

Words

- We are going to be talking about our words today
- Did you know that English has between – 140 000 and 1 000 000 words
 - That's a big difference... (sometimes I wonder where some of these stats come from right??!)
 - but it depends on how you define a word?
 - Who here plays scrabble from time to time?
 - If you play scrabble you will know that it can get heated...
 - Would the average – non scrabble playing - person accept: “aa” (slide)
 - But really Active words, passive words, outdated words, now words, slang –
 - 1m came from Google, digital research on 5m books)
 - Now... if you speak English..we use around 2000 – 2500 regularly
 - some of you more....(you know who you are)
 - and I'm not mentioning names...
- Arabic can go as high as 12 million words (as each word can have different forms)
- 3000-5000 words would allow you to be fluent in Japanese (must be the right words)
- 300 000 words in isiZulu
- Can some of the older members tell me what culture that is? (Klingon)
 - They have their own language
 - About 3000 words..
 - Has its own institute, Shakespeare has been translated into Klingon
 - About 20-30 fluent speakers in the world
- Words are powerful!!
- They allow us to communicate...
- And the Bible guides us on how to use them...
- Read with me...

James 3:3-6 READ

- ³When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. ⁴Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. ⁵Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. ⁶The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body.
- Brutal!
- The tongue is a small muscle... but it is powerful...

- We can **say things** that:
 - **Tear** people down...
 - **Hurt** their feelings...
 - **Twist** their hearts..
 - Words can **break**...(even when you don't mean them to..)
- But... **words** can **also build**..
- You can use words to:
 - **Encourage**..
 - To **help**..
 - **Redirect** their lives...
 - Words **make a difference**... they **really do**..
- And God holds us to account for our words...
- Jesus said in **Matthew 12:36-37** "But I tell you that **men will have to give account** on the day of judgment for every **careless word** they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned."
- By... your... words...

So lets look at **4 points on the topic of "words"**...

(1) Words expose your heart

- In **Matt. 12:34** it says: *'For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks.'*
- Now **our words** are simply a **window** into **our hearts**...
- The **things that come out** of our mouths are a reflection of **who we are inside**...
 - **Angry** words – come from an **hurting & angry heart**
 - **Rude** words – often come from an **unhappy heart**
 - **Spiteful** words – come from a **bitter heart**
 - **Unkind** words come from a **selfish heart**
 - **Gossip** often comes from a **mean, jealous or insecure heart**

Illust: When I was **new in my relationship with Maura** I used to **take opportunity** to **poke fun** at her in **public settings**

- Eventually she confronted me on it..
- Now... what I thought was that I was "**just keeping things light**"...(ouch..)
- But **what came out** was a **lack of respect, unkindness, selfishness** and **personal insecurity**...
- It was there **in my heart**... coming out my mouth...
- We **can't separate WHAT** we say and **what's in our heart**...
- Your **words expose** your **heart**

(2) Talking too much is a sin

- Now I wasn't sure whether to put this into the lesson because I can talk too much...
- But I think some of us need to hear this because its in the Bible..

Proverbs 10:19

When there are many words, sin is unavoidable,
but the one who controls his lips is wise. (how's that?... many words... sin is unavoidable)

- Talking too much is often a sign of all kinds of other problems in your heart:
 - Pride... thinking your opinion is best and most important..
 - You know what I see when someone is at a table talking the whole time... dominating the conversation... not letting the rest speak...
 - I look across to the quieter ones and I see this...(roll eye emoji)
 - Selfishness
 - When YOU need YOUR emotional needs met...
 - Where YOU need to get it all out so YOU can feel better...
- Sometimes we just need to hold back
- If there are tough situations and you don't know what to say...
- In the words of Ronan Keating: **"Sometimes...you say it best when you say nothing at all."**

(3) Be careful with reckless words..

- I remember a situation clear as day.. about 13-14 years ago...
 - We were sitting in a group sharing about our strengths...
 - And out of nowhere.. I said.. Maura has the gift of being controlling...
 - (so unkind... in a public setting... clearly I had issues...)

Reckless words!

- Prov 12v18 says that *Reckless words pierce like a sword!*
 - I've often said things that have caused harm without meaning it
 - And have felt okay about the harm based on the fact that my intentions werent to cause any hurt...
 - But good intentions aren't enough!!
 - Reckless words pierce and we need to be careful what we say!!
- When Maura's mum had cancer – someone said to her: "oh my aunt had cancer...but she died"
- Now – do we need to forgive each other? YES YES and always YES

- But in **Proverbs 29:20** it says *'Do you see a man who speaks in haste? There is more hope for a fool than for him.'*

The Good News Bible says it even more bluntly, **'There is more hope for a stupid fool than for someone who speaks without thinking.'** GNB

- If you are white – and you complain about the government – ever thought that it can be taken that you would prefer the old one back?...(insensitive)
 - Oh but I didn't mean it that way...
 - Reckless...
- We need to be careful!!!
 - Complimenting other peoples **spouse** – must be careful
 - Talking about **weight...** Commenting on how **someone looks**
 - Talking about things you have **no experience** in
 - Giving **advice**
 - Even **encouragement** – needs to be **encouraging!**
- **When is it okay** to **say to someone...** **"wow you look tired!!" ..?**
- NEVER...

A while ago

- Maura called me – and I answered: "Yes Satan"
- Now it didn't go down well
- And even though – I told her 10 x that I was joking (actually I was quoting from Ace Ventura)
- Maura remembers clearly the day I called her Satan

Proverbs 26:18-19

Like a madman shooting firebrands or deadly arrows is a man who deceives his neighbor and says, "I was only joking!"

- **Sometimes** we can be so so **insensitive!!!!**
- Church – we **need to be careful!**
- We need to be sensitive when we speak?
- **When we're not** we:
 - We **push** people away
 - We **create a bad impression** of **ourselves** and **of Christianity**
 - We can **hurt people** and **not even know it**
 - We **hurt those we love**

- **James 3:17** says that “Wisdom that comes from heaven is...considerate”
 - How beautiful is that!?
 - When you are considerate it shows a wisdom from heaven...
 - Some of us in here need to grow in being more considerate with our words...
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Finally...

4. focus on Words That Heal

- We can do amazing things with our words!!
- Kind, generous, upbuilding words are amazing healers!!
- Paul said to the Colossians: ‘Let your conversation be always full of grace.’ (Col. 4:6)
- How often?... ALWAYS...
 - As you walk out of the service today... you can heal...
 - As you have conversations... you can heal...
 - In meetings at work.. you can be the one that stands out... why?.. because your conversation is full of grace...
- What about when we are mad!!?... always...
- What about if I disagree with someone?... always..
- What if I’ve been hurt?... always...
- Now... I am a believer that we need to have tough conversations sometimes right??
 - Good friends need to be able to say the truth even when it hurts...
 - ...But always ...full ...of grace...

In **Proverbs 12:19** we only read half earlier...

Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

The tongue of the wise brings healing...

in Proverbs 12:25 says that “Anxiety weighs down the heart, but a kind word cheers it up”

- Maybe its just me but life is hectic isnt it
- We are all under pressure
- And yes we need to hear the truth and we need to be disciplined and corrected and all those things.
 - But what we need to hear A LOT!!
 - Is “Your doing okay!”

- you're a hero for hanging in there
- things arent perfect – but well done!!
- As a parent! You are so so so aware of your failings
 - Yes – you need to discuss those regularly
 - But you just need to hear that you are doing something RIGHT!!

Proverbs 16:24

Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.

To close of today... and before we have communion...one last thought...

- We can't all afford a therapist...
- But you know what helps us heal from our hurts...
- Sincere, kind words..
- If you can experience love and acceptance ...“**IN SPITE OF THE TERRIBLE THINGS YOU HAVE DONE, BEEN THROUGH OR HAD DONE TO YOU**” – healing can take place...
- We carry so many burdens on our shoulders
 - Our fears...
 - Our anxiety...
 - Our guilt...
 - Our regrets...
- We all just need to hear healing words sometimes...

In fact...Paul sums up the whole lesson with this:

Eph. 4:29 *'Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.'*

- Church... I pray we will be kind with our words...
- That they will be used to build...
- And that if we need to work on our hearts to make it happen... we will do just that..

Lets close with a prayer