

Our Words

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[0:00] James 3 verse 6, it tells us, And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity.

! So is the tongue. It says, And it is set on fire of hell.

They're strong words, aren't they? The tongue is a fire, it's set on fire of hell. We know tongues can hurt people.

The tongue, what we say, can be damaging and destructive like a fire. You know, it only takes a little spark, a little glowing ember to start a bushfire.

And like that too, the tongue can be set on fire of hell. It can defile the whole body, make the whole body dirty. And so it's something we must be guarded about.

[1:21] And in Proverbs 21, 23, we read, Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles. You know, we guard our tongue, we guard what we say, we'll keep ourselves from troubles.

And Psalm 141, verse 3, it says, Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth. Keep the door of my lips. Set a watch, O Lord. Keep guard over what I say.

There's several things we can do with our words. Some, bad, some, good. You know, I have trouble with my words. I know we're all honest.

There's times we have trouble with what comes out of our mouth. And that's something that we all could take stock about, think about. I know someone was telling me lately about minced oaths.

You know, it's words that aren't really swear words, as you would define them, as the world would consider them. And yet, they're substitute swear words, really, aren't they?

[2:24] You know, if I can illustrate, just to mention what I mean, a word like gosh. For example, some would think there's nothing to do with that. But gosh is a substitute for God.

You know, it's really just, comes out so easily, doesn't it? Such a word as that. Or there's many other words we could talk about, but I'd rather not really mention them. But you can think about it for yourself.

Words that sound a bit like a swear word, but they're not really a swear word. And yet, shouldn't we guard our tongue and set the watch over our lips? Words can have a very destructive force, or they can have a very constructive force.

We see that with our words, we can vilify. We can vilify. Now, what does vilify mean? To vilify someone, vilification, it means to slander them. It means we can speak evil of someone.

Now, I must confess, I was talking to a brother of late and saying about a particular person I know, I said, he's a bit of a wacko. Now, it's no one in this gathering tonight, it's no one in this church, I think he's scarcely ever come, if ever he's come.

[3:34] But, you know, that was an unkind word that I used, and I must make that confession tonight. That I called someone a wacko. And yet, that is vilification, isn't it?

It's vilifying. And really, I'm embarrassed to say that I had done so. And we can use our tongue to vilify people, to bag people, have a go at them.

You know, would we say it to their face? Would we be that honest that we could say it to them in person? We can use our words to murmur. There's things such as railings, undercurrents, evil speakings, surmisings.

It means just even thinking ill of someone, without grounds. Surmisings. And in Philippians 2.14 it says, Do all things without murmurings, all things without murmurings and disputings, that you may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom you shine as lights in the world.

Do all things without murmurings and disputings. You know, sometimes we can do something for God, and murmur about it, can't we? We can groan and moan.

[4:51] You know, sometimes we can. We are human clay vessels, aren't we? And we see this occurred in Exodus 16, verse 2. It says, The whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness.

Exodus 16.2. The whole congregation. You know, if they put it to a vote, they'd have got the sack, wouldn't they? So, we can see that the whole congregation murmured against the prophet of that gathering.

And to murmur, it means to complain, to utter a way of complaint, a murmuring, a complaining. And we all can complain.

There's times we might complain about God. We might groan in prayer about what he's trying to do with our lives and not really understand. We might grumble about our lot in life.

We might be a discontented person. Discontentment can lead to strife and contention. Murmuring, it brings strife and division. It's the mother of evil speaking, of backbiting, of strife, division, hard feelings, misunderstanding and separation.

[6:06] It's a sad thing when we have such conflict. And really and truly, what it boils down to is murmuring gives Satan a place. Who is Satan the devil?

He's the accuser of the brethren. And I know I was saying this morning, I was reflecting on how I treated an older man of God.

As much as he had, as I saw it some, serious false teaching. It was the manner in which I did it. It was evil speaking. And we ought not to give Satan a place.

We don't want to give him a place. Give him an inch. And murmuring does that. It gives him grounds. And will we use our tongue to vilify, to attack another?

Or will we die to self and put away anger, bitterness and evil speaking? In Ephesians 4.31 it says, Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and glamour and evil speaking, all that kind of stuff, he says, put it away.

[7:10] Be put it away from you with all malice. And be kind one to another, kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you.

You know, I look back on my life about how I've treated some people. And I think back with regret. With regret. With remorse. With shame.

You know, there's been times when I've left churches and I've bad-mouthed the pastor. You know, and I'm ashamed to say that I did that.

And it was wrong of me to have done that. When they're doing their level best to do what they can for God. And we can all think of that for ourselves. Have I something of that in me that I need to put aside?

In 1 Peter 2, 1 it says, Wherefore, laying aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisies and envies and all evil speakings. I know there's a fellow who sometimes comes here and it's one of his pet kind of sayings.

[8:18] He says, Speak evil of no man. Which is from Titus 3, verse 2. It's a command from God. Speak evil of no man. And something we should take to heart, isn't it?

And I know for this brother, he had this spirit about him that even when he knew something, that he could have a go at someone, that he chose not to do so. He chose not to speak evil of that other man.

And I thought that spoke well of his character and I thought, That's a man I can trust because he's not going to go treating me that way. And in Proverbs 12, verse 18, it says, Of words that they can cut like a sword.

In Proverbs 27, verse 15, it talks of words that are nagging words. Now, it says here, A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike.

Now, I'm sure there's contentious women and contentious men. This is not just women. It's men too. It can be nagging, you know, going on and on and nagging and annoying people.

[9:24] And these are things that are unhelpful ways of speaking, aren't they? You know, we can nag people, we can bag people. Let's not vilify, let's not be contentious, but instead to be gentle, showing all meekness.

As we read in Galatians 5, verse 14, it says of them, that of some folk there, that in the context, it's love thy neighbour as thyself. That's a tough call, isn't it?

Love your neighbour as yourself. You know, that's a whopping big scripture there, isn't it, for all of us to think of that. And in the context, he says, but if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

I read an article based on that scripture that was saying that some cannibal Christians, you know, all the cannibals don't live over in some remote islands, you know, chopping up people and eating them.

There's some in churches too. You're biting and devouring one another. You know, just bring some food with you if you're hungry. That's a bite and devour one another. He says, look out, lest ye be consumed one of another.

[10:31] We don't want to be like that. And so, I like to think that we can, being a church that has that kind-heartedness, that tender-heartedness. In Proverbs 15, 1, it says, a soft answer turneth away anger.

The answer that is soft will turn away anger, but grievous words will stir it up. And so, we can use our words to vilify, to vilify, to speak evil, to slander.

Secondly, here's a good one now, we can use our words to edify, to edify one another. In 1 Corinthians 14, verse 26, it says, let all things, all things be done unto edifying.

So, everything that we do, it says, let it be done for this end to edify. And what does edify mean? Now, we think of edifices are buildings.

We call them an edifice. Edifying, it means building people. It means building. To edify means to build. To build up, to strengthen, to mature, to develop.

[11:38] And, I thank God there's people in this church who have got an encouraging ministry. They edify people. I know there's people that take people into their homes. There's people that have been kind.

I know Robin and family have been very kind to my wife. With recent times, there's Greg and his family, Brad and his family, and others in the church. There's people that kind-hearted that they edify one another.

Edify one another. That's a good thing. I know there's hospitality here with Richard and family. There's people who care about edifying, building people up. That's a blessed thing.

I thank God for people who've got that heart. And Romans 15, in 1 it says, we then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak and not to please ourselves.

Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. So if you can think of a reason how you can edify someone, how you can build them up, then take those steps.

[12:38] In Ephesians 4, 29 it says, let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good for the use of edifying, they minister grace, grace, answer the hearers.

We talked about grace this morning. It's a blessed thing. We want to walk in grace, to be a grace-filled people. And 1 Thessalonians 5, 11 it says, wherefore, comfort yourselves together and edify one another even as also you do.

And the word comfort here, it conveys the meaning of coming alongside another to help. To come to one's side, to place an arm around them, to comfort, to cheer, to encourage.

Now the paraclete, the Holy Spirit, the comforter, our helper, he is that great comforter. And that is the picture for us of how we ought to edify and encourage and comfort, put our arms around one another and not push people away.

Are we an encourager or a discourager? Maybe some of us need encouragement. I'm sure there's many here today that do.

[13:51] We all do from time to time. And yet, the enemy just wants to be the accuser of the brethren and to divide and destroy.

Instead, let's build others up, edify one another. That's what we want to be, a church that's building up, building up, building up one another in our most holy faith. And it comes as we love.

It comes as we love one another, as we have that heart of love, as we have the Christ-like spirit of our Saviour, as we bear one another's burdens, as I know you are doing.

And we thank God for the spirit. As we care, then that will pervade everything that we do. And we'll be like Him. That's what we want to be, isn't it? That's what our heart longs to be, to be like Him, to be like our Lord, to be like our Saviour, our Master.

And here's a poem I read contrasting these two things, building or wrecking. A builder or a wrecker. You may have heard this. As I watch them tear a building down, a gang of men in a busy town, with a ho-heave-ho and a lusty yell.

[15:03] They swung a beam and the side wall fell. I asked the foreman, are these men skilled? And the men you'd hire if you wanted to build, he gave a laugh, ha, and said, no, indeed, just a common labour is all I need.

I can easily wreck in a day or two what builders have taken a year or two. What I thought to myself as I went my way, which of these roles have I tried to play?

Am I a builder who works with care, measuring my life by rule and square? Now, we're not Masonic or anything. I didn't pick that up when I wrote this out.

But, so, disregard that because we certainly do not support Freemasonry. Am I shaking my work to a well-made plan, patiently doing the best I can?

Or, am I a wrecker who walks to town, content with the labour of tearing down? O Lord, let my life and my labours be that which will build for eternity.

[16:06] Now, it's an interesting kind of poem, isn't it? Contrasting the wrecker and the builder and thinking of that. Are we part of the building crew or of the wrecking crew?

Are we into edification or demolition? Are we edifying, building people up? And that can apply to all of us in our day by day.

Find a way you can shine a bit of sunshine into someone's life. So, be that one who can build another to edify those around you. And especially by your words you may help win others for Christ. What a blessing that is. What a joy. Here's a quote from a man who edited a religious publication. And I've done such myself.

And this man, Dr. Trumbel, says, I've been an editor for more than 25 years with a circulation of 100,000 a week during much of my time.

[17:08] A Christian publication. I've published more than 30 volumes. Yet, looking back upon my work during all these years, I can see more direct result of good through my individual efforts.

With individuals that I can, through all of my spoken words to thousands upon thousands of people in religious assemblies or all my written words.

And he says this, he says, reaching one person at a time is the best way of reaching all the world in time. It's interesting, isn't it?

I know there's folk that I've seen at work around this place and around this neighbourhood touching one here, one there.

and what an impact that can make for our Lord as we're used of God to reach one by one. And you can do that too. I know Ralph in his ministry in the hospitals, reaching one by one by one.

[18:13] In their last hours of life, what a tremendous opportunity. Reaching one person at a time. And we can, and I'm guilty of this, you know, I've got three and a half thousand Facebook friends.

I invite them all to come to the trumpet. I've got halfway through them, but there's only seven coming so far. And it's sometimes people that aren't really coming. You know how it works. you know, we can have thousands and thousands, and I've got 1,500 email addresses that I spam people with every so often to invite them to come and to fellowship.

But, you know, brothers and sisters, it's the one by one by one, isn't it? And I know I was encouraged by what Darrell said before, how he's found this church a welcoming church.

He's found the receptivity of the people that, you know, in his, I'm not meant to single embarrass Darrell out by saying this, but in some of our experiences we can come and the church is cold.

We're not talking about the air conditioning. We're talking about the coldness of the people. The coldness that, that the, the distance, that distance that people have.

[19:25] And that kind of status thing that some can have that some are not ones that we want to associate with. These are things we don't want to have.

And thank God that we had that feedback that that was the feeling of this one that there is a receptivity. And it says in the word, receive one another, doesn't it? We want to receive one another and reach out to those that may not be walking the pathway with the Saviour yet.

Especially those that we can help win them for our Lord. And it can be that one by one by one, not having some massive great, you know, major means of reaching the masses, although we'd like to do that too, but the one by one is the most important.

And it's edifying one another. And it's that love that builds up. It's the opposite of the knowledge that puffs up. We can all be guilty of that. I can be guilty of that.

I like to show off my knowledge every so often. 1 Corinthians 8 verse 1, but knowledge puffs up, doesn't it? We've got to put that big jab, a big pin in it every so often.

[20:38] Let some of the gas out, don't we? When we get our head puffed up, we get a swelled head, we need to crucify it, and instead to have the love that builds up.

Here's another story of a preacher. One day he was visiting some folk, and he visited this poor lady, and she was at a wits end.

She was a busy lady. And he was urging folk how every Christian, however poor or busy, can witness for Christ, if they're willing.

And after he gave this message, this woman came up and said, oh, what can I do? What can I do? I'm a poor widow with five children to support. How can I find time to go to anyone about Christ?

And the preacher said, does the milkman call at your house? It's not appropriate for our day and age, but you know. Does the baker?

[21:38] Yes. It was a quad a long time ago. Does the butcher? Yes, was the curt replying. And the woman turned away. Two years later, the man of God came and spoke again at this place.

And the woman came up to him and said, I'm that woman who was vexed with you. When you said that every Christian can find time to witness and someone to witness to. And when you asked whether the milkman and the butcher and the baker visited me, I went home to pray.

God showed me my duty. And through my humble efforts, five people have been led to the Saviour. And they're all consistent working members of the church.

She was challenged to take time, to make time, to edify, to evangelise, to be a witness, to shine his light into these dark lives.

And we all can consider that. We're all busy in many ways, but we all have the same amount of time. And are we busy building up one another or pulling one another down?

[22:44] And how can I edify others? We're meant to be a building block, building up those about us, receiving one another, being a blessing, and crucifying the flesh.

When it goes against the grain, let's crucify the flesh that rises up against that, because God wants us to do it. In Romans 14, 19, it says, let us follow after the things which make for peace, and things where with one may edify one another.

And that is shown by often our words, isn't it? We've got Brother Reg heading over to the Philippines. We want to be prayerful for Reg as he goes to that other nation.

A different lingo, different kind of language, a great challenge for Reg as he goes over there. Pray that Reg's words will be words of life.

Words of life. Amen? You want to pray for that. Words that will edify one another and that will be a blessing. And friends, we've seen our words can vilify.

[23:49] I've been guilty of that. Our words can edify. That's what we want. That's what we need. And our words can glorify. Our words can glorify God.

Isn't that the ultimate? As we sung in praises, we sung his worship, we're applying what it says in 1 Chronicles 16, 28, Give unto the Lord, ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength.

What about Psalm 50, verse 23, Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me. What about Psalm 96, 12, I will praise thee, O Lord, my God, and I will glorify thy name.

Psalm 86, 9, All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord, and shall glorify thy name.

Glorify God. This tongue, this mouth, your lips can praise him, your heart can utter forth his praise and give him the glory that is due unto his name.

[25:01] We can give him glory in our prayer, give him glory in our praise, whether therefore you eat or drink or whatsoever you do, absolutely everything that you do, 100% of all that you are and have and be, you can glorify God with that, do all to the glory of God.

God, even when you're down at the workplace, down at the school place, down at the shopping place, you can be doing that to the glory of God and glorify him.

We're created for that, we're created to glorify God. Thou hast made all nations to come and worship before thee, O Lord, to glorify thy name.

We've been created, created for his glory. Isaiah 43, verse 7, it says, even everyone that is called by my name, for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him, yea, I have made him.

He's made you to glorify him. He's made you for his glory. He's made you to give him the glory that is due. Give God the glory. There's many scriptures we could refer to, and we don't have time, but give him glory, glory for his holiness, glory for his mercy, glory for his truth, glory for his deliverance.

[26:29] Friends, today you might be listening to this and you're outside of Christ. You're searching, you've got some kind of religious bands, there's something there that you want, something more than just this life.

The ultimate and absolute is to glorify God with your life, to find that reason reason to be, to think of that blood, that it was for me, the wounded hands, the pierced man bleeding for you.

And when it's personal, it grips you, it grips you, it shakes you, it grabs a hold of you, it awakens you, and I trust that it can glorify God with your life.

And what are we to offer? Just we humble people that we are, what would God want with a person such as me? With all my faults and failings and inadequacies, he's paid a beautiful, awesome price. If you're saved, if you trust him, then you can say I am bought with a price.

[27:49] Bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. Your body and your spirit belong to him.

So make it count, make it matter, make something of eternity. Stamp your life on this earth that you'll do something. Not to gain merit, but because you want to glorify him, and he's due that glory. David Brayner said to Jonathan Edwards this, he said, I do not go to heaven to be advanced, but to give honour to God. It's no matter whether I shall be stationed in heaven, where I shall be stationed in heaven, whether I have a high seat or a low seat there, but to live and please and glorify God. My heaven is to please God and glorify him and give all to him and to be wholly devoted to his glory.

That's my heaven. That's my heaven, said David Brayner, a man who died very young in the privations of a desperate, challenging field of witness.

[29:03] Even the everyday things of life can give glory to God. Johann Sebastian Bach, and I'm not sure whether he was a reasonable Christian or not.

I'm not sure. I don't know. But whatever the case, this is one quote that he said. I'm not a real music expert, but this is what Bach said.

All music should have no other end and aim than the glory of God and the soul's refreshment.

Where this is not remembered, there is no real music but only a devilish hubbub.

That's a good quote, isn't it? All music should have that aim, the glory of God. And he headed some of his compositions with JJ, which means in the Latin, Jesus help me, and one soli di gratia, which means to God alone, the praise.

We ought to commit our life with such a spirit, shouldn't we? That what we do is to the glory of God.

That even whatever we might do, that nothing is to our own self-glory, that nothing of it is to our own vain glory, that in all things God may be glorified.

