

War of the WORDS

Week 1 – The Power of My Words

September 10, 2006

Defining the problem...

- Name calling, harsh criticism, humiliation (public or 1-on-1) put downs, purposeful embarrassment, sarcasm, ridicule, making threats, etc.
- Done out of anger or rage
- Its purpose is to manipulate, control, keep power
- It is also withholding positive words that need to be / should be spoken

What it looks like

- Embarrassing or making fun of someone in front of others
- Putting down someone's accomplishments, goals or dreams
- Making someone feel like they're stupid
- Using intimidation or threats to get your way
- Telling someone that they're nothing, worthless
- Using words to attack / tear down another
- Attacking someone's character
- Twisting words to win an argument
- Bringing up someone's past to embarrass / humiliate them
- Saying nothing

If you claim to be religious but don't control your tongue, you are fooling yourself, and your religion is worthless. James chapter 1 verse 26 (930)

So is this really that big of an issue?? Yes it is!

1. Because lots of us are walking around with gaping wounds in our souls caused by this
2. Because lots of us have been shaped (*negatively!*) by this
3. Because lots of us continue to live in verbally abusive environments
4. **Because as Christ-followers, God expects better of us!!**

Jesus said, "Pray like this: Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. May your kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Matthew chapter 6 verses 9 & 10 (737)

Above all, you must live as citizens of heaven, conducting yourselves in a manner worthy of the Good News about Christ. Philippians chapter 1 verse 27 (899)

(over)

In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God and the Word was God... The Word gave life to everything that was created... So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love....

John chapter 1 verses 1-2, 4 & 14 (809)

Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.

Ephesians chapter 4 verse 29 (897)

Don't repay evil for evil. Don't retaliate with insults when people insult you. Instead pay them back with a blessing. That is what God has called you to do, and he will bless you for it.

1 Peter chapter 3 verse 9 (936)

How does my speech measure up??

1. Do my words unify or divide?
2. Do my words tear-down or build others up?
3. Do my words encourage others to be open & honest with me about their thoughts & feelings, or do they seek to control & squelch?
4. Am I approachable & teachable or defensive & self-protective when I speak?
5. How healthy would those closest to me rate my speech?
6. How God-honoring would God say my speech is?

Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do, because you are his dear children. Live a life filled with love.... *Ephesians chapter 5 verse 1 (897)*

Is there hope for me?? **Yes!!**

1. Because God has a wonderful plan for our words - far better than anything we can come up with on our own
2. I need to realize that sin has radically altered the agenda for my words, resulting in much hurt and pain
3. In Jesus I find everything I need to speak as God intended me to speak
4. The Bible clearly teaches me how to get from where I am to where God wants me to be!

Where to now??

Next week: Understanding My Heart - *where my words come from*

In two weeks: The Need for Forgiveness - *freeing myself from destructive words*

In three weeks: Saying Something Different - *speaking positive words*

This study is based on book War of Words, by Paul David Tripp. Next week we continue with the topic "Understanding My Heart" as we look at the issue of where our words come from