

10 - The Power of Words
Pastor Joe Oakley - GFC - 6-16-24

We are in a sermon series called Greater Freedom. Since this is Father's Day, I'm preaching a message that will help fathers, but not just fathers, it will help all of us. The title of my sermon is The Power of Words. I will be teaching principles that apply to everyone, but I will also show how fathers can apply this at home.

By the way, fathers - please don't get your information about fatherhood from the world! Get your information about fatherhood from the greatest Father of all - your heavenly Father! He says in 2 Peter 1:2-4

Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness. Through these He has given us His very great and precious promises...

What I want you to see is that God has given us what it takes to succeed in life. He has given us everything we need to be the spouse and parent our family needs! You have God's grace - God's peace - God's knowledge and wisdom - God's Spirit - God's power - and God's great and precious promises! So take heart - You already have what it takes to do this well!

We've taught you that spiritual warfare is primarily a war of words. Satan's main tools are words - temptation, accusation, condemnation and deception - and they all involve words.

1- People can open the door to the devil by the words they speak.

The average Christian thinks that they can say whatever they want to anybody at any place at any time. Well you can, but Proverbs 6:2 says:

You have been trapped by the words of your lips—ensnared by the words of your mouth.

In America we have the right of free speech. But as Christians, we have a higher law than the laws of our nation. In the Kingdom of God, there is no such thing as "free speech." The words we speak matter because the words we speak have power.

Did you know that one day God will hold you accountable for every word you say? Jesus said in Matthew 12:34-37

For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man

out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.

Your words have power. They will either justify you or condemn you. That's why the Psalmist wrote in Psalm 141:3

Set a guard over my mouth, O Lord; keep watch over the door of my lips.

There is very plain teaching in the Bible about the power of words – either for good or for evil. Proverbs 18:21 says:

Death and life are in the power of the tongue.

Words have the power to hurt or the power to heal.
 Words have the power to destroy or the power to build.
 Words have the power to encourage or the power to discourage.
 Words have the power to curse or the power to bless.
 Words have the power to lie or the power to speak truth.
 Words have the power to kill or the power to give life.

Your words can release the promises of God or block the promises of God. If you don't think so – remember, a negative report kept the Children of Israel out of the Promised Land! Satan wants to block your blessings! One of his main tools to accomplish that is words. That's why it's so important for us to control what we say. James 3:6-10 says:

***And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.
 For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.
 With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so.***

2- Your words have the power to bless or curse – you get to choose!

Out of your mouth can proceed blessing or cursing. To bless means “to speak well of, to ask God to bless them with health, happiness and prosperity.” To curse means the opposite. It means to speak evil, harm or towards someone.

My point today is that in order to shut the door to the devil we must stop speaking curses over ourselves and our families. What are some of the ways we curse ourselves?

We curse ourselves with statements like:
 I feel like I'm losing my mind
 I'm so stupid
 My marriage is doomed to fail
 I'll never succeed - No one in my family ever succeeds
 We'll never get ahead financially

Now – I understand that words alone won't make you or break you – But there is power in those words. Our words either open the door to the devil or shut the door to the devil.

You must stop cursing yourself and start speaking words of blessing over yourself. This may seem strange to you at first, but Isaiah 65:16 says

He who blesses himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he who swears in the earth shall swear by the God of truth.

It's biblical to speak blessings over yourself! If I asked you this: would you curse something God wants to bless? You would say, "Of course not." Yet we curse ourselves while God wants to bless us. My brothers and sisters – these things ought not to be! Some people have no problems putting themselves down but they can't seem to build themselves up! They can curse themselves but not bless themselves.

Remember - ***Death and life are in the power of the tongue.*** Our words can either open or shut the door to the devil in our lives, our families and our workplaces.

3- To shut the door to the devil – we must get into agreement with God.

God is a speaking God – and from the very beginning, Satan's tactic has been to contradict what God says through deceptive words. Before he could convince Eve to sin, Satan had to cast doubt on the word of God. Eve chose to believe Satan and it brought a curse on this planet.

All of us face the same choice: to believe God or believe Satan. We either believe what God says is true or what Satan says is true. We either confess what God says about our circumstances, or what Satan says about them. Do your words agree with God or do they agree with Satan? Hebrews 10:23 says:

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.

The Greek word for confession is homologeo. It means to assent to or agree with. Confession literally means to speak the same. Thayer's Greek Lexicon says it means "to say the same thing as another." To say the same thing as whom? That's where you choose.

Your words either agree with God or they agree with Satan.
 Your words either say what God says or they say what Satan says.
 God wants you to agree with His Word; Satan wants you to agree with his words.
 God wants you to say the same thing He is saying; Satan wants you to say the same thing he is saying.

Jesus overcame Satan by agreeing with the word of God rather than agreeing with the words of Satan. We shut the door to the devil the very same way – by agreeing with the word of God. Revelation 12:11 says:

And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.

To overcome Satan, you must know the truth, live the truth and speak the truth. It's not enough to believe – faith without works is dead. We know that without faith we don't receive anything from God, but faith is not enough. 2 Corinthians 4:13 says:

I believed, therefore I spoke.

Believing in your heart is important, but so is confessing with your mouth. Jesus taught this in Mark 11:22-23 when He said-

Have faith in God. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.

He will have what He believes? NO! He will have what He believes AND says. Now understand I am not teaching you can have whatever you say. You can't just pick something out of the blue and say I want that and receive it. There are principles at work here.

Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word.
 So – when we are in the word – God gives us hearing ears.
 We hear from Him. When God speaks – it builds faith.
 When we have a word from God and faith – then we can speak it into existence.
 So, to shut the door to the devil we must win the war of words by using the sword of the spirit – which is speaking the truth of God's word.

Instead of confessing “I can't” we must confess God's word that says “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

Instead of confessing defeat, we must confess God's word that says God always causes me to triumph in Christ Jesus.

Instead of confessing lack, we must confess God's word that says My God shall supply all of my needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Instead of confessing fear, we must confess God's word that says

God has not given me the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

Instead of confessing weakness, we must confess God's word that says The Lord is the strength of my life.

Instead of confessing sickness we must confess God's word that says By His stripes I am healed.

Instead of confessing confusion we must confess God's word that says God is not the author of confusion, but of peace.

Instead of confessing condemnation, we must confess God's word that says There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.

Instead of confessing worry, we must confess God's word that says He will keep you in perfect peace, when your mind is stayed on Him.

Instead of confessing failure, we must confess God's word that says, In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.

There is power in speaking the word of God. Not just for ourselves, but for our families. Instead of confessing that our children will never serve God, we must confess God's word: As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord!

Matthew 3 records the very beginning of Jesus' ministry. He spent 30 years preparing and now it was time to fulfill His destiny. Matthew 3:16-17 says:

As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on Him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is My Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased."

Jesus was about to enter into His ministry and He needed two things: The power of the Holy Spirit and the spoken blessing of His Father. Now – parents, I really want to help you here. Your children need the same things! That's why...

4- Parents need to bless their children

Remember, the Father said to Jesus - "This is My Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased." Parents - that's the basic message your children need to hear from you, "I love you and I'm proud of you." Parent – your fundamental mission in life is to make sure your children know you love them. You do that by telling them and you do that by showing them. You can't say it too much or too often.

If they don't hear it from us, they will spend their lives trying to hear it from whomever they can however they can. That's why so many men are driven in life – going from job to job trying to succeed and it's never enough because they feel so inadequate. Why? Because they don't have their father's blessing!

And that's why so many women are driven in life – going from relationship to relationship trying to be loved because they don't feel loveable.

Jesus gave us a great example of how parents should interact with their children in Mark 10:13-16

People were bringing little children to Jesus to have Him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, He was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.

I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." And He took the children in His arms, put His hands on them and blessed them.

We see three specific things Jesus did for children:

1. Jesus valued children
2. He took them in His arms – He was affectionate – hugged them
3. He laid hands on them and blessed them

A biblical blessing involves spoken words that reveal the value of the person being blessed and words that encourage their prophetic destiny. My wife has specific phrases for every grandchild that she has taught them since the time they could understand. One says – “I’m the apple of God’s eye” – Another – “God knit me together in my mother’s womb” and another “God has a special plan for my life.”

You may think that’s no big deal, but I believe our grandchildren will remember these words for the rest of their lives. And what would you rather have ringing in their ears – “I’m stupid and I’ll never amount to anything” or “I’m special and God has a special plan for my life”? Spend time thinking of different ways to speak and show your love. And remember Ephesians 4:29.

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

Always speak words that build up your children rather than tear them down.

Parents, I want to give you some relief today. You don’t have to be perfect. We’ve all blown it with our children. We’ve got to know that there are no perfect parents. And by the way – God is the only perfect parent and Adam and Eve and everyone since has rebelled against Him!

You cannot be perfect, you will make mistakes, but when you do, confess it to your family and ask for their forgiveness. This is no excuse to be a bad, lazy, selfish parent. We need to get it right more than we get it wrong. But you don’t have to be perfect to be a good parent. But you must let your children know you really love them.

Dads – you can do this. You have what it takes.

You can value your children.

You can tell them you love them and tell them you're proud of them.

Hug them. Bless them.

By the way – if it's hard for you to show physical affection to your children, you need to get over that now.

Get help. Go to counseling - but figure it out because your kids need it!

Doing this is your main mission as a dad.

By the way - to a child, love is spelled T-I-M-E.

So they won't believe you value them if you don't spend time with them.

Dads - you can carve out a little time for each child. Talk to them.

Enter their world. Find out what they like to do and do it with them.

I loved it when my dad would occasionally get me out of school early so we could go fishing. I remember one time when we lived in Florida – my dad got me out of school early to go fishing in the Everglades. I'll never forget the attendance lady in the office. She asked my dad, "Why are you taking Joey out of school early?"

My dad said, "We're going fishing."

The attendance lady got a condescending look on her face and said, "Well, Reverend, do you think that is an appropriate reason to take your son away from his education." My dad just looked at her and said, "Yes I certainly do. Joey's my son and I think it's important for us to spend time together. So sign him out."

My dad was my hero that day. Now get this – I was in the 3rd Grade – so that was 60 years ago – but I still remember it to this day.

Dad's you can do this! You have what it takes. Think of some way to show each of your children how special they are to you. Just take a little of your time and invest it in your children.

Your family needs you man of God!

They need you to be a man of faith and a man of the Word!

They need to lay hands on them when they are sick so they are healed.

They need you doing spiritual warfare on their behalf!

They need to see you standing in faith when times are tough!

They need to see that going to church is a priority for you!

They need to see you giving and serving and worshipping!

They need to see you praying when they have a need!

I want to close this sermon like I opened it and remind you that you already have what it takes to do this!

You have God's grace – God's peace – God's knowledge and wisdom – God's Spirit – God's power – and God's great and precious promises!

You are without excuse! You can do this in Jesus name!!!