

# Our Words, Our Spirit and His Life

Dale Rumble

## A Question

---

*Jesus said, “. . . the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.” (John 6:63)*

It is important to understand the relationship that exists between our words, our spirit, and the life that God would minister through us to others.

*He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, “From his inner most being shall flow rivers of living water.” (John 7:38)*

Why is it, that so often life does not accompany the words that we speak? What hinders His life from flowing when we minister as Spirit filled Christians? The answer lies not only in the words that we use, but also in the condition of our heart when we speak.

It is from the example of Jesus’ life and ministry that we can fully appreciate this. With Him, it was more than a correct choice of profound words, but His life in total was the key of His ministry.

*In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. (John 1:4)*

## The Influence of Our Heart

---

The first place that we must look, when our ministry is deficient, is the condition of our heart.

*For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders. These are the things that defile the man. (Matthew 15:19-20)*

God see us as we are in our heart. He judges us on the basis of the condition of our heart; for it is here that character is formed.

*Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life. (Proverbs 4:23)*

Our manner of speech reveals the condition of our heart, as well as the thoughts of our mind. If our heart is *right*, and our words are *correct*, life will be imparted. However, if our words are correct while our heart is wrong, we may minister death. This need is well expressed by David's prayer:

*Let the words of my mouth and the **meditation** of my heart (that which is in my heart) be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord . . . (Psalm 19:14)*

Some obvious mannerisms that hinder the reception of truth from our words are: speaking too fast or too loud, using a mixture of careless, foolish or harsh words that mask the truth we wish to express. Spoken truth can be endorsed by gentle words, words of tenderness, and encouragement. In ministry, it is not possible to separate the condition of our heart from the words that we speak. Let us consider the various phases that we go through in the redemption of our words.

## *The Death Phase*

---

We all start in the "death phase," a time when our conversation is generally void of life. This is how it was when we came to Christ; perhaps we were a blasphemer, prone to gossip, slander, hate or deception, telling dirty jokes, backbiting, or murmuring. Such things minister death. The work of the Holy Spirit is to bring us out of this unhappy state, to one where we bring life to others. This involves more than ceasing to sin in our speech; it also means speaking so that God will stand behind our words. It is

written that death and life are in the power of the tongue (Proverbs 18:21).

When we first come to know the Lord, we realize that we are no longer to speak as Godless men, destroying the character or ministry of others by talebearing, slander or gossip. We cannot be like the man in Proverbs of whom it says his words are as a scorching fire. We now recognize that only a *perverse* man spreads strife. In the past, our words were like clubs, swords, or sharp arrows in the lives of the people around us. We were accustomed to conducting warfare with words; now we have become a people of peace. When we were evil, our words also were evil, for they came forth from what was in our heart. Now as Christians we desire to speak only what is good.

When the Lord Jesus shed His blood on Calvary, not only were our sins forgiven, but He also took our sinful nature to the cross and nailed it there. Thus, in addition to the forgiveness of sins, we have also been given enablement to walk in victory. We can now put to death the “deeds of our flesh,” including what we say, focusing our conversation on Him rather than on carnal things.

*... there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. (Ephesians 5:4)*

We will also find there are even some religious topics that should be avoided in conversation. For example, the church at Corinth were divided over their preferences of leaders.

*... each one of you is saying, “I am of Paul,” and “I am of Apollos,” and “I am of Cephas,” and “I of Christ.” Has Christ been divided? Paul was not crucified for you, was He?” (1 Corinthians 1:12-13)*

This is a familiar picture: Christians quarreling over their identity in the body of Christ. Paul condemns such carnality.

*. . . for since there is jealousy and strife amongst you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men? (1 Corinthians 3:3)*

When we came to Christ, we brought the ways of death with us in our words, just as these Corinthians did. This is what God *first* begins to deal with in our life. I call this initial period the bridle phase, because He works to put a bridle on our words. It is not good enough that our words be sweet one day and bitter the next; He seeks to bring forth only sweet water. Therefore, His discipline in our life is directed at helping us bridle our words; for if we can master what we say, then our whole body is under control.

*For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well. (James 3:2)*

We put bits in horses' mouths so that we can control them. It is equally true that *by ourselves*, we cannot tame our tongues; we need the bridle of God's government.

*But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father; and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God. (James 3:8-9)*

## *The Bridle Phase*

---

There are four redemptive steps we go through in this phase. The first is found in Isaiah.

*. . . woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then one of the seraphim flew to me, with a burning coal in his hand which he had taken from the altars with tongs. And he touched my mouth with it and said, "Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away, and your sin is forgiven." (Isaiah 6:5-7)*

First of all, we must see the Lord for who He is. God must sovereignly reveal His glory, and His holiness to us. When this happens, we too will say, “Woe unto me for I am a man of unclean lips.” When the fire of the Holy Spirit touches our hearts, He shows us the enormity of our need, and our hopeless position apart from His purifying power. We cannot represent a Holy God unless we put aside the unholy traits of anger, wrath, malice, slander and abusive speech from our mouths. We must lay aside falsehood and speak truth to each other, for we are members of one another. We become convicted of the need to avoid unwholesome words, bitterness and gossip. Thus, first of all in the bridle phase, we find a consciousness of the great need we have in our speech habits, and our dependency on the power of the Holy Spirit to help meet that need.

Next the Lord teaches us that we must begin to rule our spirits. If indeed our words express what is in our hearts, then we must rule there—if we are to control our words. The Lord will bring practical dealings into our lives to show us this truth. Certain scriptures will become pertinent to our growth in this area.

*He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit, than he who captures a city. (Proverbs 16:32)*

*Like a city that is broken into and without walls is a man who has not control over his spirit. (Proverbs 25:28)*

The third aspect of the bridle phase occurs as God begins to show me the great value of silence. There are many instances, or set of circumstances, when we need to be silent. For example, when Herod had Jesus brought to Him and questioned at length, Jesus answered him nothing. There will be times in our life when we too are *not* to utter that which is precious.

*Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine . . . (Matthew 7:6)*

There are many Christians with preacher’s itch who would speak anytime, to anyone, everywhere. A true witness knows

when to speak and when not to. The prompting for silence will come from the Lord, just as does a prompting to speak.

Another instance that calls for silence is found in the story of the woman caught in the act of adultery, and who was taken before Jesus by her accusers. There were witnesses, and the law said that under this condition she was to be stoned. Jesus was bound to keep the law, but He also wished to minister mercy to the woman. He did not know what to speak; therefore He stooped down and drew in the sand; in silence He waited for His Father to give a word of wisdom. In such cases we too must learn to be swift to hear and slow to speak. When we do not know what to say, silence is correct. It is written:

*He who guards his mouth and his tongue guards his soul from troubles. (Proverbs 21:23)*

A third occasion when there is need for silence, is while we are enveloped in certain unpleasant circumstances brought into our life by God. Since these are for our good, He would have us go through them without complaining. It is written of Jesus:

*He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth. (Isaiah 53:7)*

A fourth example calling for silence is whenever we are tempted to make decisions based only on our emotions. When the Lord was transfigured before His three disciples, Peter said:

*“Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles . . . one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah,” not realizing what he was saying. (Luke 9:33)*

What Peter said was neither pertinent nor profitable. Emotions are never a good basis for spiritual decisions.

Silence can be beneficial in ministry whenever God would use our conduct to speak to someone. This is illustrated in Peter’s exhortation to wives:

*. . . you wives, be submissive to your own husbands, so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word they may be won **without a word** by the behavior of their wives. (1 Peter 3:1)*

Many times what we are, and what we do, speak louder than anything we could say. God knows when an unbeliever will not listen, but will observe.

Another circumstance that calls for silence, is when for the sake of others, it is better to not speak of certain things.

*It is the glory of God to conceal a matter . . . (Proverbs 25:2)*

In the course of building relationship, counseling and sharing lives together, we all acquire understanding of some things that should not be made public. If we are trustworthy, we will not reveal them. The love of God will cover and conceal as well as expose. If we speak when we should remain silent, we can never be sure where our words will eventually go.

*Furthermore, in your bed chamber do not curse a king, and in your sleeping rooms do not curse a rich man, for **a bird of the heavens will carry the sound**, and the winged creature will make the matter known. (Ecclesiastes 10:20)*

What seems to be a harmless word that we didn't expect to go any further, will often resound through the church and eventually hurt someone.

Probably the most important time to be silent, is when God wants to speak to us.

*There will be **silence** before Thee, and praise in Zion, O God. (Psalm 65:1)*

It is easy to quote scripture and facts to others, however we must listen if we are to have a word from the Lord for them.

*He who gives an answer before he hears, it is folly and a shame to him. (Proverbs 18:13)*

How many times, when someone is sharing a problem with us, do we begin to answer with scripture before we completely understand the problem. This is not right. God has given us the “hearing ear,” as well as the “seeing eye,” so that we may know how to answer. Time spent in prayer and silence before the Lord, is the basis of being able to speak for Him.

*The Lord God has given me the tongue of disciples, that I may know how to sustain the weary one with a word. He awakens me morning by morning. He awakens my ear to listen as a disciple. (Isaiah 50:4)*

A fourth objective of the bridle phase is to discipline our choice of words when we do speak. To this end, our Father’s exhortation would sound something like this:

*Alright now, My son, you can speak, but remember that where there are many words, transgression is unavoidable, and he who restrains his lips is wise; also guard your steps when you go to My house, and draw near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools. When you speak, do not be hasty in word or impulsive in thought to bring up a matter in My presence, for I am in heaven and you are on earth; therefore, let your words be few so that you do not let your speech cause you to sin.”*

This diminishes our self confidence, so we are not so sure we have all the answers. We learn to say, “If the Lord will, I shall do this, and I shall say that.” We begin to speak words out of His life rather than from our knowledge about Him.

The fast of God described in Isaiah 58 deals with those things we must lay aside to have the glory and blessings of the Lord upon our ministry. This includes, in part ceasing “to speak our own words” (verse 13). The world says, “Talk is cheap.” God says, “More talk leads only to poverty” (Proverbs 14:23). Empty words are *not* cheap, they are destructive and costly. When we look at a horse *after* it has been tamed, we recognize that the bridle on him is proof of his ownership; also as we exhibit a bridle on our own mouth, we show proof that God owns us.



*Do all things **without grumblings or disputing**; that you may prove yourself to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach. (Philippians 2:14-15)*

Our sonship and character is seen when we live our lives in the absence of grumblings and disputings. This fruit has its roots in the bridle phase.

## *The Life Phase*

---

Having experienced the bridle, there begins to be an enrichment of life in our words. When we prepare to minister, we are more concerned with our heart than our head. We are impressed with the need for quiet times in worship and prayer, since there must be sweet water in the pipeline if we are going to water the garden of the Lord. When our heart is filled with good things, they can be released as life. However, for this release to become a flow of life, it must be governed by an anointing of the Holy Spirit.

It requires the wisdom of God to impart spiritual knowledge through words, so that it is received as life by the hearers. This wisdom is not primarily related to the mechanics of speech, but to certain virtues of our spirit when we speak.

*. . . the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. (James 3:17)*

The wisdom of God is a necessary part of life flow because His nature, seen in us when we speak, is what makes our words acceptable. What we are, becomes the basis of how and what we speak.

*The tongue of the wise makes knowledge acceptable . . . (Proverbs 15:2)*

*The wise in ;heart will be called discerning, and sweetness of speech increases persuasiveness. (Proverbs 16:21)*

*The heart of the wise teaches his mouth, and adds persuasiveness to his lips. Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones. (Proverbs 16:23-24)*

The Apostle Paul puts it this way:

*Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, as it were, with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person. (Colossians 4:6)*

With His wisdom, we can speak to the spiritual, to the carnal, or to the lost, and minister life in each case. If our heart attitude is divorced from the words that we speak, all we will accomplish is to pass on information and concepts. The Lord tells us to *feed* His sheep; He did not say to give them information. Information comes from the mind, while feeding involves our heart.

Peacemaking is one ministry of life, where words and character are closely related.

*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. (Matthew 5:9)*

It is true that a brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city, and only ministry in the Spirit of God can bring reconciliation between such parties. A peacemaker is one whose words bring the Lord's government into the lives of those in disagreement, so that they are reunited. Wherever Christ reigns, His peace is present. Making peace is not deciding who is right, but bringing Christ into His rightful place in the situation.

Words of life unveil the love of God, and make clean those who obey them. Christ cleanses the church with the washing of water by His word. One does not bring cleansing by pronouncing judgment, but by speaking in love. Love is patient and kind. It will not brag nor act arrogantly, and will bear all things, believe all things, hope all things, endure and cover those things that need to be put away. The love of God also speaks the truth in confrontation. If we have been through the bridle phase, we are able to speak truth in love, and tell it like it is. We can speak redemptive truth to one another if heart attitudes are right. Once God has de-

livered us from a harsh, biting, cutting spirit, He can then trust us to use *His* sword. The word of God is sharp; used skillfully, it is the means of speaking truth in love, of separating soul and spirit, and is devastating to the carnal nature as well as Satan's kingdom.

The flow of words and life in body ministry is well pictured in the following scripture.

*... put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. And beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you; with all wisdom teaching, and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your heart to God. (Colossians 3:12-16)*

When Jesus ministered, He spoke as one having authority. I believe spiritual authority will generally be recognized and received, when it is seen coming from a pure heart. Paul exhorted Timothy to *speak, exhort and reprove with all authority*. A leader cannot function with authority if the people will not receive his words. Paul's counsel to Timothy addressed what was needed for Timothy to be received in his role as a young leader:

*Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in **speech**, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an **example** of those who believe. (1 Timothy 4:12)*

Leaders must conduct themselves so as to show the grace and gentleness of His nature in their heart, that it may endorse the words they express. This is particularly true in their relationship with each other; for if leaders cannot flow as one, they will *never* lead the sheep into unity. As a recent Shepherd's conference, the Lord prophetically called us to lay down our swords and daggers. We were told not to use doctrine or tradition to cut or stab one another. Scripture states that the Lord's bondservant must *not* be

quarrelsome. Christ does not need us to argue His case, nor should we defend ours. How often we wound others in the cause of what we think to be correct!

We are to minister in faith; we must never excuse the word that He gives us; we must not apologize for it; we need not justify it; we must not add to it, and we must not exaggerate it. We are simply to speak what He gives us. In addition, we must be careful to not dissipate the anointing with too many words, even when we have a clear message from Him. We should expect to be like Elijah, who spoke words that God stood behind. Elijah prayed that it would not rain, and it did not. Elijah said that fire would come down and God sent the fire. We need to be men whose words are given and confirmed by the Lord. Life can flow out of the anointing of God. Words of life must be *His* words, and be expressed by a spirit that prepares the hearts of the hearers to receive them. In this way, His words can be spirit and life through our mouths.

*. . . man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. (Matthew 4:4)*

## **FOUNTAIN OF LIFE PUBLICATIONS**

*No copyright restrictions. Tracts may be copied.  
Offerings will be gratefully appreciated.*

71 Old Kings Highway • Lake Katrine, NY 12449  
(845) 336-7333

*For this tract and others download from*  
**[www.thefountain.org](http://www.thefountain.org)**