

**“Words Do Matter”**

**Matthew 12v33-45**

**Scripture Ref: 2 Cor 5:10; Rev 20:11-13; Rom 10:8-10;**

- 1. Have you ever had a thought – out loud? Maybe someone you know did something really dumb, or your wife comes out in an outfit that you really don’t care for, or you have a judgmental opinion of someone ...**
  - a. And it just pops right out in broad daylight. (your first thought is “uh-oh, did I just say that out loud?”)**
  - b. And immediately you tell the person “wait, I didn’t mean that” or “I really didn’t mean it *that way*... not the way you took it”**
    - i. Baby what I said was “that dress is *where it’s at!*”**
  - c. But in truth – you did mean it that way! You just didn’t want anyone to actually KNOW that you meant it that way!**
- 2. In other words – what came out of your mouth is an indicator of what is in your heart!**
  - a. Is it sweet and kind? Or bitter and sharp?**

33 "Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit. 34 Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. 35 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.

- 3. Jesus likens these guys to a fruit tree**
  - a. You might walk by an apple tree, pick an apple, take a bite, if its healthy tree the apple will be nice and juicy, crisp**
  - b. But a diseased tree wont have good apples – they’ll be all bitter and sharp**
- 4. How does that apply? Simple – what were these men saying about Jesus?**
  - a. You see, if they were truly open to God and His Spirit, they would have spoken well of Jesus, been open to Him, received Him as the awaited Christ.**
  - b. But they weren’t really that ‘into’ God – they just pretended to be**
  - c. They cared more about appearances - they looked Godly, sounded Godly, acted Godly.**
  - d. But their fruit was all bitter and sharp –And Jesus tells them...**

36 But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. 37 For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

5. **Jesus is talking about that day that everyone will experience – the “day of judgment” – the day that we stand before God and give an account of our lives.**
  - a. **And so Jesus is telling these “careful, for the words that you say will be recorded and played back one day before the Almighty God,**
  - b. **Think about that – if someone were going around behind you and recording every word you utter, and you knew one day it would be played back for all to see – would you choose different words?**
  - c. **Some of us would want to hit the ‘rewind’ button!**
  - d. **But the fact is – every word we speak WILL be replayed, and we will give an account.**
6. **Paul describes to us in 2 Cor the “bema seat of Christ”**

*2 Cor 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.*

- a. **In other words, every believe will give an account of their life – not to see whether you will go to heaven or hell, but to determine your reward in heaven.**
7. **In a similar fashion, the unsaved will stand before the Great White judgment throne.**

**Rev 20:11-13**

*Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.*

- a. **God, being just and righteous, would have to allow anyone who met His standard of righteousness into heaven – of course we know that no one can meet that standard.**
- b. **But the evidence will be laid out – there will be no one protesting “that’s not fair” – because their own words will condemn them.**
- c. **Imagine standing before God and hearing your own words “oh that Christian stuff, totally bogus”**
- d. **Jesus is reminding these men that the things they are saying to Him – they will hear them again one day.**

- 8. You see – words DO matter – it is by our own words that we are either saved, or condemned.**

**Rom 10:8-10**

*"The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): 9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

**Rom 10:13** For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."

- 9. But – Jesus is not finished with His encounter -**

38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You."

- 10. Before we look at Jesus response, think about this – these guys had just accused Jesus of doing miraculous things using demonic power**

- a. ...and now they want a sign? Another miracle – what so they can accuse Him of being demonic again?
- b. These people didn't want a sign, they were just playing games, which is why Jesus told them:

39 But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.

- 11. "You want a sign, I'll give you a sign, I will be buried, dead for three days, and then I'll will arise from the grave, that will be the sign I give you"**

- a. Interesting – all of the miracles Jesus did: Healing lepers, the blind could see, deaf could hear, mute could speak, the lame walked...
- b. After all those things that Jesus did, they still didn't believe- - they wanted a sign...

- 12. There is something to be said for paying attention to what is going on around you.**

- a. Jesus then gave 2 examples:

**Example #1 - Jonah**

40 For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. 41 The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and

condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here.

- 13. Many people are familiar with the account of Jonah, who spent three days in the belly of a whale**
  - a. But the bigger story behind Jonah was not the whale – it was Jonah’s judgmental attitude towards the people of Ninevah**
  - b. See Nineveh was a wicked city – so God told Jonah to go and tell them to repent... but Jonah didn’t want to.**
  - c. Why? Come on! Those people are wicked, they are sinners! They do all kinds of bad things! They deserve whatever they get!**
  - d. And besides, they aren’t even God’s chosen people!**
  - e. So Jonah ran – and that’s why God sent a storm to thrash the ship and get the sailors to toss Jonah overboard and the whale to scoop him up and spit him out on the beach –**
  - f. So Jonah finally goes to Nineveh – but he’s not happy about it – and preaches – and guess what, the whole city repents, and is saved!**
  - g. But – Jonah is still upset – he is mad that God spared those sinful people (I can see him preaching now!).**
  - h. And God has to show him – through a plant and a worm – that God extends His grace to ALL - not just the Jewish nation.**
- 14. And Jesus says “Hey, even those sinful Assyrians repented, yet one greater than Jonah, ME, is before you and you are too proud to repent.”**
  - a. “those men from Nineveh will be standing there the day that you are judged.”**

**Example #2 - Sheba**

42 The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here.

- 15. The “Queen of the South” – better known as the “Queen of Sheba”, heard about the wisdom of Solomon, and he decided to cruise up from Ethiopia to Jerusalem to check out Solomon for herself.**
  - a. And all she had heard, and then some, were true.**
  - b. She became a believer based on the awesomeness of Soloman**
- 16. ...”and so” Jesus tells them “one greater than Solomon is here, and you are too proud to hear my wisdom”**
- 17. In other words – there was a problem with these guys that Jesus was trying to show them – trying to get through in so many**

ways – yet the were just too stubborn, too proud to listen and hear...

- a. They were convinced that if you dress up the outside, make everything look pretty,
- b. ...have all your rites and rituals, your robes and raiment's,
- c. ...your synagogues, your titles, your Sabbath
- d. Then you are part of God's Kingdom!
- e. ... And Jesus is trying to get through – "God's kingdom is not about any of that! It is about ME and a relationship with God THROUGH ME.

**18. Reminds me of the Beverly Hillbilly's. Some of you younger folks don't know what I am talking about – but...**

- a. "Come and listen to a story 'bout a man named Jed... A poor mountaineer, barely kept his family fed, Then one day he was shootin at some food, And up through the ground came a bubblin' crude."
- b. Jed struck it rich – became a gazillionaire – moved his family to Beverly Hill into a big mansion.
- c. But of course, they were still hillbillies – Jed still hunted bunnies in the front yard.
- d. Granny still cooked up moonshine by the pool.
- e. Ellie-May still had all her 'critter friends".

**19. You know, people sometimes do that with God. They take on all the trappings of Christianity,**

- a. Go to church – sing about God – wear a cool Christian T, have a WWJD bracelet, put a fish on the car,
- b. They have all of the outer trappings... but without the inner change.

### **An Unclean Spirit Returns**

43 "When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. 44 Then he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when he comes, he finds it empty, swept, and put in order. 45 Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation."

**20. Israel had cleaned up the outside, gotten rid of the idols, following the law, attending synagogue**

- a. Has the priests and the temple – but it was all outer trappings!
- b. Jesus is telling them without HIM – none of it mattered!

**21. Today people can do the same thing – fix up the outside, ignore the inside.**

- a. How many times have you heard someone say “Man, I’ve got to clean up my act?” And then they’ll commit to stop smoking, drinking, stealing, whatever.
  - b. But when you check in with them a few months later, things are worse than ever!
  - c. What happened? That person focused on changing the “outer person”, without first changing their “inner person”.
  - d. They took a broom, went through the house, swept everything clean, stood back and through “great, everything looks great!”
- 22. But let me tell you, as the father of two young boys, one sweep does not clean the house! Ten minutes later the ‘twin-tornados’ come back through, and it looks like a bomb went off!**
- a. Jesus is telling us that we cannot just “clean house,” we have to “clean heart!”
  - b. And there is only one way to a clean heart. It’s not a program, or a new regimen, or a new outlook: **It is the person of Jesus Christ, who came not to “reform” but to “regenerate!”**

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