

What The Bible Says About The Tongue

by Sanjay Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the power of our words, focusing on the impact of what we say with our tongues, lips, and mouths. It highlights the importance of speaking words of love and encouragement, drawing from various Bible verses to illustrate the significance of controlling our speech and using it to build others up. The message encourages listeners, especially children, to be mindful of the words they speak and to cultivate habits of kindness and encouragement from a young age.

Scripture: Proverbs 18:21, Ephesians 4:29, James 3:5, Colossians 4:6, Proverbs 15:4, Matthew 12:36, Psalm 19:14, Proverbs 21:23, Ephesians 4:15, 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Topics: "Power of Words", "Encouragement and Kindness"

Description

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Transcript

Good afternoon, brothers and sisters. Good to see you all. I have a question for the children.

What do you think are the three most common parts of the head that are in the Bible? So, neck and above. Children, below the age of, I don't know, 10. Tongue, good, that's one.

Ears, two. Eyes, beautiful. Which is why, see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil.

All right? And off those three, which do you think is repeated, it comes the most often in the Bible, of those three? Anybody? Off the three, yes. Tongue, and it's not just the tongue. Tongue, sometimes it's tongue, it's lips.

I actually did this with one of my children. I said, let's look up in the Bible. It's easy, go to Bible Gateway and you can search and then do that with your children.

Sometimes you have to look beyond tongue because sometimes it's tongue and lips and mouth. So you have to add those all together and you'll find, actually, and it's because it's hard to hurt somebody with your ears. You can hurt yourself with your ears.

It's hard to hurt somebody with your eyes. You can hurt yourself with your eyes. Jesus says, pluck out your eyes.

But we can all hurt somebody with our tongue, as we know. And there's many, many scriptures. I'd encourage all of you, especially children.

I didn't print out all 131 references to the Bible. I picked a few of them. And because this verse in 1 Peter 2 is so powerful.

When you read that chapter in 1 Peter 4, people often think it's referring to people who speak up here, speak in the utterances of God. But the entire chapter is about, let me just read a little bit of the context. And you'll think like we're living in these times.

Okay, let me read 1 Peter 4, round seven. The end of all things is near. Think about the times we're living in right now.

Wars, Israel, Hamas, Ukraine. Therefore, be of sound judgment. Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers the middle.

Be hospitable to one another without complaint, okay? Everyone has a special gift. Everyone in this room has a special gift, which is to serve one another. And it's in that context, it says, whoever speaks is to speak in the utterance of God.

So is that just for Brother Zach? Or, you know, as some of the other brothers say here, every brother and sister, we have an opportunity to, every time we open our mouth, we have a choice. It could be a fountain of love, or it could be spewing venom and hate. I have a short story to talk about.

Yesterday, it's been a tough week for Kathy, as you guys, folks all know. But yesterday we were driving, and we were on El Camino, and the car in front of her breaks suddenly, and she got rear-ended by the person behind her. And there's just two of us, the kids were in the car.

And we pulled over, and we got out, and the lady behind her was really livid. And I don't know how a rear-end you could think. But she was absolutely guns blazing, okay? Guns blazing.

And my natural instinct was to defend the family, defend, you know, paternal instinct takes over. So I'm going back at her, and we went on for a couple of minutes. There was no, I don't have to confess, any curse words were said.

But I raised my voice, because it was very clear it was her fault. And at the end of a couple of minutes of that going back and forth, where we ultimately exchanged, you know, driver's license and registration, I thought to myself, wow, she, this is tough, because her car was in a lot more damage than mine. And did I actually show her a bit of the spirit of Jesus here? So it took a couple of minutes, and then at the end of it, I asked her if we could get her an Uber, and she was in no mood to listen to me at that point in time.

But we left home, and I, you know, prayed for her, and I wish I could have called her and apologized, because I asked myself, if I saw her next at the kingdom, in heaven, or at the judgment seat, would she say I saw a little bit of Jesus at that time when she was completely in the wrong? And so on. And for you little children, it's really important. I think I've shared the story before.

There was a famous reporter who talked about one day she was a teenager, and she was very upset at her dad for something, something simple, you know, I don't know, maybe she wanted to do something, and her dad said no. And as sometimes teenagers can do, you know, stormed away, went into a room, and slammed the door and said, you know, I can't believe you did this. Woke up the next morning, her father died of a heart attack.

And I always think about that in the context of older folks. You know, what are the last words we say to them in an evening before they leave? I'd encourage my children to give their grandparents a hug. Well, most recently, Kathy's mom passed away, and I was thinking back, what was the last thing we said to her? So brothers and sisters, especially the young children, I'd encourage you, develop habits early in life that everything you say, we can live by this verse in 1 Peter 4, where that tongue is like that powerful rudder.

It can move a ship. I mean, if you think about these big, if you go next to these big ships, aircraft carriers, or cruise ships, and you look at the bottom, there's this rudder that's a small fraction of the size of the ship, and that moves the ships. And you can see these big ships, they can park in a small spot.

It's a huge ship, and it's a rudder that's moving them and allowing them, rudders and engines. So it's really a tremendous reminder. We've heard so many times about how we need to use our tongue in these last days.

Explicit lyrics are on Spotify. The world is filled with children who feel that they can say anything to their teachers. Employees who feel they can say anything to their bosses.

Politicians who say they can say anything. We have to be a different generation that guides our lips, not just lips. Sometimes it can be an email.

Sometimes I think we have to also, there have been emails that I've regretted sending at work. And I've learned sometimes maybe the best thing to do, even if you feel that way, is write an email, put it in the draft section, go to sleep, and maybe in the morning you'll delete it. That's a good practice.

The draft section is there for a reason. You don't have to send it. You can type it up.

It's not a sin to type it up, but then next morning I've deleted some. So whatever the Lord gives you wisdom on how to do this, the point of that passage is to be a servant, to be an encourager. We've heard many times, the most important thing I tell my kids, there's a beautiful story we used to read to them as young kids, which is at the end of every day, you can either fill a bucket or you can drain a bucket.

Do you want to be someone who has filled someone else's bucket? Not just in nice pat on the back kind of words, but in a spiritual encouraging way. Are we, brothers and sisters, who fill other brothers and sisters' buckets, are we always draining them out? And start at a young age, brothers and sisters, you're young kids, to fill other buckets with encouragement. Encouraging, prophesying is encouragement, something we can all do.

And if we do that, then the utterances of God that this 1 Peter 4 verse talks about isn't just some brother who preaches here or speaks here. It could be every one of you. You could be a very quiet person and you may not have a gift or a call to speak up here, but God can use you in a powerful way in your school or in your college or in your workplace.

Or it might be an email that you send that could be a blessing to us. Amen.

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