

THROWING SHADE

WEEK 2: WORDS FROM THE HEART

DAY 1: READ MARK 12:28-34, JAMES 3:8-12

Last week, we focused closely on this passage from James. How does Jesus' answer to the scribe in Mark affect your understanding of the tongue, its purpose and potential? In Mark 12:30-31, Jesus very clearly says we're to love the Lord with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength and love others as ourselves. How does Jesus' response (and God's commandments) contrast James' description of how we use our tongues? Practically speaking, what would practicing these commandments look like in your life? What would be different? What needs to be different? Why?

DAY 2: READ LUKE 6:27-45, PROVERBS 4:23-25

One of the things we see in this passage in Luke is that the kind of Christ-like love for those around us is neither easy nor obvious, but Jesus has commanded us to do it in the same ways we've received mercy, love and compassion from our Heavenly Father. Do you find yourself making intentional decisions to love like in these passages or are you on autopilot, loving the people who love us back, being generous with others who are generous back to us, being "Christian" to other "Christians," etc.? What about the ways you use your words? Explain.

DAY 3: READ MATTHEW 15:1-20

Jesus has some extremely strong words here, both about the condition of our hearts and the corrupting things that come from our mouths. Why is this important? Look at verses 18-20. Jesus makes a clear point that the things coming from our tongues stem from the condition of our hearts. Why is that? How have you experienced this?



DAY 4: READ PSALM 51, LUKE 6:39-42

If we are to use our tongues to speak the love of Jesus into others, we must check the condition of our own hearts. Just like good fruit comes from good trees and bad fruit comes from bad trees, if we are unwilling to repent or receive the cleansing love of Jesus, how can we ever expect to use our tongues to spread the love of God? Reflect on the areas of your heart and in your life that still need to be cleansed and transformed by the blood of Jesus. Prayerfully submit those things to Him. Praise Him in advance for the work He has already done and is sure to continue doing.

DAY 5: READ ROMANS 12

As we continue focusing on the roles our tongues play in a lifestyle of Christ-following, Romans paints a beautiful picture of what it should look like for all of us to use our bodies in obedience to Jesus. What does Paul's picture in this passage look like in the context of using our tongues? Practically speaking, how does this encourage or inspire you to use your words? How does it challenge you? What differs from how you currently use your words?

DAY 6: READ JEREMIAH 17:5-13

Over and over in scripture, we read that the Lord knows the condition of our hearts; even so, He still decided to love and rescue us from the devastation we deserve. While we strive to control our mouths and how we respond when we're on the receiving end of the blows, let these passages encourage you to draw deeper in trust, dependence and confidence in our God who loves us. He is our sole source of salvation, the sole means for our healing and the one guide to lead us through it all. Take time to reflect and give up control over the things you're still clutching onto, whether done out of a desire to maintain control or an unwillingness to let God's healing totally transform you. Give it all away.

DAY 7: READ PHILIPPIANS 4:4-8, PSALM 24

Let today be a day of worship, thanking God for the things He's done and casting all your anxieties, troubles, anger and mistrust at the feet of Jesus, knowing He hears you and loves you. Reveal your wounds to Him and with thanksgiving, humility and prayer, rejoice and watch Him care for you. Be prepared to use your mouth to share the ways you've witnessed God care for you with others!