

...FOR THOSE SEEKING THE EMPOWERING PRESENCE OF THE *Holy Spirit*

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The Tongues Movement Gone WILD!

by Paul Anderson

When I was a kid, we'd say to those who called us names, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me." Like fun! Names hurt us more than any stick ever did. One neighbor boy enjoyed calling me "Big Ears." Words shaped like weapons wound far more than a piece of wood. Job asked his so-called friends, "How long will you torment me, and break me in pieces with words?" (Job 19:2).

Words have launched wars. They have broken up countless marriages, separated life-long friends, split churches, and sent children down the lonely road of depression.

But they have also done the reverse. Words have healed cancer, prevented suicides, restored friendships, stopped wars from breaking out, bonded a man and woman in a marriage for life, and brought the emotionally imprisoned into liberty.



When a baseball manager was fined for chewing out the commissioner, a sports writer defended the manager by arguing, "After all, they were just words." Solomon knew better. He wrote, "There is one whose rash words are like sword

thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing" (Proverbs 12:18). Words have great potential for good or evil: "Death and life are in the power of the tongue..." (Proverbs 18:21a). That's a lot of power for such a small instrument. All the more reason to control it.

One problem—we can't. James writes that "we all make many mistakes, and if anyone makes no mistakes in what he says he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also" (James 3:2). I have a friend who used to run marathons. Now he prefers the longer runs, like fifty or a hundred miles. To ask him to go out for a three-mile run would hardly tax him. But to ask most people to attempt a one-mile jog stretches their limits. Steve has mastered the hardest runs. Few live there.

Taming the tongue takes us to our limit. Mark it down as a clear sign of maturity. If we finish that

assignment, everything else is a snap: "He who guards his mouth controls himself..." (Proverbs 21:23). Manage your tongue and you just took charge of your life. Is that an option? Not if you realize that you have a machete in your mouth. It doesn't take long to do a lot of damage with a few swipes. Maybe that is why Jesus said that "men will render account for every careless word they utter" (Matthew 12:36). I am not free to say anything anytime any way. No "Free Speech Movement" is advertised in the Bible.

We can find several lists in the New Testament of deadly sins, those that can keep us out of the kingdom of God, among them murder and adultery (Revelation 22:15; Galatians 5:17; I Corinthians 6:9,10; Romans 1:30). Unfortunately for us "clean folks," sins of the tongue are also included in each list. I may say, "I have a little problem with my mouth," but God has a different view. What I see as in need of minor adjustment God would call for major overhaul. If you agree, look with me at some more words from Brother James.

**"DEATH AND LIFE ARE
in the power of the tongue."**

Proverbs 12:2b

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MU The Master's Institute

The Tongue Has Great Potential for Good.

"If we put bits into the mouths of horses that they may obey us, we guide their whole bodies. Look at the ships also; though they are so great and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs" (James 3:3,4). James gives us two examples to show us that small can be significant.

A Bit. A broken and bridled stallion makes a beautiful sight, and a little bit goes a long way! The flick of the wrist by the master turns the mighty beast in an instant. His will has come under the control of his rider, and a ninety-pound girl can rule a great race horse.

James likewise says that a controlled tongue makes possible the direction of the whole body. If you want to obey your Master, start with the tongue. It's downhill from there.

A Rudder. On a recent vacation, my wife Karen and I sat at one of our favorite restaurants along the San Pedro harbor and watched mega-oil freighters cut their way into quiet waters and dock. Amazing as it is, the direction of these huge ships is determined by a relatively small rudder, operated by one man's hand.



And similarly, the focus of our lives is shaped by the funny little member in our mouth. How far we go and how fast we get there is determined by the tongue. It will take us down a path of

destruction or it will preserve us: "He who keeps his mouth and his tongue keeps himself out of trouble" (Proverbs 21:23). The same mouth can either bring deliverance or devastation: "He who guards his mouth preserves his life; he who opens wide his lips comes to ruin" (Proverbs 13:3).

The Tongue Also has Potential for Evil.

"So the tongue is a little member and boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire! And the tongue is a fire. The tongue is an unrighteous world among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the cycle of nature, and set on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by humankind, but no human being can tame the tongue—a restless evil, full of deadly poison" (James 3:5-8). Again, James gives us two examples.

Fire. I watched the 1993 Southern California fire on TV. Our close friends, the Guldseths, watched it for real. It wiped out the apartment house they built for guests, plus the tool shed and a sports car. One match can do lots of damage. So can one word.

Determining the cause of fires often proves difficult. Pyromaniacs can make a crime look like an accident. James removes any doubt about the origin of forest fires ignited by the tongue—the pit of hell. We may say that it started with a prayer request, a concern, a white lie, or a little criticism. James corrects us by saying that it was fueled by the fires that will rage for an eternity.

"HOW GREAT A FOREST is set ablaze by a small fire!"

James 3:5b



My dad and I were once cleaning up around our property in the Mojave Desert. The tumbleweeds were stacked together and ready to be carted off. Dad decided that a shortcut would make our work easier. He said, "I'll set fire to this pile, and we'll be done with them in a moment." When a wind came up and blew one from the heap, we almost started a prairie fire. He later recalled the devastation of such fires on the prairies of Montana. "I should have known better," he confessed. If your tongue ignites such a fire, you're likely to be guilty of more than you will want to take responsibility for.

God sees all such blazes, started by a reckless tongue, a careless word of sarcasm, a fit of outrage, a yearning for vengeance. They are much more than "just words," to return to our sports commentator. Remember—only you can prevent forest fires!

Poison. A quiet and controlled lady once put her troubled daughter in our church school where I served as pastor. The girl lasted only a few weeks. As the principal explained why she had to dismiss the child, the mom listened impatiently. When she decided she had heard enough, she stomped out of the room, spilling poison and profanity along the way. Mrs. Cool morphed into a serpent in a second.

A snake exists in South America that is called the two-step. If you're bitten by one, two steps and you're dead. The poison works about that fast, paralyzing the nervous system. The tongue works just as quickly and as deadly. People lose their reputation, their future, their health, their savings, their relationships, their jobs—and even their lives through the poison that is spewed out of serpentine mouths. Call it the “tongues movement” at its worst.

In case you're wondering, James is not complimenting us. He compares our tongue to the jagged weapon of a viper. In his hard-hitting letter, he does not deal with predestination or the future of Israel or the nature of the church. He talks about temptation, anger, shining it on with the rich, and now how I speak. He doesn't let me off the hook. He wants reality without religious clothes, and inconsistencies bother him immensely. He marvels at the incongruity of our lifestyle. He says, “From the same mouth come blessing and cursing” (James 3:10a). His friend Paul tells us that carnivorous Christians will sooner or later be eaten alive themselves: “If you bite and devour one another take heed that you are not consumed by one another” (Galatians 5:15).

So the challenge comes to do what I am already told I can't: tame my tongue. I can't, but Jesus can. His words were always rightly chosen, bringing much needed grace and truth. So I must surrender this organ, as with every part in my body, to the Master, trusting more than trying, believing that He can and will do this work of maturity in that moving member between the head and the heart.

**“...THE TONGUE OF THE WISE
brings healing.”**

Proverbs 12:18

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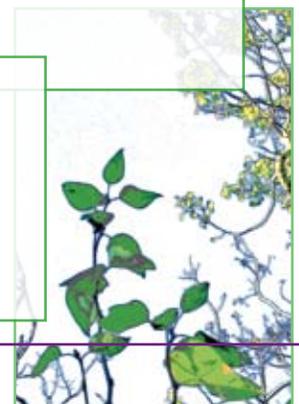
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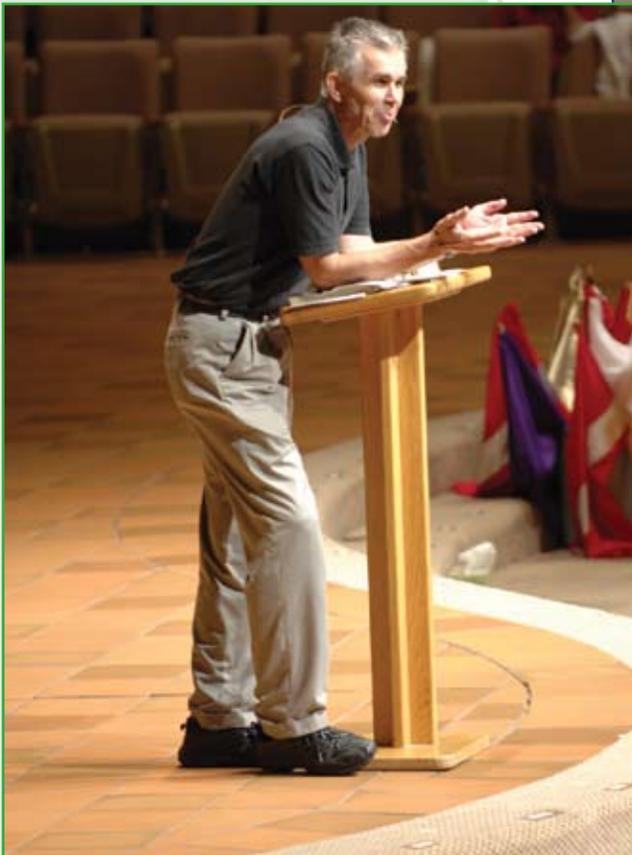
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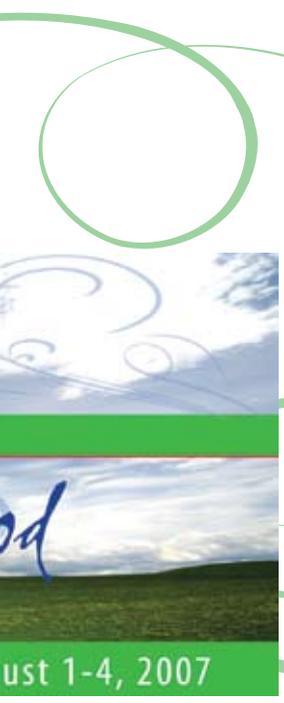
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T	CD	CODE	SPEAKER(S)	SESSION	TOPIC
		07LU1	R.T. Kendall	Wed. Evening	<i>How To Forgive Ourselves-Totally!</i>
		07LU2	Jim Anderson	Thurs. Morning	<i>New Birth: The Essential Starting Point of Kingdom Life</i>
		07LU3	Paul Anderson	Thurs. Evening	<i>Welcome Home!</i>
		07LU4	Steve Hill	Fri. Morning	<i>The Foundation of the Kingdom</i>
		07LU5	Larry Randolph	Fri. Evening	<i>Post-Resurrection, Pre-Pentecost</i>
		07LU6	Larry Randolph	Sat. Morning	<i>Saturday Evening Talk</i>
		07LU7	Paul Teske	Sat. Afternoon	<i>No Man Can Heal A Man</i>
		07LU8	Steve Hill	Sat. Evening	<i>The Commands of the King</i>

THURSDAY WORKSHOPS

		07LU9	George Johnson/Paul Anderson	<i>Breaking Strongholds, Bringing Deliverance</i>	
		07LU10	Dan Siemens	<i>Jumping in the Alternative Ministry Stream</i>	
		07LU11	Mike & Mona Shields	<i>Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire!</i>	
		07LU12	Jim Rickard	<i>Healing & the Kingdom of God</i>	
		07LU13	Denise Siemens	<i>Kingdom Mathematics: When A+B ≠ C (When Things Don't Work Out the Way We Think They Should)</i>	
		07LU14	Dawn Lundgren	<i>Is That Really You, Lord? Recognizing King's Voice</i>	

FRIDAY WORKSHOPS

		07LU15	Paul Teske	<i>Is the 3Fold Ministry of Jesus Applicable For Today?</i>	
		07LU16	Robert Walter	<i>How to Grow Disciples & Pastors in Your Backyard</i>	
		07LU17	Trond Loberg	<i>Bringing the Kingdom to a Secular Society</i>	
		07LU18	Rivers Teske	<i>Choose Life</i>	
		07LU19	Joe Johnson	<i>Fan Into Flame the Gift of the Holy Spirit</i>	
		07LU20	Bruce & Cindy Urban	<i>Power in the Kingdom-Be Filled With the Spirit</i>	
		07LU21	Mike Bradley & Team	<i>Purpose & Values of Alliance of Renewal Churches</i>	

PASTORS SESSIONS

		07LU22	R.T. Kendall	<i>Pure Joy in the Midst of Trials</i>	
		07LU23	R.T. Kendall	<i>Why Bless Your Enemies</i>	
		07LU24	R.T. Kendall	<i>Questions & Answers</i>	

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		07LU29	Jim Anderson	Thurs. Morning	<i>New Birth: The Essential Starting Point of Kingdom Life</i>
		07LU30	Paul Anderson	Thurs. Evening	<i>Welcome Home!</i>
		07LU31	Steve Hill	Fri. Morning	<i>The Foundation of the Kingdom</i>
		07LU32	Larry Randolph	Fri. Evening	<i>Post-Resurrection, Pre-Pentecost</i>
		07LU33	Larry Randolph	Sat. Morning	<i>Saturday Night Talk</i>
		07LU34	Paul Teske	Sat. Afternoon	<i>No Man Can Heal A Man</i>
		07LU35	Steve Hill	Sat. Evening	<i>The Commands of the King</i>

THURSDAY WORKSHOPS

		07LU36	George Johnson/Paul Anderson	<i>Breaking Strongholds, Bringing Deliverance</i>	
		07LU37	Dan Siemens	<i>Jumping in the Alternative Ministry Stream</i>	
		07LU38	Mike & Mona Shields	<i>Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire!</i>	
		07LU39	Jim Rickard	<i>Healing & the Kingdom of God</i>	
		07LU40	Denise Siemens	<i>Kingdom Mathematics: When A+B ≠ C (When Things Don't Work Out the Way We Think They Should)</i>	
		07LU41	Dawn Lundgren	<i>Is That Really You, Lord? Recognizing King's Voice</i>	

FRIDAY WORKSHOPS

	07LU42	Paul Teske	<i>Is the 3Fold Ministry of Jesus Applicable For Today?</i>
	07LU43	Robert Walter	<i>How to Grow Disciples & Pastors in Your Backyard</i>
	07LU44	Trond Loberg	<i>Bringing the Kingdom to a Secular Society</i>
	07LU45	Rivers Teske	<i>Choose Life</i>
	07LU46	Joe Johnson	<i>Fan Into Flame the Gift of the Holy Spirit</i>
	07LU47	Bruce & Cindy Urban	<i>Power in the Kingdom-Be Filled With the Spirit</i>
	07LU48	Mike Bradley & Team	<i>Purpose & Values of Alliance of Renewal Churches</i>

PASTORS SESSIONS

	07LU49	R.T. Kendall	<i>Pure Joy in the Midst of Trials</i>
	07LU50	R.T. Kendall	<i>Why Bless Your Enemies</i>
	07LU51	R.T. Kendall	<i>Questions & Answers</i>

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