

Bedford Bulletin

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**“GOD
Made us
Alive...”**

**Together
with Christ**

Ephesians 2:5

Speak Softly and Carry...

Theodore (Teddy) Roosevelt the 26th U.S. president was known for coining the phrase, “Speak softly and carry a big stick; you will go far”. Christians also must speak softly but, in place of a big stick we must carry something much more powerful, much more persuasive—the word of God. Peter commanded, *“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear”* (1 Pet. 3:15). Carry God’s word in your heart, that is the big stick, and that is what will help you go far.

Solomon wrote, *“The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable, But the mouth of the wicked what is perverse”* (Prov. 10:32), and *“The heart of the righteous studies how to answer, But the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil”* (Prov. 15:28). Everywhere the apostles went, they spoke the word of God. In fact because of a great persecution that arose against the church in Jerusalem the saints were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles, and those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word (Acts 8:1-4).

Today we are no different in that when we do go out into the world, we need to speak words that are able to overpower anxiety. Solomon wrote, *“Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, but a good word makes it glad”* (Prov. 12:25). Just think, in these uncertain times how many people are dealing with anxiety? How grateful might they be at the hearing of the powerful word of God that can make a depressed heart glad? Just by sharing Jesus’ good news.

Knowing & Doing God's Will

Proverbs 11:14

When we are troubled by others, we need to keep in mind that Jesus was also troubled by some. Even though the officials at that time, lied, oppressed, and even afflicted our Lord, He didn't play their game and was "above" all that. He did not spit-out mean things about them, even though they were without doubt—in the wrong. Paul, like all of us, can learn from the Master's example and testimony how we should speak, and respond to the world around us. Like Jesus, we must act in love, and with control over every word that comes from our mouths. We are warned by the Lord that what we say will be remembered on the Day of the Lord. Jesus said, "*But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment*" (Matt. 12:36). We cannot get caught up in the slinging of mud, true or not true, when we talk about our leaders in this country, or any other person for that matter.

Paul said, "*speaking the truth in love*" (Eph. 4:15), that's the advice that comes to us through inspiration. We cannot make railing accusations with mean spirited words, and expect the other side to hear us, let alone accept us. Truth must be spoken but tempered with love so that one may receive it and be changed by it. We have heard, "He started it!" But what if the other side is spitting out mean words at us? Solomon said, "*A soft answer turns away wrath...*" (Prov. 15:1a). In the same chapter Solomon says, "*A wholesome tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit.*" (v.4). Other translations use words like "*soothing tongue*" (NASB), "*gentle tongue*" (ESV) and the Contemporary English Version has, "*Kind words are good medicine*". The Hebrew word that is translated in all these ways is (mar-pay') and literally means "healing". Used in Proverbs 12 and 18b Solomon again writes, "*...But the tongue of the wise promotes health.*"

John taught (1 John 4:20), "*If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?*" Concerning the tongue James says, "*It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.*"⁹ *With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the [f]similitude of God.*¹⁰ *Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so*" (James 3:8-10). Similitude means, "likeness", therefore, it is sin to curse others because all are made in the likeness of God. "*For God so loved the world that He gave His only*

begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” We all sin and fall short (Rom. 3:23) because we’re not God, but we can be godly, because out of His love He gave us who have believed and obeyed Him, the Spirit of Truth (1 John 4:6). Now if the God of Creation loves them, we also must do the same. Luke recorded Jesus saying, “A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks” (Luke 6:45). If we’re looking into the mirror of our soul, that is God’s word, we’ll know what’s in our hearts, the love of God or the evil of the Devil, by what comes out of our mouths in times of trial. If it’s imitating those of the world around us then Paul’s advice is, “Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, ^[a]clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. ³² And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you” (Eph. 4:31-32).



“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.”

Let’s be the lights (Matt. 5:14) that are reflective of the Lord, and not this

old sinful world, not reflecting evil, but good. *“Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary ^[h]edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers” (Eph. 4:29). Let’s not tear others down with our words but build them up that they may see the goodness of God in us. The Psalmist give good advice as to how we should use our words saying, “Oh, give thanks to the Lord! Call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the peoples! ² Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him; Talk of all His wondrous works! ³ Glory in His holy name; Let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the Lord! ⁴ Seek the Lord and His strength; Seek His face evermore!” (Psalm 105:1-5). Sound advice for us all.*

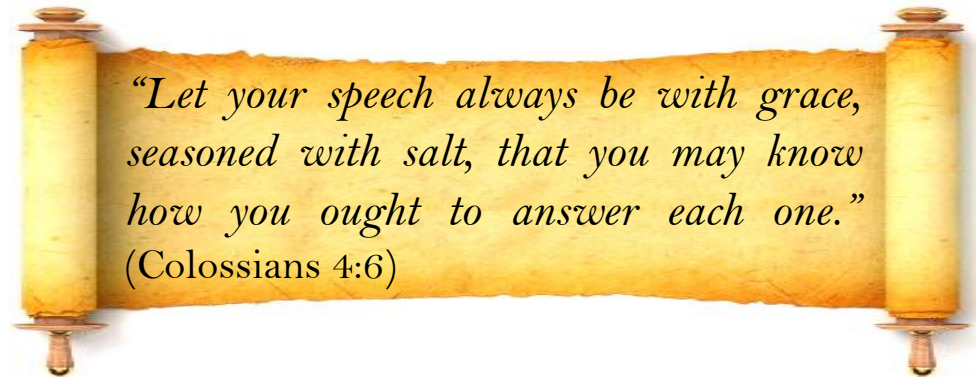
Remember that we can say things that help others or tear them down. God has every reason to tear us down, but what did He do? Loved us, gave us His Son, His Word of life, and hope. Shouldn’t we be doing the same for the lost, hungry souls? From experience I know I needed it, and was beyond words, when I finally received it.

Speaking the word of the Lord, concerning the Great Day of God, Malachi said, *“For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, and all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up, ’ Says the Lord of hosts, ‘That will leave them neither root nor branch. ² But to you who fear My name The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings; And you shall go out and grow fat like stall-fed calves” (Malachi 4:1-2). Jesus will “arise*

with healing in His wings” coming to all who fear His name, and they will grow strong spiritually.

Always remember, “...whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him” (Col. 3:17).

As always,
in Love
Dave Scarpino



Our faithful Creator is worthy to be praised in this assembly. All praise to Him who reigns above in majesty supreme! He gave His Son to die, for all mankind, that He might redeem all. Our blessed Redeemer suffered and died for our sins and is now risen and sitting at the right hand of God as Head of the church. Let us offer the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, knowing that He is the author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him. (Hebrews 5:8-9) “**Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!**” (Isaiah 6:3)

“A man has joy by the answer of his mouth, and a word spoken in due season, how good it is!” (Proverbs 15:23)

