

## THE POWER OF WORDS

*(Proverbs 25:11 NKJV) "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver."*

A word fitly spoken is →

- Appropriate for the situation
- Well- matched to the time
- Effective speech that applies power for success
- A good choice of words

*(Acts 4:32 ICB) "The group of believers were joined in their hearts, and they had the same spirit. No person in the group **said** that the things he had were his own. Instead, they shared everything."*

**MATTHEW 12:33-37 NKJV**  
*By your words you will be justified.*  
*By your words you will be condemned.*

Definitions –

1. **"Justify"**  
*(See Biblical Definition)*  
 Secular Dictionary:  
*To prove or show to be right or reasonable*
2. **"Condemn"**  
*To pronounce guilty*  
*To sentence to doom*

### Words: (1) Define and (2) Reveal the Quality of Relationships

(A relationship can be defined as a connection.)

The words we speak either connect us or disconnect us.  
 Are you connecting or disconnecting when you speak?

*(Romans 15:5 TLB) "May God who gives patience, steadiness, and encouragement help you to live in complete harmony with each other--each with the attitude of Christ toward the other."*

### Encouragement depends on Communication.

The Ministry of Reconciliation and Exhortation 

*(2 Corinthians 5:18 NKJV) "Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation."*

(Reconciliation can be defined as reconnection.)

*(Hebrews 10:24-25 NKJV) "And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, {25} not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching."*

Definitions –

3. **"Reconciliation"**  
*"Enemies have made up and are now friends"*  
*"Whatever has come between you and another person has been removed and replaced with love."*
4. **"Exhortation"**  
*To incite, provoke, stimulate and motivate someone to be encouraged so they will take courage in doing the right things and being all that God has designed them to be.*



How are we to do this?

Answer →

**Positive Word Power**

## Words have the Power to Encourage or Destroy

The ministry of encouragement in the church requires an understanding of the forces behind the fears, anger and frustration in us, and the people to whom we minister.

## Understanding Depends on Communication

- ☑ Ministering effectively requires understanding.
- ☑ Interaction with people requires understanding.
- ☑ Success with others, regardless of who you are or what you are doing requires understanding.
- ☑ Understanding always requires effective communication.



Understanding what?

What the other person is feeling.  
What the other person is facing.  
What the other person is trying to communicate to you

We can misunderstand the same (above)

**Word Power is the power to bring understanding. UNFORTUNATELY... IT IS ALSO THE POWER TO BRING MISUNDERSTANDING AND LACK OF UNDERSTANDING.**

## Your selection of words determines WORD POWER.

- ☑ Encouragement ...comes from selecting the right words at the right time. (A connection is formed.)
- ☑ Encouragement ...results when your words move a person closer to God. (A connection is formed.)
- ☑ Discouragement ...results when your words take a person away from God. (A disconnect is made.)

Words will determine a number of things, including:

1. The quality of fellowship (between speaker and others or between others who hear the speaker)
2. The quality of life - Your words will affect the quality of life in the person or people to whom you speak.
3. The degree of your influence - Your words will influence your hearers. They can cause the attitudes and actions of your hearers to be positive or negative, good or bad, righteous or unrighteous.
4. The direction and growth of your own life - Your success or failure as a leader depends in large part on (and certainly reflects upon) the words you speak.

The simplest definition of "Leadership" is "Influence"

# WAYS WE COMMUNICATE

## I. SPOKEN WORDS

*(Proverbs 15:4 NKJV) "A wholesome tongue is a tree of life, But perverseness in it breaks the spirit."*

Spoken language is universal to the human race. It is also a universally powerful enabler that encourages and edifies, or discourages, disappoints and causes hurt. Though we also communicate through the written word and even images we create that have no words, for this study, we will focus on words that we speak.

### A. Empty Spoken Words (Negative Word Power)

We are capable of saying things that are empty of substance. These words are spoken to avoid commitment and to conceal the truth. They are "skin deep." They ring hollow in the ears of our hearers. Such words are brittle and without strength. They lack integrity and are easily shattered into meaningless pieces.

- ☑ These kinds of words cover and hide our true feelings, or lack of feelings. They are anything but transparent.
- ☑ They are words **birthed out of fear** of exposure or discovery.
- ☑ We use these words to create **shields or walls** around us to keep people from knowing what we really think and feel. We do so to avoid exposure, disapproval or rejection.
- ☑ These words keep us at a distance from others. They are sinful and displeasing to God, because they deny, degrade and destroy relationships.
- ☑ **They break the spirit and freeze the soul of the hearer!**



**What would be typical of brittle, hollow, empty words?**

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## B. Dark, Defiling, Spoken Words (Killing Words) (Negative Word Power)

*(James 3:5-6 NKJV) "Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! {6} And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell."*

*(Luke 6:45 NKJV) "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks."*

The Bible tells us that dark, defiling words come from the innermost parts of our being. They are a reflection of what is in our hearts. They are words that defile and afflict both the speaker and the hearer. They are violent in their intention and outcome. Their substance is bitter. They carry the potential to place great burdens on those they are directed toward.

Dark, defiling words are spoken without any attempt to conceal their evil. They are driven from our mouths by what is in our hearts. They can be spoken with deliberate control toward a deliberate target, or they can simply float in the wind defiling all who hear them.

Dark, defiling words drive people into hopelessness and bring mournful attitudes to their spirits. These are words full of judgment and they will exact deliberate destruction. They serve the devil well, even as they dishonor God.

Sometimes, people speak these words in ignorance, as a matter of speech patterns they have been taught, without understanding the damage they cause.



*(Proverbs 18:21 NKJV) "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit."*



What would be typical of dark, defiling words?

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*Tongue*



## C. Life-giving Spoken Words (Positive Word Power)

*(Proverbs 16:24 NKJV) "Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the bones."*

Life-giving words are alive. They liberate, encourage and empower. Like empty, dark words, they also come from the innermost part of our being. (Again, Luke 6:45 NKJV) Unlike empty, dark words, these words are full of life and overflow with potential to touch others in eternally significant ways. These words release God's grace. They have with them the ability instantly to change a listener's perspective.

- ☑ They are spoken in a conscious effort to bring the grace of God to others. God is faithful and His grace will fill your words.
- ☑ One spoken sentence, full of living, liberating words can show the way to freedom and victory of someone who has lived in bondage and defeat.
- ☑ They are words that reject the lusts of the flesh (Galatians 5).
- ☑ They are Christ-like words. They are words of kindness, gentleness and mercy. They bring the peace of God.
- ☑ When they are spoken, life and love fills the air and hope comes to the hearer. They bring Christ to the hearer.
- ☑ They are words that warm the soul, even in the most frozen seasons of life.

These are words of life, unity and hope. God expects that as we grow in the Lord, we will become progressively more able and certainly more willing to speak such words.

Often, we need to reflect on what we have said, or are saying. We need to double check ourselves against what God has said about words that come from within in.

*(2 Timothy 1:13 NKJV) "Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus."*

*(Ephesians 4:15 NKJV) "but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head; Christ;"*



What would typically be living, liberating words?

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Take inventory of your words. What speech patterns do you use that need to be erased from your vocabulary?

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## II. SILENCE (Silent Unspoken Words)

In addition to our spoken words, we communicate in unspoken ways. We can be present in a crowd, or with just one other person, and though we say nothing, nevertheless, we can powerfully communicate. Our actions communicate as if they were. Though not spoken, they send messages as if they were. We will look at the two kinds of silence (silent words) that we project onto others.

### A. Dark, Defiling Silence

(Silence screams – loud and clear.)

These are words you decide you will not say. Even though you do not say them with your voice, **others hear them loudly and clearly.**



## Silence as Judgment: Rejection or Disapproval



Your silence can be interpreted as rejection. For example, *“What he did not say confirms my feelings that I am bad or worthless. He believes this, so he does not say it.”*

Silent words scream at people. A woman can ask her husband, *“Do you love me?”* He may just look at her and say nothing. The message she receives is, *“Of course I don’t love you, but you will not get me to admit it,”* or *“I don’t love you but you are not worth my even speaking that out loud to you.”*

These examples are extremes, but they are typical because unspoken words, carried by spontaneous gestures or expressions communicate as well or better than spoken words. Unlike our spoken words, they are powerfully transparent. Silence, when used unwisely or without compassion is the silence of a fool.

### B. Compassionate, Caring Silence

Silence is unspoken, yet it can say, ***“I’m not going there!”*** These words say, *“I’m not willing to enter into sinful attitudes or behavior by speaking words of agreement with what you are saying.”*

- ☑ Silence in the form of unwillingness to enter in... sends the message: *“I will not murmur with you. I do not agree with the sinful words you speak.”*
- ☑ Compassionate, caring silence can also send the message, *“I am here for you! I don’t know what to say, but by my attitude you can see that I care and will join with you in your difficulties.”* Silence in the form of unwillingness to interrupt or speak quickly and carnally... sends the message: *“I care.”*

There are times when a person just needs to pour his or her soul out to you. *They do not need you to tell them how to fix things.* On occasions when wisdom is called for, it often means careful consideration of the facts and *a lengthy appointment with the Holy*



*Spirit before you speak.* A wise person often delays answering until God gives the revelation. Silence is a wise tool when used wisely!



**In your daily experiences, how does silence, both POSITIVE and NEGATIVE, speak to you?**

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## CONCLUSION

Words, spoken or not, have enormous power. They can be the acid that erodes relationships and destroys lives. They can also be the glue that holds relationship and fellowship together and bring life to those involved. They will make lasting differences in the lives of the people who speak them and those who receive them. God is interested in us being sensitive to the words we speak. He wants us to use our words to stimulate each other to love and good works.

In the next lesson of this series, we will examine words and their ability to become the glue that binds or the acid that corrodes our relationships.