

A GOOD WORD



***The Lord God has given me
the tongue of those who are taught,
that I may know how to sustain with a word
him that is weary.***

Isaiah 50:4a

The Christmas season is the time when in many ways people are more openhearted, more generous, easier to get along with than any other time of the year.

But the Christmas season is also the time when people who are hurting hurt much more.



- If someone is lonely to begin with, they'll feel lonelier at Christmas.

- If someone feels left out most of the time, Christmas can be the roughest season of the year.

Even when they're invited to dinner by friends and relatives ... they still feel left out.

Most of us have known Christmases when we were among those who hurt. We have known what it's like to be cut off from the rest of the world by that invisible wall.

We may have been walking among the pretty lights, the trees, the carols and the best wishes of all our friends. Yet it was as if we were in another world.

But even though we know first-hand what it's like to be inwardly hurting when everyone else seems to be celebrating, and even though we've now tasted some healing from the Lord and have a little peace in our hearts and would like to share it, when someone walks into the room feeling what we once felt, we're often at a loss ... we don't know what to say. Sometimes they're literally begging for a word that will re-store their faith.



We try, but it seems that the words that come out of our mouth are lifeless.

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"Lord God, how I need such a tongue!"

There is a death in the family of one of our friends and we go to visit them. They take us aside and tell us how discouraged they are. *"Where is God now?"* they ask.

We try our best to comfort them ... perhaps we quote a little scripture ... but we know we didn't bring them any help --- like throwing a life ring half way out to them and watching them drown.

A stranger begins to question us about the meaning of life. We want to give him the right answer. *"Lord, here's someone who's crying out for you, but how do I get to them?"*

It's like watching a man in a burning building fifteen feet from our own window and ten stories up and having absolutely nothing to put out to him to bring him to safety.

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The thing we notice about Jesus is that he had that kind of tongue. He knew how to sustain with a word.... him that is weary.

- He had a word for the sick that healed.
- He had a word for the sinner that brought him to repentance and into the kingdom.
- With a word he lifted the fallen and raised the dead.

***"They wondered at the gracious words which pro-ceeded out of his mouth.
No man ever spoke like this man,"***

...Said the officers who had been sent to arrest him but couldn't.

Not only did Jesus speak a word which was always Spirit and life, he promised that those who believe in him would do the same.....

***On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and pro-claimed,
"If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the
scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.'"***

John 7:37-38

**Those rivers of living water flowing from the heart...
....come forth from the mouth.**

The mark of the presence of Jesus in our lives is that our speaking, our ordinary conversation, begins to convey the life of God. There is a place for prepared sermons and lessons and carefully thought-out letters we write to our friends, but it's the words that come out of our mouths in the daily round that heal the sick and raise the dead.

"Either make the tree good, and its fruit good; or make the tree bad, and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit."

Matthew 12:33

What's he talking about? He's talking about the words that come out of our mouths in daily life.

***"You brood of vipers! how can you speak good, when you are evil?
For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.
The good man out of his good treasure brings forth good,
and the evil man out of his evil treasure brings forth evil."***

Matthew 12:34-35

If the Spirit of the Lord dwells in us, and if we are walking in the Spirit, surely we can expect that the fruit of our lips will be a good word at home, *especially at home* ... on the job ... among strangers... among friends a good word!

Now a good word has nothing to do with eloquence.

Nor is it a matter of learning or skill. A good word from God coming out of our mouths is the inevitable result of a good word from God filling our hearts.

***How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of him who brings good tidings,
who publishes peace,
who brings good tidings of good,
who publishes salvation,
who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."***

Isaiah 52:7



And who is able to bring good tidings and publish peace and publish salvation and say to Zion, "Your God reigns!" but the person whose own heart is saturated with the goodness of God!

How can I say with authority to anybody, that God lives and that God is good, unless he lives in me and unless his goodness is cleansing and taking possession of my own heart?

No doubt the best Christmas present we can give to anybody is a good word ... a word that will really encourage and give hope and lead to faith.

We're not talking about words without deeds, words of love without deeds of love. To the hungry we need to give bread, and to the thirsty something to drink. But on top of the best deeds we can ever perform there needs to be a life-giving word.

What a change will come over our family life --- especially our family life – our work life, when good fruit starts coming out of our mouth consistently!

1. A good word for others is something we need to ask God for.

And he said to them, "Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; and he will answer from within, 'Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything'?"

Luke 11:5-8

What is this bread he begs for at midnight?

A good word to speak to this friend who comes on a journey.

"It is the Spirit that gives life, the flesh is of no avail, the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life."

John 6:63

"If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

Luke 11:13

And why does he give us the Spirit?

So that we can give a good word.

We are encouraged in this parable to ask the heavenly Father for a living word to give to the weary traveler who has come to us. *"Lord God, I won't leave your door until you give me that good word, which is the Holy Spirit."*



"And now, Lord, look upon their threats, and grant to thy servants to speak thy word with all bold-ness, while thou stretchest out thy hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of thy holy servant Jesus."

Acts 4:29-30

...they asked for power to speak a good word and they received.

"And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness."

Acts 4:31

2. A good word for others is something we need to receive from God.

The man who went to his friend at midnight not only pounded on the door and made lots of noise, he waited expectantly. He opened his heart ... he knew it would come.

Don't just stand around and wish that God would give you something good to say, know that he will. You asked, you will receive. Open your heart and know that he will give you the tongue of one who is taught so that you will know how to sustain with a word him that is weary.

**"Thou anointest my head with oil,
my cup runneth over ...
and out of my heart will come rivers of living water."**



3. Once God has given us a good word for others, it's freshness and it's power and it's freedom to flow out will depend on our day-in-and-day-out attitude.

And the angel said to them, "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all people; for to you is born this day in the city of, David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

Luke 2:10-11

You can be sure that the attitude of that angel was good will. What man or angel can carry a message of good will without an attitude of good will?

- If our attitude is good will, the good word will always come forth when it's needed.
- If our attitude is sour, how can we expect a good word to come forth? How can a sour will.... give forth sweet water?

4. When we speak a good word we are never to worry about the results ... the results belong to God.

We can be sure that every heart that receives the good word will have it confirmed.

A good word spoken in the name of the Lord is like a seed which we plant in the ground.

We plant it and leave it.

It will grow by itself without any help from us.

- We don't have to call them up the next day to see if they were impressed with what we said.
- We don't have to follow them around to make sure they've taken our advice.
- We leave the seed to the soil where it was planted.

If the seed is receptive it will grow in its time.



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God help us to take this promise of the Spirit into our hearts.

May God send us forth with a good word for the lives we touch in the coming days.



Prayer: Yes Lord, send us forth with a good word today and in the coming days. There is such need, such sorrow, such loneliness, such despair. We don't have what it takes to lift those who suffer so deeply. There are no words that come from human lips that can rescue the suffering they're experiencing, especially during the holidays. We admit our helplessness. There is no way we can bring a healing word, a healing touch without your Spirit. So help us Lord, we beg you, give us a good word. Give us tongues that are taught so we can sustain with a word those who are weary. Help us to find such joy in you... that we become so saturated with your goodness that good words can't help but flow out of our mouths. And may we turn from the day to day negative, critical attitudes that sour the sweet words you do put into our mouths. Light us with the fire of Heaven, send Living water from our mouths as we speak your word with boldness so you may bring healing... signs and wonders of those in despair being brought to pure joy... through the name of Jesus. Amen.

Maranatha Mirror

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THE LAMB
WHO WAS SLAIN
HAS BEGUN HIS REIGN

