



Week 9 - Life Speakers

WE TRAIN PEOPLE TO LOVE GOD & THEIR BODIES.

“Words are containers of power. You choose what kind of power they carry.”

Joyce Meyer

“Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless.”

Mother Teresa

“Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.” Most of us shouted this as children—often at the top of our lungs—aiming it like a shield against someone’s cutting words. It was less a statement of truth than an act of defense, a way to pretend that what was said hadn’t slipped past our brave face and lodged deep within our souls. Yet it does not stop the hurt or shame or anger or embarrassment.

Words can bring life. Words can bring death. Words can be wielded as weapons or given as gifts.

Why do words carry so much power? Why are words the things that make or break our hearts and relationships? Why can we remember so vividly words spoken to us years ago?

The answer begins in Genesis 1. In this passage, God creates the entire universe—everything from light to the smallest microcosm to the amazingly detailed human body. He deliberately designed and fashioned the universe, our solar system, our planet, our atmosphere, and everything by SPEAKING. Genesis 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, and 26 all begin with this statement: **“And God said....”** God created the cosmos with His words. In Genesis 1:28-30, God declared over humankind our destiny and authority as the crown of His creation - His children.

“So God created man in His own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female He created them,” Genesis 1:27. Every human who has ever lived is created in the image of God Himself – in the *imago dei*. There are many implications from this truth, but our focus is this: God creates with His words, and because we are made in His image, so do humans. God’s words carry immense power to create. So do ours. We are made in His image, and therefore, our words have also been designed to carry power. Joyce Meyer says, *“Words are containers of power. You choose what kind of power they carry.”*



This truth carries great weight for us as leaders -our words carry significant influence, and we must learn to use our words for the Kingdom of God and life. James 3 is a sobering treatise on the power of words, and it opens with a striking warning: **“Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness”** (James 3:1, ESV). This verse arrests our attention. It reminds us that words—especially those spoken with authority—carry real weight and lasting consequence.

“Don’t abort your blessings with your mouth.”
Bill Johnson

Leaders and teachers in God’s kingdom are held to serious accountability for their words, a responsibility that should be approached with holy fear. Jesus clearly articulates this in Matt. 12:37-37:

“But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the Day of Judgment for every empty word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.”

As followers of Christ, teachers of God’s word, and leaders in His kingdom, we must be sober-minded about our tongues.

There are two aspects of the power of words: DEATH or LIFE. Proverbs 18:21 states: *“Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits.”* The fruit of every person’s words is either death or life. There is no middle ground, no neutral statement. **Every word** contains a seed that is planted in the soul and grows into a harvest—either for life or death. Words will make or break our lives and our leadership.

Much of what we see and experience in our lives is the direct result of what comes out of our mouths. The power of words is evidenced in the words we speak, those we do not speak, and those we hear. Let’s look at these aspects of words and their power as we move forward in God-first, God-only leadership.

The power of death

God’s word details many sins of the mouth. Gossip, slander, lying, exaggeration, perverse talk, complaining, and words without self-control are addressed as primary sins of the mouth.¹ As one reads through the above list, it becomes apparent that a few of these are “socially” or “religiously” acceptable.

¹ See list of Scriptures for reference on Day 3 Training Exercise.



Exaggeration and complaining are examples of sins that tend to be overlooked. Gossip is frequently disguised as “concern” for the person being gossiped about. Lying is unnoticed when we say, “I will pray for you,” and never give a second thought to that person. Slander, perverse talk, and a lack of self-control with the tongue all create death, rather than life. Read Ephesians 4:25, 29-32 below:

“Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another...Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by who you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.”

This passage, written by the Apostle Paul, gives sobering instruction about our words and hearts. According to this passage, our words can grieve the Holy Spirit. Bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and slander all carry a verbal aspect to them. Our good, good Father desires our hearts to be free and pure – it is out of our hearts that these wicked things come, most often through our mouths.

Consider a situation where bitterness poured out of your mouth, or anger compelled you to speak words that cut the hearer to the heart. Return to the idea that words are containers. Words spoken in bitterness or anger are as if we are pouring a container of nasty sludge on the hearer. Gossip could be imagined as a sticky, difficult-to-wash-off substance that leaves a lasting residue. Complaining might be well-represented by a gray-like lifeless substance, again, poured out of our mouths. When Jesus tells us that we will give an account for every word on the Day of Judgment, it is very, extremely sobering. In God’s design, our mouths are to be containers of life, pouring peace, joy, and truth on those around us.

The tongue and its power are frequently discussed in the bible because explicit instruction and understanding are needed about the power of our mouths. Let’s go back to James 3. Read this chapter frequently, on your knees, asking



the Lord to bring redemption and self-control to your tongues. Please read James 3:1-10 below:

“Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body. If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things.

How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird, reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so.”

Examining the tongue brings to remembrance Paul’s lament in Romans 7:19, 24-25: *“For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing...Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!”* There is always redemption and restoration in Christ. So how do we appropriate the power of Christ in our tongues?

One key to freedom and change comes in Eph. 4: 32 *“Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.”* We learn to live, lead, and speak out of the forgiveness that God has given us. The more we receive from Him, the more we can give. As our hearts are transformed by



the forgiveness and love of the Father, we grow in capacity to love and serve others well with our mouths.

The most important key to our words is dealing with our hearts. Jesus clearly tells us that our hearts are the problem: *“For his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart”* (Luke 6:45). The answer to changing our words is not simply remaining silent; it is allowing the Lord to purify, refine, and transform our hearts. Romans 12:2 tells us to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. ***Renewed minds and hearts speak new words.***

“Words can inspire, and words can destroy. Choose yours well.”
Robin Sharma

When we struggle with words, the Lord invites us to come to Him for freedom. If a primary struggle with words is regarding one’s spouse, press into the Lord about how to speak life over him/her. Perhaps one’s struggle is with profanity. Begin to ask the Holy Spirit to make you aware of your words and the source of them in your heart. Ask the “Lord, show me ME!” questions. The words that come out of our mouths are indicative of what is in our hearts; allowing the Father to reveal what is in our hearts allows Him to grant us repentance and to begin to heal our hearts.

Sometimes the most powerful source of death-dealing words to our souls is our own self-talk. Pay attention to the words you speak over yourself and the thoughts from which those words arise. Do they agree with what our Father says about you? We must train ourselves not to entertain thoughts or speak words about ourselves that our Father does not think or speak. When we find our self-talk being containers of death instead of life, the Lord has given us a way to freedom. Repentance and confession break the power of darkness. As we renounce the seeds of death and begin to speak words of life into those places, freedom comes. This is freedom fighting in action!

Another powerful way the enemy uses words to sow seeds of death into our lives and souls that many people are not aware of is through what we HEAR--music, videos, movies/TV. If we truly believe what God says about words being life or death (Prov. 18:21) and that none are neutral, we must evaluate what we listen to by this biblical standard. (Prov. 18:20-we will eat the fruit of the words we speak and hear.)

“The tongue has no bones but is strong enough to break a heart. So be careful with your words.”
Unknown



Our circumstances and relationships are a direct reflection of the words we have spoken, the words we have NOT spoken, and what we have listened to. For example, songs about how lousy one's spouse acts and about a lonely marriage/relationship will sow seeds of death in a relationship. Songs about how dismal our faith is sow death in the form of unbelief and fear into our hearts. *Not every song on Christian radio is worth hearing.*

When listening to the radio, develop a Holy Spirit filter – *Lord, does this song bring life to my soul? Does this song and its lyrics grieve your heart?* When our filter becomes about what pleases or grieves the Holy Spirit, we will begin to see real change in our own words and hearts. Unfortunately, there are many songs with a fantastic rhythm and a beat that moves our bodies while containing lyrics that poison our hearts. As leaders, especially those desiring to lead like Jesus - whether through fitness classes, health coaching, outdoor ministry, or in our daily workplace - we must learn to be discerning and picky about what we listen to personally and what we allow in our classes, homes and lives.

TV shows, social media, and movies are to be judged by the same standard – *Do the words in this incite godliness or death?* Movies, reels, or shows revolving around fear or issues from which Jesus died to set us free do not sow life into our spirits. At the cross, Jesus set us free from fear and darkness, but sometimes, through what we hear or watch, we invite bondage and lies back. (Gal. 5:1) Have you ever watched a movie, been on social media, or listened to a song and felt almost inexplicably dirty afterward? Or, on the positive, felt encouraged and drawn up to life? This is the power of words in what we hear.

Learning to filter what we hear and watch is a lifelong task and one that will be difficult at times. Proverbs 2:2 commands us: *"Tune your ears to wisdom, and concentrate on understanding."* When the Father gives us boundaries on what we can listen to or watch, we can trust Him – He always desires our BEST, and any boundaries He sets will only bring greater freedom, even if sacrifice is required.

Imagine a fence at the end of a cliff, keeping the children playing in the grass from falling into a deep canyon. Our Father's commandments always protect. Remember, as leaders, our lives set the standard. What we tolerate, others will tolerate even more. Leaders are called to a higher standard—not comfort, but holiness. We return continually to intimacy with our Lord and to our identity as



His children. From this place of closeness, we abide, lead, and speak. The narrow way may be difficult at times, but its fruit is life.

The power of life

The good news is that words are ALSO containers of power for GOOD!! There is great hope for our mouths! 😊 Proverbs 18:20 states: *"From the fruit of a man's mouth his stomach is satisfied; he is satisfied by the yield of his lips."* There is such a beautiful truth here – we can speak words that satisfy our very souls. If every word is a seed, we can be intentional and sow seeds of truth in our own lives, as well as those around us.

As the Lord reveals and heals our hearts, the answer to our mouth problem is not just NOT talking! His solution involves holding our tongues, of course, but even more so, involves learning to speak as He would over any given circumstance or relationship. He has given us the ability to bring LIFE through our mouths. He teaches us to ask - *'Father, what would You say in this circumstance or relationship?'* What a gift!

Imagine speaking to someone and your words being like a bowl full of beautiful fruit. Or like a hot-fudge sundae with a cherry on top! Or the Holy Spirit comforts someone through the words you speak. Containers of LIFE! How amazing that God has given us this incredible ability – to speak, to declare life over those around us.

Here are some of the ways we get to declare the Gospel through our words!

- **Every word - a gift.** Eph. 4:29 *"Watch the way you talk. Let nothing foul or dirty come out of your mouth. Say only what helps, each word a gift."* (Msg) Another translation commands us to speak only what is good for building up, giving grace to those who hear in every situation; by the power of the Spirit, our words can give God's GRACE to those who hear! Imagine your words as gifts. What a beautiful picture.
- **Every word - as salt.** Col. 4:6 *"Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person."* (NASB) Our words can make life better! This is what salt does – it makes food more delightful, more palatable. Again, our words are containers of grace!



- **Words like honey and for health.** Proverbs 16:24 *“Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body.”* Our words can bring sweetness and health to the souls and bodies of those who hear!
- **Encouragement.** Heb.3:13 *“But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called ‘today,’ that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.” (ESV)* Our encouragement can help keep people from sin. What an amazing privilege!!
- **Lift depression.** Proverbs 12:25 *“Anxiety in a man’s heart weighs him down, but a good word makes him glad.”* As leaders, we have the immense privilege of speaking words that lift anxiety and depression, first to our own hearts, then to those we lead. Light always overcomes darkness (John 1:5)
- **Creative power.** (Genesis 1) As we saw at the beginning of our reading, God creates with His mouth, and we are made to create with our mouths, just as He does. You have what you say, so say what God says and what you want. Begin to declare life and good things over relationships, over your body, over your finances, and over every aspect of your life. Romans 4:17-*He is the God who gives life to the dead and calls into being things that were not.* *Note. This is NOT “Name-it-and-claim-it.” This is partnering with God to begin to say over our lives WHAT HE SAYS. He invites us to diligently study His word and spend time with Him to know what He is saying in our NOW. This is what we have been created for!
- **Foster greater faith.** Romans 10:17 *“So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.” (ESV)* Create faith in your own heart by speaking His word. The more we hear His Word, the greater our faith. Read the word out loud. Practice memorizing it out loud. When you struggle in an area, find out what God says about that thing, and begin to speak it OUT LOUD so your ears can hear. Everything changes when God speaks His word to us; faith ignites, and our minds and hearts are changed. We then serve as His mouthpiece, speaking faith-creating words to those we lead and love. 1 Cor. 14:1
- **Our weapon against the enemy.** Eph. 6:13,17 *“Take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day...take*

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*the...sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” God’s word in YOUR mouth is death to the enemy! That is GREAT NEWS! When we begin to agree with God’s word and speak it out of our mouths, it is a sword that rapidly defeats the enemy. However, if we never unsheath our swords, it does us very little good in battle. We unsheath our swords of the spirit by speaking God’s word out loud. **God’s word -> God sword***

- **Power of CONFESSION.** John 6:63 *“The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.”* God has given us His word to show us what life has been designed to be like. Wherever we see a discrepancy of peace, joy, or life in our circumstances or relationships, we look to God’s word. What does HE say about this situation? We then partner with God by speaking what He says about us, our relationships, etc. This is where strongholds are broken – as we believe in our minds and speak out of our mouths. We come out of agreement with the enemy and into agreement with the Lord when we begin to declare what He says about any given situation or circumstance. Confession puts our hearts in agreement with Him.

Words are power. God’s word in our mouth defeats the enemy. His word in our mouth also brings life to our own hearts and those around us! Lord, may we learn to be faithful with our mouths. And when we mess up, may we be quick to repent and return to You.



Another note on the words we hear: what we hear and watch can also bring life to our souls! Worship music can change the atmosphere of a home filled with strife or fear. Great messages from God’s word can usher in new freedom. Movies and videos can increase our faith, joy, and affection for God and those around us. Choosing to listen to and watch life-giving music/videos, etc., may begin as a discipline but will culminate in the joy that comes from freedom and obedience.

We are His mouthpiece here in the world! As leaders, our words carry great weight for the good of those around us. Our privilege is the declaration of the Gospel – as fitness instructors, coaches, leaders, spouses, parents, employees, and servants to the King of all kings. May our mouths be pure and sow life wherever we go!



"The power of words can move you to tears, evoke absolute joy or lead you in action. There are words of encouragement, of sympathy, of love and admiration. The right words can give you strength, define your faith, give flight to the things that live in your imagination.

**Words will inspire you, cut you, bring you back to life.
They will comfort you in time of need. Words will nourish your soul."
Unknown**

Here are a few verses about the tongue from God's word:

And my tongue will proclaim your righteousness, your praise all the day long. Ps. 35:28

The mouth of the righteous talk of wisdom, And his tongue speaks justice. Ps. 37:30

The tongue of the wise commends knowledge, but the mouths of fools pour out folly. Prov. 15:2

A gentle tongue is a tree of life; but perverseness in it is a breaking of the spirit. Prov. 15:4

Whoever keeps his mouth and his tongue keeps himself out of trouble. Prov. 21:23

With patience a ruler may be persuaded, and a soft tongue will break a bone. Prov. 25:15

A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. Prov. 15:1

Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking guile. Ps. 34:13

The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit. Prov. 18:21

Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless. James 1:26

Because Your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you. So I will bless you as long as I live; in Your name I will lift up my hands. Psalm 63:3-4



Training Exercise—Day #1: Solving the problem of the heart

Take time to sit with the Lord – lift your heart to Him in worship and stillness. Enjoy Him.

“In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple...“Woe to me!” I cried. “I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty.” Is.6:1,5

In Isaiah 6, the prophet Isaiah encounters the God of all creation and is deeply convicted of having unclean lips. An encounter with the Lord brings us to a time of repentance and change concerning our words. We have the choice about what comes out of our mouths. Words can never be retrieved, but we can replant seeds where destruction was once sown.

Prayerfully read Matthew 12:34-37, James 3:1- 12.

Make notes of what the Holy Spirit reveals. Stop and get on your knees in repentance if necessary. Ask the Lord to reveal how very important words are. Ask Him to show you how to guard your ears, what you hear. Consider your ears as gates, just as you would your eyes. Give Him permission to set holy, life-giving boundaries.

IT ALL COMES BACK TO INTIMACY – God-first, God-only. He is our only hope.

**“Take my voice, and let me sing Always, only
for my King.**

**Take my lips, and let them be Filled with
messages from Thee.”**

-FRANCIS RIDLEY HAVERGAL

Check in with your swim buddy.



Training Exercise—Day #2 Word Wounds

The Father wants to heal word wounds.

All of us have had words of death spoken over our hearts. The Lord wants to heal – uproot and destroy words spoken to us and over us that were death and replant seeds of LIFE. So today, we return to the very first pillar – God-first, God only, asking the Lord to reveal and heal.

Our good, good Father wants to heal those hurting places.

The way the Lord gives us to deal with and bring healing to word wounds is simple, though not necessarily easy. In Matthew 21:18-22, Jesus spoke to the fig tree and cursed it. It died from its roots, and it could no longer produce fruit. As the Lord reveals word wounds, you have the authority to curse the root of the word(s) spoken and their fruit in your life. Curse the words and their root and fruit in your life, in the mighty name of Jesus.

Sit with the Lord and ask Him to show you words spoken over you that are death, or have sown seeds of death into your heart and identity. Maybe you will need to write them down. Where words have wounded you, tell the Father. This time will be a very personal, healing time as you sit with Him, hear what He says about you, and allow Him to uproot bad seeds planted. Pray over every word wound.

As He begins to uproot the pain and the hurt, tears may come. Let them flow. The Lord will also show you the truth about the person who spoke those words over you. As the pain is purged, He will replace it with compassion for the person who hurt you, resulting in forgiveness.

This would be an excellent time to return to our week on identity and re-sow good seeds. Healing is a journey sometimes; keep uprooting lies and re-sowing the life of God's word. Healing and freedom will come—re-plant life. Begin to say about yourself what the Father says about you!

In the portal, this week is another document, “Who I am in Christ.” Let these things become your confession of truth and freedom.

Check in with your swim buddy.



Training Exercise—Day #3 Proverbs 18:21 Sweet fruit to those around you

Spend time with your Lord first before anything else!

First Activity: a practice in using our words for life. Declare the day Godly! Even before the sun comes up, speak over the day according to what you and the Father want the day to be about. Create the day the two of you want, starting with your first words over the day. Ask the Lord - what do YOU want in my day?

Make a list of those you want to bring life to with your words intentionally. This can be an ongoing practice. Put specific days on the calendar or specific people on the calendar to love on. Become a habitual life-speaker ☺

Maybe you write a note to mail, send a text message, or make a phone call. Ask the Holy Spirit how He would use your mouth as His mouthpiece for LIFE today. (I hope this EXCITES you ☺)

Second activity: Each week, we read from our list of Declarations. Let there be a beginning place for you. In the portal, you will find another list of declarations. These declarations are based on biblical promises and our inheritance in Christ. When we begin to put our mouths in agreement with His word, change will come.

Take some time to read over the declarations. See which ones stick out to you by the Spirit. Begin to pray out loud those promises over yourself every day. Let it become your confession, and watch Faith IGNITE!

Connect with your swim buddy. Share your experience, what you learned, and what challenged you.

*Bible verse on words of the mouth –

Gossip (Prov. 11:13, 17:9, 25:23, 6:22)

Slander (Prov. 16:28, Col. 3:8, Eph. 4:29)

Lying (Prov. 6:16-17, 12:22, John 8:44, Acts 5:1-10)

Exaggeration (Prov. 10:19, 28:23)

Perversion (Prov 19:1, Col. 3:8) Prov. 12:18. James 4:11, 1:26, 5:9, 5:12 Matthew 12:34