Death and Life Are in the Power of the Tongue

As part of your sanctification process with the Lord, expect God the Father to come after three main areas in your walk with Him.

The first area will be with your “thought life” – which is the area of your unspoken words. We already have another article in our site specifically dealing with this area. The title of this article is “You are What You Think.” In this article, I give you all of the Scripture verses that have to deal with the Lord wanting to impart a right type of thinking into mind and thought process.

The second area God will be targeting will be your “word life” – which has to do with the words that are being released out of your mouth to other people.

The third area God will be coming after will be your “action life” – which will be how you act and behave towards others. Your actions and behaviors toward others has to line up with your sanctified thinking and your sanctified speech. The Bible says we have to be “doers” of the Word, not just hearers.

This article will be dealing with the second area – which will be your word life towards others. You can have a certain amount of your thinking and thought life cleaned up to some degree in the Lord with the sanctifying help of the Holy Spirit, but if you can’t make the next step and transmit the right kinds of words to others in your own personal dealings with them, then all of the sanctification that you went through to get your thinking and thought life cleaned up will have all been for naught.

In this article, I am going to give you several powerful key verses from the Bible on this topic. When you string all of these verses together like I will do in this article, you will really be able to see exactly what God wants to do with you in this area. These verses are once again giving all of us some profound and powerful revelation from the Lord in just this one area alone.

Your “word life” with others will make or break you in your own personal relationships with other people in this life. If you don’t learn how to speak to other people in a positive and godly manner, then sooner or later no one will want to have anything to do with you, and you will eventually find yourself being totally isolated and alone.

I simply can’t stress enough the power that is on these particular verses – and that each and every Christian do the best they can to clean up their speech and the way they express themselves to other people in this life.

The very first verse I will list below will give us perfect revelation from the Lord on this issue. This one verse is so powerful from the Lord, that I have decided to name the title of this article just after this one verse.
This one verse is telling us that “death and life are in the power of the tongue.” Just stop and think for a minute what the Lord is trying to convey to us with these specific words. There are two things to pick up from this verse.

The first thing that God is trying to tell all of us is that we have a certain amount of “power” in our tongues. Our tongue is referring to the verbal words that we speak out of our mouths to other people.

When God is using the word “power,” He is telling us that every single one of us has a certain amount of power residing in our mouth and in our tongues with the words that we can release to other people.

And with this kind of power residing in our ability to release spoken words to other people—God then tells us what can happen with this kind of power. This power can either be used to bring life or death to the person that we are speaking to. Think of the responsibility and ramifications of this revelation— that our spoken words to other people can either bring them life or bring them death!

You can either choose to learn how to speak and release positive words of love, encouragement and edification to other people in your own personal dealings with them, or you can choose to release negative words of condemnation, criticism, coldness and harshness. The choice is yours!

God the Father makes it very clear with the way that He has worded all of these Scripture verses which way He wants us to take with the power that we already have residing in our tongues.

Every single one of us can stop and think how good we have felt when someone has released and spoken words of love, encouragement and edification to us. Words can cut right through you like a knife, and when those words are positive and constructive, they can have an incredible way of building up your own sense of self-esteem, self-worth and self-confidence.

One of the verses I will list below says that good words can literally be health to our bones. In other words, good and positive types of words can give you better physical health as a result of the boost your immune system will receive.

However, just the reverse is also possible. If all a child ever hears from his parents as they are growing up are stern and abusive words of condemnation, criticism and negativity—then that child’s self-esteem and self-worth can be severely affected if it is not counter-balanced by other people in his life who will speak out the right kinds of words of love and encouragement to him.

If a child does not get properly watered with words of love and encouragement from his own flesh and blood parents during his early growing years in the family, then sooner or later he will end up believing in all of the lies of his parents as a result of
their constant bombardments – and he will then end up growing up thinking that he will never be good enough to amount to anything worthwhile.

There are many grown adults who never end up accomplishing everything that God would’ve had in store for them in this life as result of not being able to pull out of all the negativity and pessimism that their parents had heaped on them during their earlier growing years in the family. And all of their possible growth in the Lord in this lifetime ends up getting stunted as a result of the “death” that was brought upon them by the negative and abusive words spoken to them by their own natural parents.

This is why the Lord is telling us in this verse that some kind of death can literally be brought about as a result of speaking out the wrong kinds of words to someone – especially words spoken between parents and their own children.

This same type of “death” can also occur in marriages between husbands and their wives. Many married women have had all of their healthy sense of self-respect, self-worth and self-confidence beat right out of them as a result of all the verbal abuse they have had to put up with from their verbally, abusive husbands.

**As Christians, we should all work very closely with the Holy Spirit in allowing Him to help us clean up our word life and how we verbally express ourselves to other people in this life.**

**If we can learn how to get this part of our life properly cleaned up and sanctified under His direction and guidance, then not only we will become more pleasing to the Lord, but we will also dramatically increase the quality of our own personal relationships that we can have with other people in this life.**

For the Holy Spirit to really be able to start to work with you in this area, you will need the knowledge that the following Scripture verses will give you. I will once again break these verses down under their appropriate captions so that you can fully grasp the revelation that the Lord is trying to convey to you.

**The Scripture Verses**

If you can grasp what the Lord is trying to tell you with the knowledge and revelation that is in these verses, and then start to work with the Holy Spirit in trying to learn how to change, control and curb some of your bad speech habits – you can change the way you talk and express yourself to other people, with all of it being for the better.

I have personally seen the Lord take several people who used to cuss like sailors, and who were very demeaning and abusive in the way they would talk to other people, and completely change and transform them into sanctified saints who no longer cuss and who now treat their spouses, their children and their good, personal friends in the godly way and manner that He would like all of us to do.

I will now break these individual verses down under 5 specific captions.
1. Death and Life Are in the Power of the Tongue

The very first verse I will list below is the one that will tell us that death and life are in the power of the tongue. The rest of the verses will further extend off of this revelation with some very interesting verbiage being used by the Lord to try and drive home the point of how powerful our words really are – and how they can either be used to bring life, love, edification and encouragement into a person’s life – or bring death, destruction, negativity and torment.

I will list each one of the verses one right after the other, and then point out and highlight some of the key phrases that are in some of these verses so you can really see the powerful revelation that is in these verses.

1. “Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit.” (Proverbs 18:21)

2. “There is one who speaks like the piercings of a sword, but the tongue of the wise promotes health. The truthful lip shall be established forever, but a lying tongue is but for a moment.” (Proverbs 12:18)

3. “Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.” (Psalm 34:13)

4. “A man’s stomach shall be satisfied from the fruit of his mouth, and from the produce of his lips he shall be filled.” (Proverbs 18:20)

5. “The Lord God has given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him who is weary.” (Isaiah 50:4)

6. “Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time. Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.” (Colossians 4:5)

7. “The mouth of the righteous is a well of life, but violence covers the mouth of the wicked.” (Proverbs 10:11)

8. “The words of a man’s mouth are deep waters; the wellspring of wisdom is a flowing brook.” (Proverbs 18:4)

9. “A wholesome tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit.” (Proverbs 15:4)

10. “Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the bones.” (Proverbs 16:24)
11. “Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, but a good word makes it glad.” (Proverbs 12:25)

12. “A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly, but the mouth of fools pours forth foolishness.” (Proverbs 15:1)

13. “He who guards his mouth preserves his life, but he who opens wide his lips shall have destruction.” (Proverbs 13:3)

14. “Whoever guards his mouth and tongue keeps his soul from troubles.” (Proverbs 21:23)

15. “The heart of the righteous studies how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil.” (Proverbs 15:28)

16. “Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips.” (Psalm 141:3)

If you will notice, some of these verses have two sides to them. On the one side are the positive benefits and blessings one can receive as the result of learning how to speak properly to others. On the other side are the negative things that can occur as a result of not properly expressing yourself to others – either in the specific words that you choose to say to a person or in the way or manner in which you say these words to a person.

So that you can fully grasp both sides of this coin, I will first bullet point all of the positive things that are in the above verses and then I will bullet point all of the negative things. Here is the positive side of the coin:

- The tongue of the wise promotes health
- The truthful lip shall be established forever
- A man’s stomach shall be satisfied from the fruit of his mouth
- Let your speech always be with grace and seasoned with salt
- The mouth of the righteous is a well of life
- The wellspring of wisdom is a flowing brook
- A wholesome tongue is a tree of life
- Pleasant words are sweetness to the soul and health to the bones
- A good word can make someone’s heart glad
- A soft answer turns away wrath
- The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly
- He who guards his mouth preserves his life
- He who guards his mouth and tongue keeps his soul from trouble

When you read all of these key phrases one right after the other, you can really start to see how powerful of a thing it really is if you can learn how to properly express yourself to other people in this life. Notice in 3 of the middle bullet points, that someone who can speak to others in a righteous and godly manner will be like a well of life, a flowing brook, and a tree of life to that person.
Pleasant words, good and uplifting type words, and a wholesome tongue can also help serve to lift a person’s spirit up, help make their hearts glad and happy, be able to turn away possible wrath and anger, and also help to guard and preserve your own personal life. One wrong word to the wrong person at the wrong time could lead you to having an early departure from this life.

If more people would learn how to walk and abide in the revelation and knowledge that is in these verses, and learn how to express themselves in a more positive and godly manner to others – we would have less tensions and conflicts in our marriages, in our families, in our personal friendships and in the workplace.

Now here is the negative side of this same coin:

- Keep your tongue from evil and speaking guile
- Violence will cover the mouth of the wicked
- A perverse tongue will break the spirit
- A harsh word stirs up anger
- He who opens wide his lips shall have destruction
- The mouth of the wicked pours forth evil

Jesus has already told us that those who will live by the sword will also die by the sword. The second bullet point above tells us that violence can chase after and literally come upon someone if their speech to others is wicked and evil.

These key phrases are telling us that those with big mouths, and those who like to speak harsh words to others can bring sudden destruction down on them and possibly those that may be close to them. Flip off and cuss out the wrong guy on the highway, and he may be the last person you will ever see alive again.

Put both sides of this coin right next to one another and you can see very clearly how the Lord wants us to express ourselves to other people in this life.

2. Rebutting the Wicked

Though the Lord wants us to be able to talk with others in a civil, loving and uplifting way and manner – this does not mean we have to become submissive doormats and be too afraid to engage with the wicked and evil people in this life if we are forced to.

Jesus Himself did not mince any words when attacking some of the high ranking Jewish leaders of His day. He also did not hold back when throwing out the money changers who were trying to do business in His house of worship.

The next set of verses are very interesting, especially in the day and age we now live in where everyone is trying to be politically correct and are too afraid to verbally engage with someone for fear of offending them.

Here are 5 very good verses telling us not to be afraid to engage when we have to – and be willing to take a stand and tell the truth even if it means initially hurting or offending someone.
1. “But those who rebuke the wicked will have delight, and a good blessing will come upon them. He who gives a right answer kisses the lips.” (Proverbs 24:25)

2. “Open rebuke is better than love carefully concealed. Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.” (Proverbs 27:5)

3. “He who rebukes a man will find more favor afterward than he who flatters with the tongue.” (Proverbs 28:23)

4. “Blows that hurt cleanse away evil, as do stripes the inner depths of the heart.” (Proverbs 20:30)

5. “Therefore, putting away lying, each one speak truth with his neighbor, for we are members of one another ... let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.” (Ephesians 4:25,29)

As I have stated in my article on “The Sin of Abortion,” many pastors across this country are afraid to call out this abomination for the sin that it really is for fear of offending those who may be pro-choice in their congregations. As all of the above verses are trying to tell you, anyone who is to afraid to call out these types of obvious sins are failing to make an attempt to clean away an evil sin and abomination.

Notice that several of these verses are telling you that if you would be willing to take a strong stand and express the Lord’s opinion on these kinds of hot issues and topics, that you initially may hurt and offend a few people, but afterwards you will end up finding much more favor with others, will help impart grace and knowledge to these people, and then possibly end up receiving a good blessing from the Lord for being willing to do this.

This same principle applies between parents and their children. Nip in the bud any bad and inappropriate behavior as soon as you start to see it surface and manifest, and you just may save your son or daughter years of possible trouble down the road.

### 3. Do Not Bear False Witness Against Your Neighbor

In the very litigious claims conscious society we now live in, many people are filing unscrupulous lawsuits. And in some of these lawsuits, the plaintiffs are bearing some type of false witness against either an employer, a co-worker, a company or corporation, or a total stranger. In other words, they are flat out lying against a defendant, all in an effort to try and make some type of financial gain either against an individual or a particular company.

As you will see in the verses I will list below, when God the Father has it set up as one of His [10 commandments](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/10_Commandments) that you should not be bearing any type of false witness against your neighbor, and then tops it off by saying that this type of lying will be considered an abomination in His sight – any Christian will get himself into major trouble with the Lord if they try and do this to either unjustly hurt the person
they have targeted as a matter of trying to get some type of personal revenge against them, or if they are doing it to try and make some kind of financial gain.

You will have the vengeance and wrath of God Almighty Himself come down on you and your life if you ever try to hurt anyone else with any type of false accusation or false charge. Let these verses be a major warning to any Christian who is thinking about doing this for either personal revenge or any type of monetary gain.

1. “Do not be a witness against your neighbor without cause, for would you deceive with your lips? Do not say, “I will do to him just as he has done to me; I will render to the man according to his work.” (Proverbs 24:28)

2. “A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who speaks lies will not escape.” (Proverbs 19:5)

3. “Do not speak evil of one another, brethren.” (James 4:11)

4. “Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, but those who deal truthfully are His delight.” (Proverbs 12:22)

5. “Getting treasures by a lying tongue is the fleeting fantasy of those who seek death.” (Proverbs 21:6)

Notice the second verse says that anyone who bears a false witness will not go unpunished. The first verse tells us that we cannot even try to bear false witness against someone even as a matter of personal revenge. The Bible tells us that any type of vengeance or payback always belongs to the Lord. It does not belong to you or to any of your friends who would like to try and get even for you.

The last verse perfectly describes what people are doing when filing unjust lawsuits based upon trumped-up, false allegations. Trying to obtain treasures and financial wealth by way of a lying tongue is a fleeting fantasy, and eventually judgment will be rendered against you at the hands of God Himself.

As a Christian, do not ever tempt your hand or your fate with the Lord by crossing over into this kind of forbidden territory with Him.

4. Shun Profane and Vain Babblings

In addition to never, ever, considering bearing any type of false witness against anyone, these next set of verses will tell us to learn how to shun profane and vain babblings.

The word “babblings” means “foolishness and meaningless type of talk.” In other words, try to keep unnecessary and foolish type of gossiping and talk to a bare minimum. I know in the work place where many people are huddled very close together, this is a real hard one to try and keep on top of.
But as you will see in several of the verses listed below, if the one you are gossiping and talking about eventually finds out that you have been doing this behind their back, you will lose a good friend if that person was your friend to begin with, or you will end up making an enemy if that person was not a close friend.

One verse below says “a brother offended is harder to win than a strong city.” Two other verses say that “a whisperer” and one who “repeats a matter” will “separate the best of friends.”

Many people have lost some of their best friends as a result of getting caught talking behind their backs or spreading personal information about them. Once that personal trust has been violated to any significant degree in a good friendship, it will be very hard to get them to ever be able to trust you again.

These next 6 verses are a true word to the wise.

1. “But shun profane and vain babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness. And their message will spread like cancer.” (2 Timothy 2:16)

2. “In all labor there is profit, but idle chatter leads only to poverty.” (Proverbs 14:23)

3. “A talebearer reveals secrets, but he who is of a faithful spirit conceals a matter.” (Proverbs 11:13)

4. “A brother offended is harder to win than a strong city ...

5. “A perverse man sows strife, and a whisperer separates the best of friends.” (Proverbs 16:28)

6. “... but he who repeats a matter separates the best of friends.” (Proverbs 17:9)

Per the article that we have titled “Choose Your Friends Carefully,” if you have been given several good God-friends by the Lord, really value and cherish these kinds of personal relationships and do not ever be tempted to betray their trust by engaging in unnecessary babblings and gossiping behind their back. True good God-friends are hard to find in this life.

I also believe that cussing, cursing and swearing can also be included in what the Bible calls “profane babblings.” There are many Christians who still like to cuss out of their flesh, even as they continue to grow in the Lord.

However, sooner or later what you will find out as you start to draw closer to the Lord in your own personal relationship and walk with Him, is that your desire to want to keep on cussing will start to wane. Not only will you be receiving the conviction of the Holy Spirit Himself when you do start to cuss, but you will also find your own natural desire to want to keep on cussing will start to wane and lessen.
The reason for this is because you will find yourself wanting to become more pleasing to the Lord in your actions, in your thoughts and in your spoken words. Your desire to want to please God will increase and once it does, you will start to lose all desire to want to cuss anymore because you will sense how displeasing it is to Him and that He really does find it offensive.

If you really stop and examine all of the cuss and curse words we use, most of them are either attacks directly against God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit, or they have to do with some vile and nasty bodily functions. Many people cuss out of habit and never really stop and think of the actual words they are using when they are cussing.

Just remember, God the Father is watching your every movement, your every thought and your every action. He sees and hears every thought and every word that comes out of your mouth. If we really love our one and only true Lord, then we will lose all desire to want to cuss, curse or swear in His sight. It’s not only offensive to Him, but it’s also offensive to anyone else who may be around you when you start spouting off.

5. God Will Judge You By Your Words

I will end these Scripture verses with one very strong and powerful verse direct from Jesus Himself. In this verse, Jesus tells us that we will have to give a direct account to Him for “every idle word” that we may speak in this life. He says that we will either be “justified” by the good words we have spoken in our lives or be “condemned” by any of the bad words we may have spoken.

In other words, not only does God the Father want us to get our speech in order in how we relate to other people, but He is also going to be holding every single one us personally accountable with how we have spoken and expressed ourselves to other people in this life.

This is a very serious warning being given to us by our Lord – and how we talk and express ourselves to other people in this life should never, ever be taken for granted.

As the first verse has told us, God has given each and everyone us a certain amount of power with the words that we can speak out to other people – and those words can either bring life or death to the person we are speaking to.

Here is this most solemn verse:

“But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.” (Matthew 12:36)

Not only will the kinds of words you speak out to others in this life determine how many good friends you may end up making or how good those personal friendships will end up being, but your own words are also going to be appropriately judged by the Lord Himself on your day of judgment with Him.
Conclusion

The Golden Rule will really apply to this part of our walk with the Lord. The Golden Rule says that we should treat others like we would want them to treat us. If you apply this rule to this particular topic – you could then say that we should “speak to others in the way that we would want them to speak to us.”

As I said at the top of this article, every single one of us can flashback and recall all of the times that good words spoken to us in a positive, loving and edifying manner have made us feel really good and have helped us to build up our own levels of self-esteem and self-confidence.

However, we can also recall all of the times that words spoken to us in a hateful, condescending, and critical manner have made us feel as low as we could possibly go.

When those kinds of negative words start cutting right through you like a knife, they can penetrate deep into your heart and soul and cause damage to the emotions and psyche of a person – especially if that person is not old or mature enough to be able to consider the negative source from where they are coming from, and then realize that his self-worth as a person is not based upon what other people may think about him, but only what God thinks about him.

With the way the Lord has worded all of the above verses, you can really tell that this is one area that He wants every single one of us to get a good and solid grip on.

There is simply no excuse, especially for Christians, for anyone to be talking to other people in demeaning, critical and condescending ways. If we are all equal in the eyes of God, then we should all be looking at everyone else in this life as an equal – not as someone who may be better or lesser than us.

If you really study the specific wording in all of the above verses, you will have more than enough knowledge and revelation from the Lord on how to clean up your speech and how to properly express yourself to other people in this life.

This is one area where the Holy Spirit will move in on very strongly in order to give you a helping hand. You will literally sense and sometimes actually feel Him guiding some of your words and how you should be expressing yourself to other people depending on the nature and the intensity of the conversation that is taking place.

Just learn to be sensitive to His leadings and His guidance as to what to say and how to say it. You can learn how to flow with Him in this area if you really have the desire to want to improve yourself in this area.

Remember – God the Father has given you a powerful gift with the power that He has allowed you to have residing in your own tongue. You have the power of life and death in your tongue. Use that power wisely. Use that power to bring life, love, encouragement and edification into other people’s lives.
If you do, then not only will God be highly rewarding you once you enter into heaven, but you will also be receiving golden treasures down here on this earth – which will be all the good, personal relationships you will be able to make and establish with the other people in your life – and all of those good, personal relationships will be permanent and eternal treasures that you will be able to carry over with you into the next life.

Nothing will draw people to you quicker and easier than being able to talk and express yourself to other people in the exact same way that Jesus would do if He was still walking down here on this earth. Let Jesus be your perfect role model. Study how Jesus expressed Himself when He was walking down here on this earth. Learn to pattern your own speech after the way He talked and expressed Himself to other people.

God the Father’s ultimate and highest aim for every single one of us is to transform, shape and mold us into the express image of His Son Jesus Christ – and part of this sanctification process will be the Holy Spirit coming after our word and speech life.

Let the Holy Spirit dig and get into your word life with how you talk and express yourself to other people, and I guarantee you that He will make some astounding changes in this area if you are willing to work with Him in the specific areas that He will want to target for improvement.