

Remnant Life Church
August 15, 2021
“Spiritual Warfare – The Tongue: Speaking Curses”
Pt 3
James 3:3-12

How is it that words have such power?

It is because of who spoke the very first words:

- 1) **Gen 1:3** - *And God said, “Let there be light” and there was light.*
 - a) **Gen 1:6, 9, 14, 24, 26. 29** – *And God said*
 - b) The creation of the universe came on the WORD of God
 - c) The very life of all creation was brought forth by the spoken word

- 2) What does that mean?
 - a) Words bring life
 - b) Your words can bring life to the person you are speaking to
 - i) Many times, my role in helping people through a difficult time
 - ii) Not to provide answers but to speak words of life, encouragement, and hope
 - c) You don’t need to be a pastor or minister to do that
 - d) Every one of us are called, as a child of God, to speak those words
 - e) But, again, it begins in your heart

Words are primarily defined in the Bible as being described in one of two ways – a blessing or a curse

Just as words can be positive, they can also be negative

- I want this morning for us to examine and understand the danger and power of the negative words or curses that you speak

Curses

Who can curse you?

- We are not talking about foul or course language
- We are also not talking about an activity of the occult
- These are words that bring injury to your heart, your mind, and your spirit

- satan – **I Peter 5:8** – *like a prowling lion looking for someone to devour*
 - a. He will attempt to accomplish that in a variety of ways
 - b. Certainly, speaking lies and curses is how he tries to weaken you
 - c. satan will always want you to embrace the negative aspects of your life

- People can curse you
 - d. This is an area of my life that has changed as I have gotten older and I wish I had embraced it much, much sooner
 - i. How much should it matter what other people say about you?
 - ii. Especially those who do not know you well or are important in your life

- iii. What is more important is how we choose to respond
 - e. In **Luke 8** Jesus is teaching how we should deal with our enemies or those who hurt you
 - i. In the OT the law said an eye for an eye – IOW, do unto others as they do unto you
 - ii. But Jesus was teaching a different way to live – a life lived based on love and forgiveness
 - f. In **Luke 8:28** Jesus says, very simply but emphatically, to bless those who curse you
- Christians can also curse each other
 - g. **James 3:9-10** - *With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be.*
 - h. Notice these are not heathens cursing one another, they are people who praise God, believers, Christians!
 - i. Now you might be saying to yourself, 'I have never cursed anyone'
 - i. What about gossip?
 - ii. How about pointing out faults in other people?
 - iii. What about when you "correct" someone but do it in love?
 - iv. What about when you are frustrated, angry, or tired and you say things unkindly or in a hurtful way?
 - j. These are all ways in which we curse one another
 - Finally, perhaps the most damaging of the words are the ones where you curse yourself
 - k. A primary reason many people are not able to overcome difficult things in their life is because their words keep them bound
 - i. "I'll never..."; "I can't..."; "I'm not..."
 - ii. The power of negative words over yourself will only strengthen and solidify the problem
 - l. If you speak the negative over yourself, you will experience the negative
 - i. Henry Ford - *"Whether you think you can or you think you can't, you're right"*
 - m. Not about the 'power of positive thinking' or the nonsense written by L. Ron Hubbard – Dianetics
 - n. It is the power of the spoken word by a man or woman who has given their lives over to the author of all good things

Not only are the negative words and curses damaging to your mind, but, more importantly, it weakens your heart to do battle with the enemy

What do words of cursing do to us?

- a. They bring anxiety, fear, and despair
- b. They bring confusion, disorientation, and a loss of direction or purpose (**Gal 1:7**)
- c. Words can put a tremendous strain on a relationship bringing it to the breaking point

- i. Friendships, families, and marriages have all been decimated by words
- ii. **Prov 15:1-2** - *A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. The tongue of the wise adorns knowledge, but the mouth of the fool gushes folly.*
- d. And now, listen to what the prophet Isaiah declares about proclaiming, or speaking, the good news of God
 - ii. **Isa 61:1-3** - *The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to **proclaim** good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to **proclaim** freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to **proclaim** the year of the LORD's favor and the day of vengeance of our God to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be **called** oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor.*

Mentioned briefly last week: One of the most damaging things that we are dealing with in our culture today is that everyone has a voice to speak on every topic regardless of how little they know about what they are talking about

- It is fine and good for people to be able to speak their mind
- The problem is that the words of people are presented to the entire world
- The great and vast majority of people have absolutely no idea or, at best, very limited knowledge of what they are talking about
- Over the past year and a half millions of posts have been made with no guidelines to what you are reading
 - o A PhD in immunology speaks through the same platform as the person who wants nothing more than to be noticed
 - o And the more outlandish and ridiculous the statement, the more people pay attention
- The vast majority of what goes through a person's mind should never, ever be spoken
 - o That is also true for you and for me
 - o Some of the greatest acts of wisdom and maturity come from the things you keep to yourself
 - o It is not easy...but it is a character of a follower of Jesus Christ
- What is it that motivates people to say what they say?
 - o Again, it is the heart
 - o The heart without Jesus Christ has no desire to be loving, kind, patient, and edifying
 - o There is an ego present that drives many to share every thought that comes into their head
 - o No matter the level of absurdity foolishness

One of the most stark examples of the duplicity of the tongue – speaking blessing and cursing comes from the story of a man who penned one of the most beloved hymns of all time

It is 1763 and Augustus M. Toplady has just finished writing the lyrics to Rock of Ages after being caught in a powerful rainstorm and seeking shelter in an outcropping of rock and stone in England. It is a powerful, moving, biblical tribute to Christ and His finished work of redemption. Yet the same heart that wrote those stirring words also cursed man, saying of the great 16th century preacher John Wesley, when Wesley was past 70 while Toplady was a ministerial novice of only 30; "He is a lurking assassin, guilty of audacity and falsehood; a knave, guilty of mean, malicious impotence. He is an Ishmaelite, a bigot, a papist, a defamer, a reviler, a liar, without the honesty of a heathen, and impudent slanderer; with Satanic guilt only exceeded by Satan himself, if even by him. He is an echo of Satan."

This is a man who obviously has great hatred in his heart, yet God still used Him to comfort and inspire generations.

As James wrote, however, IT SHOULD NOT BE THAT WAY!