

# Taking God's Word Seriously

by Zac Poonen

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*Taking God's Word seriously is essential for spiritual growth and victory in the Christian life, as it requires us to fear God, mourn over our sin, and apply His teachings to our lives.*

**Scripture:** Isaiah 66:2, Matthew 5:4, Matthew 12:34, Matthew 12:36, Colossians 3:19, James 1:26

**Topics:** "Biblical Obedience", "Spiritual Growth"

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## Description

Zac Poonen preaches about the importance of taking God's Word seriously, emphasizing the accountability we have for every word we speak and the need to cleanse our speech from backbiting, gossiping, and anger. He highlights that our words reveal the condition of our hearts and that failing to control our tongue makes our religion worthless. Poonen urges believers to take all of God's commands seriously, including those regarding bitterness towards others, and to mourn over their sins, finding strength in the Holy Spirit for a victorious life.

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## Transcript

A bad habit that many believers have is that of taking God's Word lightly. Take Jesus' words in Matthew 12:36, 37 for example: "Every careless (idle) word that men shall speak, they shall render account for it in the day of judgement. For by your words you shall be justified and by your words you shall be condemned." Most believers do not believe that they will have to literally give an account for every single useless word that they have spoken. When we really believe this, all backbiting, gossiping, evil-speaking and anger will be eliminated from our lives. All who take these words of Jesus seriously will be radical in cutting out useless words from every part of their speech. Jesus says here that we will be justified by our words. We all know about justification by faith. But faith without works is dead, and a faith that does not cleanse our speech is a dead faith. Think of all the words that you have spoken (or written) during the last three months - at home and in the office, to husband, wife, children, servants etc., Would a tape-recording of your speech prove that you are a justified child of God, different from the world around you? Or would your words be similar to the speech of unbelievers? The speech of many believers has not been cleansed, because they have not taken the words of Jesus seriously. This in turn is because they do not fear God. They fear men more than they fear God. We cannot hope to make spiritual progress in our life if we don't develop the habit of taking God's word seriously.

James 1:26 says, "If any one thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless." If a man cannot control his tongue, his Christianity is

worthless - for, as Jesus said, the words we speak show what our heart is like. "The mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart." (Mt.12:34). The way we use our tongue is one of the clearest indications of our spiritual condition. Here is another example: God's Word says that husbands should never be bitter against their wives. "Husbands, love your wives, and do not be embittered against them."(Col.3:19). What does that mean? Does it permit a husband to be bitter against his wife even once? We know that when God's Word forbids adultery or murder, we must not commit such sins even once. Yet when we read that a husband should not be bitter against his wife, it does not hit us with the same force. Why is that? It's because we pick and choose which commands of God's Word are serious and which are not. We don't realise that all of God's Word must be taken seriously.

Those who take every word of God seriously will mourn over their sin, each time they fail. Thus they will find the comfort (strength) of the Holy Spirit, and be led into a life of victory. "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted (strengthened)." (Mt.5:4). Here then is another secret of victory: Take every Word of God seriously and mourn over your sin whenever you come short of God's standards. Thus you will prove that you fear God - and the fear of God is the beginning of that wisdom that leads to a victorious life. God looks with grace and favour at those who are broken and contrite in their spirit and who tremble at His Word. "To this one I will look, declares the Lord, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My Word" (Isa.66:2)

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