

# Loose Lips Sink Ships

by Paris Reidhead

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*The power of words can be a powerful tool for good or evil, and we must use them wisely to glorify God and bring blessing to others.*

**Duration:** 28:23

**Scripture:** Mark 11:22, John 14:6

**Topics:** "Tongue"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the significance of Jesus Christ as the Son of God who came into the world to redeem humanity. Jesus, who was born of Mary and trained as a carpenter, is portrayed as the one who holds the universe together even as he hangs on the cross. The preacher highlights the power of words, stating that God created the world through words and sin entered through deceptive words spoken by the enemy. The sermon also mentions the importance of faith and the need for believers to control their tongues, as true religion involves bridling one's speech.

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## Transcript

Words, words, how terribly important they are. During the Second World War, we frequently saw a poster in various places, public places. It showed a ship going down, a troop ship loaded with the troops at the rail, sinking into the ocean.

And under it would be loose lips, sink ships. And the meaning was this, that every place that the military personnel gathered, in all of the bars and hotels, enemy representatives would be there who were opposed to our country. And as the men were conversing and telling about leaving, going here, going there, sailing next week, where they thought they were going, someone would listen.

And wasn't at all infrequent, in fact, far too frequently it happened, that submarines would be on the line as the troop ships sailed. Thousands of American men went to watery graves because the personnel were too talkative. And so the effort was made to get them to control their speech.

Now the scripture tells us that every idle word is going to be brought into judgment. But that was a judgment far too sudden and far too serious and irrevocable for it to be lightly treated. Still, we're not at war now, but lives are being ruined in many places at odd times because of cruel, careless, thoughtless words.

It's a great responsibility being a parent. How many times children have had their vision and aspirations destroyed because when the little son or daughter said, when I grow up, I'm going to be a doctor. What, you, a doctor? And so the sarcasm and the sneer burn something into the mind and out of the heart of the child.

Neighbors and friends and family have all indulged in cruel laughter and sneers that have destroyed aspirations and ambitions that might have blessed the world. Words are a terribly powerful thing. Children grow up to be criminals because they hear their parents say, well, you're going to be in jail by the time you're 21 if you don't stop.

And so it's not to disappoint their parents. They have nothing else to do but to see to it that they're in jail by the time they're 21. After all, they've been told that their parents are expecting it of them.

Words. If you turn to James, the first chapter, you're going to find something there that will stir your heart. The first chapter in verse 26, God has made it absolutely imperative that we face this problem.

If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. True faith, therefore, is going to touch the tongue. It's going to put a bridle and a harness around it and control it.

In chapter 3 of James and verses 3 to 5, even so the tongue is a little member and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth. And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity.

So is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body and setteth on fire the course of nature. And it is set on fire of hell. Now, what's the principle underlying this? The idea first is conceived in the mind.

And then, having fixed the idea in the mind, the idea is closed in words. And the words are spoken by the tongue. Thus it is that the mouth becomes a force for good or for evil, depending upon the idea, depending upon the kind of character of the one who does the thinking.

Remember, God brought the world into being by a word. He created it by a word. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

And in Hebrews, we are told that he did it by words. He spoke it into being. Sin entered the race by words.

Yea, as God said was the communication from God's ancient foe and our continuous enemy to Mother Eve. Did God say, yea, as God said? And she listened to the words. And she believed the words.

And she spoke, and then spoke to Father Adam. And he responded. God created the world by word.

And sin became a reality in the world by words. And remember, God spoke to Abraham. And Abraham believed God.

And faith, then, is introduced as a principle that should be the means by which we would unite ourselves to God. Miriam exhibits these principles. She shows them to us.

She gives us clear insight. First, there was pride in her heart, rebellion in her spirit. Her resentment over Moses' Ethiopian wife was merely an excuse.

Moses had a right to take whom he would to be his wife. God found no fault in it. But there was racial prejudice on the part of Miriam.

The Ethiopian wife was of a different culture and a different color and a different background from Miriam. She thought that certainly could have been satisfied with one of the daughters of Israel. And so her resentment added fuel to her pride and her ambition.

And so her ideas, first in her mind, now are closed in words as she speaks to weak, easily influenced, often vacillating Aaron. Aaron had function in this because of his association relationship to Moses, not because he was a particularly strong person with any strength of character. And he listened to Miriam.

She used the most powerful thing in the universe, words, to infect the heart of Aaron and affect the life of Israel. The words proved to be words of curse, words of disaster, of tragedy. Moses heard her speak, knew it.

If he hadn't heard it from Miriam, he certainly heard it from someone who heard Miriam. After all, they lived in tents. And there never were any soundproof tents that I've ever heard about, maybe rainproof, but I've never heard any that were soundproof.

It wouldn't be at all unusual for some servant to have heard what Miriam was saying to Aaron and then taking it back to Moses. But as we said, Moses was a very humble man. He was not proud of his humility.

That's very unusual. Most of us that think ourselves humble are prone to be a little proud of our humility, but not so Moses. Moses was humble, and perhaps he felt that he had a great deal to be humble about, but at least he was humble.

And the consequence was he said, well, perhaps that is true. Moses didn't respond to the words, but not only was someone there who could have informed Moses, but there was someone else there who heard and who always hears everything that's said. It was the Lord.

He heard. He heard. And when Moses wouldn't respond, God would.

And he did what Moses wouldn't do. Aaron, Miriam, Moses, come to the tabernacle. Previously, in this daytime event, the cloud had been above the tabernacle, but as they came near its gate, not inside, the cloud settled around them, and God spoke directly to them and confronted Miriam and confronted Aaron.

When the cloud lifted, Miriam, not Aaron, Miriam was white with leprosy, advanced leprosy, serious, deforming leprosy. You see, God has reserved the leper as the picture of the sinner. I used to think that leprosy was the type of sin.

It isn't. It's the picture of the sinner, because it affects every part of the being. And so what he is saying to Miriam is this murmuring, this bitterness in your heart, this strife, this pride, this ambition that you have has totally polluted you.

There's no such thing as sin that's in some particular thing as in a member such as the tongue. Isn't it interesting that God reserves His most scathing denunciation of sin, given again in the third chapter of James, not for adultery and not for murder and not for thievery. All of these are problems that will get you in trouble with the church elders.

You can come into church intoxicated or with some other problem, and you will find that they're seriously dealt with. But you can come in year after year after year with one's heart filled with that which God condemns in the fiercest tones and excoriates with the worst words. And no one does a thing about it.

Listen, the tongue no man can tame. It is an unruly evil full of deadly poison. And in verses 14, 15, and 16 of James 3, but if you have bitter envying and strife in your heart, isn't that what Miriam had? Glory not and lie not against the truth.

This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, and devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. Words, leprous Miriam shouts to us across the centuries.

God hates sin, especially sins of words, because it's the evil use of our greatest power. The greatest endowment that God has given to man made in his image is the power of words. And to use them wrongly is to prostitute our greatest endowment.

What's the positive power of the word? We've spoken about the harm it does. May I remind you again that in the beginning, God created the heaven and earth. What did he use to do this? In Hebrews 11, 3, through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God.

So that things which are seen were not made of things which appear. You can't see the spoken word, nor can you see faith. Most important things in life you can't see.

You can't see love. It was the words that God spoke that framed the universe. How did he do it? Well, it says, by him all things by Christ.

All things are held together. Made out of what isn't seen. I have to get all of my science from the Reader's Digest because I never used that course of study opportunity when I was in school.

I found that most heavy science takes a lot of mathematics. And somehow my brain had been deprived of the faculties that made mathematics of great interest to it. I discovered that as long as I had my abacus of the first five on each hand and five additional on each foot, I was pretty well equipped to deal with most of the problems that require numbers in the world in which we live.

So I have to now depend upon the Reader's Digest for my science. And I found in it some years ago a most interesting article that talked to me about a table. And it said that that table was made up of electrons.

It went on to say something like proton and neutrons. It was made up of little particles of electricity that were swirling around in orbits. And they were so small that the relative distance was about the same as between the Earth and the sun.

And it tried to get me to understand that somehow or rather some force and some power was holding these little pieces of electricity in these orbits in such a unique way that one of them came out steel and another one came out lead or iron. One came out wood. And they said, that's what your table.

When you just come to that table, it's not solid as you think it is. It's made up of little swirling. I've been never able to look at a table in the same way ever since I sit down on a chair and say, I wonder how that swirling mass of electrons ever going to hold me up.

But to date, they've done pretty well. The fact is that he spoke and these particles of energy came together in these configurations and became all that we see and all that we have. And even when he hung on the cross by him, were all things held together.

Now he brought it into being by word. He spoke what happened when man sinned. What happened when Adam listened to Mother Eve, the word she gave and did as she had induced him to do.

She'd been deceived, but he wasn't deceived. He made a decision. He made an administrative decision.

And he said, I'm going to take the woman I can see 24 hours a day instead of the God that I see for a few minutes in the evening. I'm going to need her more than I do him. God had said to this one when he was preparing to make man, and let them, let man and woman have dominion over the earth.

And when Adam sins, what he does is to turn his authority over to Lucifer, who then becomes the God of this world. Because he takes the authority that God had given to man and man gave to Satan. And he rules with the authority that man gave him.

Now, at night, what was it, when God came and found Adam? Adam, where art thou? And he came out and he said, I was afraid. Fear had gripped the heart of man who had been given dominion. I was afraid.

And then the next thing he does is to lie. The woman thou gavest me made me eat. Nothing was such as the case at all.

He chose to eat. I was afraid, fear, and the lie. Now, what's happened? In the fullness of time, God sent His Son into the world, the Lord Jesus Christ.

This one born of Mary, by Him all things are held together. This one who is trained at a carpenter's bench as an apprentice and a journeyman and a master is the one who made the world and the trees in it. By Him all things are held together.

This one who goes to the cross and hangs upon it still is holding the universe together. He is God. Now, what is He doing? What is He doing? He has taken the place of man that He might redeem us.

And we are told that He led captivity captive and He gave gifts unto men. And what were the gifts that He gave? He gave back the authority that man had given to His ancient foe. And what did He say in John 17? I have given them thy word, the word that God gave Adam.

And Adam gave to the enemy. The Lord Jesus Christ gave back to man because He led captivity captive. He said, all authority in heaven and earth, all dominion in heaven and earth is given unto me.

In Mark the 16th chapter in verses 15 and 18, we find that the Lord Jesus Christ says, go ye therefore into all the world and preach the gospel. And then He indicates that He has used His authority, His power as God who has conquered sin and death and hell and Satan, and He gives authority back to man. You go, heal the sick, open blind eyes.

You do it. You're a joint heir with me. These signs shall follow them that believe.

Our enemy knows there is power in our words. So what is His main effort toward us? His main strategy toward us? It is to use religion, to use teachings of Christianity by certain people in sections of the church to instill doubt and unbelief and question and fear in our hearts. Why? Because if He can succeed in doing

that, He has been successful in nullifying the victory of Christ when He took back authority and gave it back to the redeemed.

So what is our responsibility? To realize there is power in our words. No wonder the Lord Jesus Christ in Mark 11 said in 24, previously it stated, if thou shalt say unto this mountain, be removed and cast out in the sea, and doubt not what you say it shall come to pass. Power in words.

We haven't learned that yet. We've learned very little about it. And so the result is we see very little.

I was systematically deprived of all that Christ had conquered in His victory over the enemy, other than deliverance from hell by the teaching that I received at the Bible school I attended and from my teachers. They wrapped me in grave clothes just as they had wrapped Lazarus in grave clothes of unbelief and doubt and question as to the authority of the Word. If what I had been read in the Scripture was good, it would belong to the Jews.

It belonged to the Old Testament saints. And if I got something in the New Testament, it was belonging to the tribulation or the church to come. Oh, I had a great I was, the God who used to be, and a great I will be, the God who's going to be.

But right now, the great I am was practically powerless. And there came a time when I said, Lord, I can't go on living this way. I went into tribes of people in the Sudan that had never seen a white man, never heard the name of Jesus.

And if I had told them that Christ died last month, they wouldn't have known the difference. They had no history. And yet, here I was doing Paul's work, deprived of everything that Paul had when he did his work.

My Bible was the size of a Sunday school quarterly. A little bit of Philipians, Ephesians, Colossians, juicy parts of that that were already assigned to somebody else. But all the rest belonged to somebody else.

And I can recall, as I went in and started to talk to the people about Christ, these people who desperately needed to have the same kind of revelation that Jesus Christ gave when he was here, and that he commanded us to demonstrate when we went. And I can recall going back to my tent, sobbing before the Lord. Why? He had withdrawn all the promises that were attend those who were to go and preach his word, only to return and give myself to the word, and to discover that I had been systematically schooled in unbelief.

And that the teaching of the Pharisees, to me, made the word of God of none effect. I'm still in the process of recovering that heritage. And I share that recovery with you.

And I say to you today that this is the word of God, and that we will speak God's word based on God's promise. God will honor his word. It's his word.

Let us not be like Miriam, who out of pride, out of arrogance, out of resentment, used her tongue to bring judgment down upon her. But let us be as the children of Abraham, who dare to believe God, dare to trust God, and dare to take God at his word. His promises are yea, and amen in Christ.

Oh, the power of the word. Use it carefully to the glory of God, and to your own blessing and benefit. Father Jesus, we lift our hearts to thee this Lord's Day morning to praise thee and thank thee that we can celebrate the Lord Jesus Christ, celebrate his birth, his life, his death, his resurrection.

When he indeed led captivity captive, we follow in the train of his triumph, our father. We would accept back that which he has given to us. He said, I have given them thy word.

He said, have thee faith of God. Thou as God did speak and knew that what thou did say would come to pass. So teach us, our father, all that we are to learn as individuals and as a body as to the right and proper, wise use of thy word.

In our hearts, our homes, our church life together, that we might see Christ magnified and glorified in our midst as we find again that he is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Oh, we thank thee, our father. And we thank thee for what thou hast done.

And we thank thee for what thou art doing. And we praise thee for what thou art going to do. Because we ask it in the matchless, peerless, resistless name of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

God come in the flesh. Very God of very God, who was very man of very man, whom thou hast exalted to thy right hand and given a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess that he is Lord to glory of God the Father. It's the same we do with joy and delight and thanksgiving.

Amen.

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