be destructive. When correcting children, we apply the law and truth but not when we speak to a friend.

Grace, discretion and sometimes silence is the Holy Spirit-led way for conversations. When we obey God's word, we always speak graciously, and then the Holy Spirit teaches us to season it with salt.

Salt is truth or correction. It is so powerful that a pinch goes a long way. The Holy Spirit uses your hint of seasoning salt (truth) to convict the recipient when it is mixed with an abundance of grace. If you want grace and truth to be in balance, then give 100 pounds of grace for every quarter pound of truth.

Your tongue may need healing. Ask God for help. Let Him change your speech; it will change your life. **AΩ**



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