

# THE POWER OF THE TONGUE



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‘The Power of the Tongue’  
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# THE POWER OF THE TONGUE

I remember as a child, we used to say “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me.” But we all knew it wasn’t true. We know from experience that things people say can have the power to hurt us or encourage us. “Don’t just talk the talk, walk the walk” is something else that’s often said, implying that just talking isn’t significant. Of course it’s important to act the way you speak, but God says talking itself is very powerful. Proverbs 18:21 says – ‘*Death and life are in the power of the tongue.*’

Words are powerful and what people say matters. It affects those who hear it, but what you say yourself can have a big impact on you too.

## *The Power of Speech*

Words can affect you in physical, emotional, mental and spiritual ways. When someone has said something positive to you it bucks you up and you will remember it for quite a while. But, if someone has said something negative to you it hurts and you may remember it all your life. Proverbs 15:4 says – ‘*A gentle tongue is a tree of life, but deceit in it crushes the spirit.*’

## *The Power of Your Speech on Yourself*

You can limit what God can do in your life by believing negative words spoken to you by someone else, especially someone with human authority. For example, a doctor may tell someone their condition is incurable. It will presumably be true from a scientific medical viewpoint, but God has already defeated sickness

through Jesus's suffering and death and the healing is already done in the spiritual realm. 1 Peter 2:24 says – *'You were healed by his wounds.'* So what the doctor said isn't true in the spiritual realm and therefore doesn't have to be true in the physical.

What you say can have a big impact on yourself. Proverbs 14:3 says - *'The fool's talk brings a rod to his back, but the lips of the wise protect them.'* Saying negative things such as, "I can never get anything right," or "Things will never get any better," or "nobody likes me," can all have a negative effect on you. Each time you say something like that, you believe it a bit more and it can influence how you approach things. It can then become reality. Negative, fear-filled words can defeat you.

On the other hand, positive words are life-giving and help to protect you in many ways, even to the extent of healing. Proverbs 16:24 says – *'Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.'* Modern medicine recognises the value of being positive. It has been shown that people with cancer who speak positively about their future live longer than those who speak negatively. Proverbs 21:23 says – *'Whoever guards his mouth and his tongue keeps his soul from troubles.'*

## *The Power of God's Words*

God's words are powerful. He made the world simply by commanding it into existence. For example, in Genesis 1:3 He said – *"Let there be light," and there was light.'* God has established a principle of power in His Word which is still at work in the world today. God says about His word in Isaiah 55:11 – *'it will not return to me void, but it will accomplish that which I please, and it will prosper in the thing I sent it to do.'*

## God's Power in Your Speech

So if your speech is powerful and God's speech is powerful, how amazingly powerful it is when Christians believe His Word and speak it out. God encourages you to read His Word, to believe it, and receive it into your heart. Proverbs 4:20-22 says - *'My son, attend to my words. Turn your ear to my sayings. <sup>21</sup>Let them not depart from your eyes. Keep them in the centre of your heart. <sup>22</sup>For they are life to those who find them, and health to their whole body.'* What a promise – when you believe and receive the truth of God's Word it brings life and even physical healing. Worth exploring?

A word of warning – after Jesus's death on the Cross, many things which are in the Old Testament are no longer applicable to a born-again Christian – someone who has accepted Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. For instance, God used to punish people before Jesus's time but, because Jesus took the punishment for every sin, past, present and future, He is no longer punishing people. Instead, forgiveness is available to us all if we will come to Jesus in faith. (To read about being born-again, go to the end of this booklet.)

The Bible also says that God's Word is a weapon. Ephesians 6:17 says – *'Take ... the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.'* When the devil was tempting Jesus to do things his way instead of God's, Jesus quoted the Bible to him until he finally gave up. What better example to follow than Jesus's! If you are struggling in a particular situation, find out what God's Word has to say about it and speak it out. As you do so, even in private, it will work for you positively. Romans 10:17 says – *'faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.'* As you speak, you hear the words you say and your faith will start to rise.

## Speech Starts with Thoughts

So how do you start to discipline yourself to talk the talk? You start in your thoughts. What you say will depend on what you think. Jesus said in Luke 6:45 – *“The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings out that which is good, and the evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings out that which is evil, for out of the abundance of the heart, his mouth speaks.”* If you are thinking negative or hurtful or damning thoughts and you speak peace and love and hope to people you’re being a hypocrite. You would have to concentrate hard on what you were saying. But if you think thoughts of peace, love and hope, and speak naturally, that is what will come out. You won’t have to make an effort to put on a front, because you would be speaking what is in your heart.

So the first thing you have to do to train yourself to talk the talk is to train your thoughts. You might think you can’t do that, but the Bible says you can. Romans 12:2 says – *‘Don’t be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what is the good, well-pleasing, and perfect will of God.’* Start focusing on God’s love for you and His desire for you to be at peace and know real joy. You can read a lot more about it in my booklet, ‘Be Transformed’.

It isn’t about a mantra or a magic formula. Change will only come as you believe what you’re saying. You have to choose to have faith in God and in His Word.

## Faith and Doubt

It’s possible to have faith and doubt at the same time. Often, faith isn’t the issue. Jesus said in Matthew 17:20 – *“If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will tell this mountain,*

*‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.”* But doubt alongside faith can cancel it out. Jesus says that when you have faith and don’t have doubt, then what you say will happen. Romans 10:17 says – *‘Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.’* When you need to build up your faith and get rid of your doubt, read God’s Word out loud to yourself. You’ll then hear it and your faith will start to build and your doubt will start to crumble.

It's easy to speak the way everyone else speaks. It’s harder to be different, but the rewards are huge. Don’t be distracted by what you can see and hear and feel. Instead, have faith in what God has done, is doing and will do. Jesus said in John 10:10 – *“The thief only comes to steal, kill, and destroy. I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.”* Jesus came so you could have life to the full. Think thoughts and speak words that build yourself and others up; encourage your faith and knock down doubts by turning your thoughts back to God’s Word.

## **Talking Faith**

Unfortunately, it’s not uncommon for someone to pray to God either in private or with other Christians with faith-filled words, and then in conversation afterwards speak negatively about the very situation they were praying about. When our words line up with God’s Word, His power is released. But when we speak negative words, we open the door to Satan. How you speak when you’re not praying will show you whether you have real faith about the situation or not. Match your talk with your praying – both need to be faith-filled. Proverbs 3:5 – *‘Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and don’t lean on your own understanding.’*

Jesus said in Mark 11:22-24 – *“Have faith in God. <sup>23</sup>For most certainly I tell you, whoever may **tell** this mountain, ‘Be taken up and cast into the sea,’ and doesn’t doubt in his heart, but believes that what he **says** is happening; he shall have whatever he **says**. <sup>24</sup>Therefore I tell you, all things whatever you pray and **ask** for, believe that you have received them, and you shall have them.”* Notice Jesus talks about speaking four times in this passage. Jesus dealt with problems by speaking to them. For example, He spoke to the wind and raging sea in a storm, commanding them to stop and they did. Don’t ask God to take a problem away, command the problem to go in the name of Jesus. Don’t talk to God about the problem, talk to the problem about God.

If you try to talk the talk without accepting Jesus as your Lord and Saviour, you’re going to find it really difficult, if not impossible, because you will be doing it in your own strength. But if you become born-again, God’s Holy Spirit will come and live in you and help and direct you. You’ll still have to make the decision about what to say when you speak, but it will gradually become easier.

## *Stop Talking*

Make a decision to stop saying negative things about yourself and your situation. Stop expecting things to get worse. Don’t give in to despair and defeat. If you do, your thoughts will start a downward spiral which will show itself in what you say. That isn’t what God wants for you. Jesus said in John 10:10 – *“I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.”* You can speak negatively and limit what God wants to do for you, or you can speak in faith and experience His blessing.

## *Start Talking*

In Mark 11:22-24 (see above) Jesus said to have faith and speak it out and then you can have what you speak. When things seem to be defeating you, think of Jesus's victory on the Cross, speak it out and believe it. Keep doing it till you see the victory. When you have a need which isn't being met, think of God's promise in Philippians 4:19 – *'My God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.'* Speak it out and believe it and keep doing it until the need is met. When you are ill, think about how Jesus let His body be broken so yours could be healed, speak it out and keep doing it till you see the healing.

Don't worry if you slip back into negative speech. Just turn away from it. God loves you whatever you say, but He wants you to have the best. If you feel that your thoughts are spiralling out of control, read God's Word out or start singing praise songs to Him.

## *Talk the Talk*

Talking faith is a decision you have to make, but, like most things, the more you practise it the easier it gets. If you think negative thoughts and speak about them, your experience will tend to be negative. But if you think positive godly thoughts and speak them, your experience will tend to be positive. It may not happen overnight, but it will happen if you persevere.

Talk the Word of God, allow your faith to rise and things will change as doubt disappears. Don't only do it when you're praying, but train yourself to think this way through the day and it will start to show in your everyday speech. Only you can do it – no-one else can do it for you.

Start talking the talk and look forward to seeing God's blessings become reality in your life.

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## *Being Born-Again*

When you acknowledge Jesus as God and decide to follow Him, you make Him your Lord. When you accept His sacrifice on the Cross for yourself personally, you make Him your Saviour. You are then born-again and have a new perfect spirit. God becomes your Father and you His child, and you can start to enjoy your personal love relationship with Him.

Romans 10:9 says – *'If you will confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.'* Tell God you are sorry for the wrong things you do, say and think. Choose to believe that Jesus is Lord, that He died for you and is now alive. Accept Him as your Lord and Saviour. Say it with your voice and believe it in your heart.

If you've done that sincerely, you are now born-again and Jesus has come to live in you. Everything you've ever done wrong or ever will do wrong is forgiven, and after this life is over, you'll live in peace and joy with your loving Father God for ever.

As a child of God, you now have a whole new family of brothers and sisters. Tell a trusted Christian that you are now born-again so they can help you in your new life in Jesus. And you have the Bible to help you understand and experience more of God's love for you and all Jesus has done and won for you. It will help you to live your life in the best possible way – His way.

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Did you know that words and how you say them  
are really powerful?

God says they contain life and death!  
Learn how to stop talking in a negative way  
and start talking positively.

Speak God's word out loud with faith  
and discover its power  
and see the change it will make to your life.



**Katherine Hilditch** has been teaching in local churches for many years. In 2013 she wrote her first booklet and since then has written many more. She created her website to make all the booklets freely available to everyone. They can be read online or printed out. Katherine's threefold purpose is to help people understand more about Jesus and all He has done and won for them, to encourage them to go deeper in their relationship with God and to provide material to help them share their faith with others. To read her story and find all the booklets go to –

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