

Life and Death

Proverbs says we have the power of life and death on our tongue. It also says what we say can bring healing or harm. James says we pour out both blessings and curses from the same mouth. This led me to wonder just what is meant by blessings and curses, and how do we speak life and death into situations, others and ourselves. I believe it goes deeper than insulting someone; maybe even at times we speak death when we don't speak at all.

When I was a much younger Christian, I let the devil get my tongue. I would allow him to use it to speak death over other's situations and mine as well. I didn't know I was doing it. It was really quite deceitful the way I was tricked into giving him my voice. For example, I would not pray out loud, with anyone. I was terrified to. Rationally I know this makes no sense, but my fear was overwhelming. One evening, our Sunday School teacher had requested that several of us go to the home of a couple and pray for them and their 18 month old baby, who was going in for brain surgery the next morning. I sat around the table, with my friends frozen in fear. I left disappointed at not being able to overcome my fear and pray out loud for that child. I had given my enemy the power of my voice when I chose to succumb to his tactics.

About a year later, I started volunteering at a crisis pregnancy center. Still I wouldn't pray out loud, not even with my husband. One day during training I sat in on a counseling session. The volunteer who was counseling the young lady had just finished and asked me to pray for the girl. Once again I was put into a state of terror. I knew I could not volunteer there unless I was able to pray for these precious girls out loud. Right then and there, the cord was dropped and my tongue was loosed to speak to Jesus in front of others. Afterward, the volunteer told me, "you pray so beautifully". Isn't it so like God to fill you with encouragement when you obey Him? This sweet lady had no idea how great my struggle with prayer had been. The rest of the day she insisted I pray for all the girls we counseled. This began an incredible journey of prayer for me.

Another way we can become death speakers is by what we say and by what we pray. I have had seasons in my life when almost everything out of my mouth was negative. I was literally cursing myself. If what I am speaking is not encouraging and edifying to others, then I am speaking death. Proverbs 12:18 says, "*Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.*" If my words aren't bringing healing to someone, it makes

sense that they are bringing harm. The word for healing here literally means a healing or a cure. The phrase “if you aren’t going to be part of the solution, then you are part of the problem” holds much truth to it, especially when you are discussing the problem. The bible speaks very clearly about how we use our words. It is displeasing to our Father when we use our words to bring hurt and pain to others.

There is power in the spoken word. The bible is full of warnings from God about how we use our weapon of the mouth. If there weren’t power in the word, then God wouldn’t have so much to say about it in scripture. The Word is how the universe was brought into being; it was by God’s word that the earth was created. How can God tell us we have the power of death and life on our tongue if there is no harm in what we say? That’s why the enemy tries to bully us into not speaking God’s life giving words and tempting us into speaking his lies. I spoke so many of the enemy’s lies over myself and had no idea what I was really doing. I tore myself down; I would tell myself lies and then believe them. I would tell myself, I was fat, ugly, I needed to stay ashamed of my past, I couldn’t be used by God, I wasn’t as good as those other Christians. I honestly thought I wasn’t “good enough” for God to love. I didn’t understand how believing God wasn’t crazy in love with me was a lie and I was allowing death into my life instead of the life giving love of God. I was speaking death over myself on a daily basis. If I am speaking death over myself, how could I ever speak life over others? When I choose to give satan the reins of my tongue, I instantly become a death speaker. I have been around death speakers, heaviness follows them, how could it not? I no longer want to wade through the murky waters of hopelessness.

There is another choice; I can be a life giver. I can use my words to pour out God’s love on others. I can choose to look at life from a faith point of view. I can choose to accept the fact Jesus came to give life, not to take it, came to heal sickness, not to cause it, came to deliver us, not to imprison us. He came so we can have life and have it to more abundantly. The phrase “abundant life” in John 10 means, life real and genuine, blessed, active and vigorous, more than is necessary, something further, much more than all, extraordinary. I want the extraordinary life Jesus promised me. In order for me to have this I need to be transformed into a life speaker. I need to speak life into all situations. I need to speak life over my neighbors who at times have been less than nice to me. I need to speak life and love over my husband when my flesh wants to lash out at him. I need to speak hope over those who are lost in the pit of despair. I need to pray with power and faith to my God who calls into

being things that were not. Of all the people I have met, life speakers are my favorites. They are full of joy, hope, faith, love, and life. They draw others to themselves. Jesus is seen in their eyes. Life speakers see miracles. They aren't afraid to ask God for them. They walk in faith, because by sight would be too overwhelming for them. They are used by Jesus to be his hands, feet, and voice for the hurting world around them. Laughter and praise can be heard coming from them. They are a blessing, not a curse to those they come in contact with. They don't live in a fantasy land, but rather a land of wonder and plenty.

I'm signing up!! I will be a death speaker no more. I want the abundant life Jesus has offered to all of us. What about you?

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