

Pastor Dwight Wagner
Garden Heights Baptist Church
Erie, PA
March 7, 2010

“Just the F.A.C.T.S.” Varied Proverbs

Introduction

A judge speaks some words and the guilty defendant is taken off to his jail cell to start serving his sentence. The President of the United States speaks and his words reverberate around the world. The Federal Reserve Chairman or Warren Buffet speaks and stock markets around the world react. A gossip makes a phone call and reputations are blemished or perhaps ruined. One angry rant by a friend or a loved one and a relationship that enjoyed years of joy is greatly impacted. A skeptical professor makes a snide remark in a lecture and a student's faith is destroyed.

As we read this morning from James 3, the tongue is ravaging fire, a dangerous animal, and a deadly poison. Solomon spoke wisely and truly, “Death and life are in the power of the tongue.” (Proverbs 18:21).

When it comes to living wisely in a broken world, there is no other subject that requires more biblical wisdom than our speech. God desires that we speak wise words. Foolish words are one of the top contributors to our broken, messed up world. We speak an average of 15,000 words a day, not to mention all the words we “speak” today through email, blogging, Facebook, and texting. It has been estimated that from the first “good morning” to the last “good night,” the average person engages in 30 conversations a day; some of you average more than that, some of you, less. Statisticians have estimated that each of us will spend 13 years of our life talking, and every day, our words could write a book of 50-60 pages. In a year, if we are just average, we could author 264 books of over 200 pages, just with our words. You can do more than that if you can speak in excess of 300 words per minute, as some of us are able to do, or if you talk incessantly at any speed,” writes John MacArthur. Proverbs recognizes how important our words are, addressing our speech approximately 150 times in 915 verses. That's about 16% of the entire book. There is more teaching in the book of Proverbs on the use of the tongue than any other subject.

When it comes to living in this broken world, we need to choose wise words over foolish words. Foolish words bring incredible brokenness. “A babbling fool will come to ruin.” (Proverbs 10:10). “A fool's mouth is his ruin, and his lips are a snare to his soul.” (Proverbs 18:7). “An evil man is ensnared by the transgression of his lips.” (Proverbs 12:13). So much in this broken world is caused by our communication. And yet there is also much power for restoration in the tongue. “There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.” (Proverbs 12:18).

Think with me just for a moment about some of the most basic truths about our speech or words.

- **Words are an incredible gift from God (Proverbs 4:22; 10:11, 20, 21)**

Think about the gift of the tongue, the gift of speech, the gift of language. It's so natural that we forget it is a gift from God. Indeed, it is part of the image of God. God spoke to Adam, Adam spoke with Eve, Adam named all the animals and gave a perfect title to his wife, Satan used communication to persuade Eve and Eve to invite Adam to eat. And that is all just in the Garden of Eden.

Think of the amazing qualities of the tongue. The tongue can bring healing. "My son, be attentive to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Let them not escape from your sight; keep them within your heart. For they are life to those who find them, and healing to all their flesh." (Proverbs 4:20-22). The tongue serves as refreshing water. "The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life, but the mouth of the wicked conceals violence." (Proverbs 10:11). The tongue is like precious metal "The tongue of the righteous is choice silver; the heart of the wicked is of little worth." (Proverbs 10:20). The tongue gives nourishing and life-giving food. "The lips of the righteous feed many, but fools die for lack of sense." (Proverbs 10:21).

- **Words can be used for good**

This all points to the truth that the tongue can be used for good. We will look at this more in depth later in the message. Tongues can bring peace, restore brokenness, instruct, rescue, encourage, deliver, give hope, and lift up.

- **Words can be used for evil**

Sadly tongues can be used for evil. The same tongue on the same day in the same conversation can be used for both for good and evil. "From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be." (James 3:10).

A suicide's body was found floating in a river and a note was written on her person. The note had only two words written on it: "They said." Do we realize what a word from our tongues can do? It can wreck a local church, mar a child for life, disrupt the harmony of a business office and destroy a marriage.

Oh, my friends, there is so much concern about international terrorism in the world today—about weapons of mass destruction. We should rightly be concerned about international peace and our national security. But I have something that concerns my heart even more—I am concerned about something that each one of us has within us—a weapon of mass destruction—our tongues.

In recent years, there have been much concern about violence in the workplace, violence in public setting, so that in many public buildings today you have to go through metal detectors. But I wonder this morning, how many of us, if we had to have walked through "a tongue detector" before entering the sanctuary this morning—a detector that

would have revealed all the words we spoke this week—how many of us would be mortified to have others discover the violence we did with our tongues.

Why is there so much devastation in our speech? Why did we wage war on another human being, many times those we love, this week? Why? You know there is so much talk today about gun violence. You read headlines “Guns kill!” We hear it so often we forget that guns don’t kill people. People kill! And along the same lines, it is not our tongues that are inherently evil. It is our hearts! Jesus in unusual clarity declares, “How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil. I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak,” (Matthew 12:34-36).

- **Only God can help us with our words**

This seems indeed to be bad news. Our hearts are deceitful and above all things desperately wicked. Who can know them? And so are our tongues! But as we will learn this morning as well—there is hope for our tongues. And that hope lies in a changed heart—a heart that is transformed by the grace of God and by the love of Christ. More on this later, but my point right now is only God can ultimately help us with our words. No speech therapist, no 12-step program, and no anger management group can give lasting hope! But God can and the gospel can. Until we realize this, we will go on sinning with our tongues: lying, gossiping, slandering, speaking before we think, and talking too much.

What I am about to say for the next several minutes will be addressed to sons and daughters of God—those who are repenting of their sin and believing the gospel already. If you are not one of God’s children by faith in Jesus Christ yet or you have no idea what that means, then be patient, for I want to address you specifically in just a few minutes, but for a few moments I want to proclaim God’s Word to those who have already had “open heart” surgery, performed by the Spirit of God. For the Bible describes those who have been redeemed by the cross work of Jesus Christ as those who have been given new hearts. God has taken our stony, cold hearts and given us hearts of flesh. He has transformed our minds so what we once considered was the foolishness of the gospel, we now understand is the wisdom of God that leaves to the eternal salvation of our souls.

And yet we still struggle with our words. Our hearts still are restless and wander and our speech shows it. We want to put off foolish speech and put on wise words. What does biblical wisdom teach us about our words, our communication and speech? I read much on this subject in recent weeks and I would like to present one idea that I gleaned from author Ken Wingate in his book *A Father’s Gift*. I am using this because it is biblical, practical, and memorable. The acronym that he suggests is not the last word on wise words. It is not comprehensive either. But it is a place to start. We will call it “Just the F.A.C.T.S.” as in the old Dragnet show, “Just the facts, sir!” The FACTS on words. I want to explain five elements of wise words and urge to use this checklist in your life daily, even hourly, in every conversation you have.

Just the Facts

- **Speak few words** (Proverbs 10:19; 13:3; 15:2; 17:27-28; 29:20)

First, wise speech means we must speak few words. "When words are many, transgression is not lacking, but whoever restrains his lips is prudent." (Proverbs 10:19). "Whoever restrains his words has knowledge, and he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding. Even a fool who keeps silent is considered wise; when he closes his lips, he is deemed intelligent." (Proverbs 17:27-28).

As has often been said, "Its better to keep your mouth shut and let others think you're a fool than to open your mouth and remove all doubt."

Now some people are naturally extroverted while others are more introverted. These wise words about few words isn't addressing personality types, but rather it is speaking of the wisdom of guarding your words, of restraining your words.

As we read in James, not many should become teachers for teachers derive their living from their words. And those who speak more are likely to stumble more in their speech.

Speak few words in the heat of an argument, when you are tempted to dig up and throw the past in someone's face, and when you are uncertain of what to say.

Speaking few words is also a part of serving and loving others by—listening. If you are talking all the time, you can't listen. Listen well and you will be considered a great "conversationalist." Speaking few words breeds good listeners, which are increasingly rare today. We are big on talk, small on listening. Listening involves letting others speak without interruption, giving them your undivided attention, and making sure you really understand what the other person is saying.

- **Speak apt words** (Proverbs 10:32; 15:23, 28; 18:13; 25:11-12; 29:20)

Secondly, the book of Proverbs urges us to speak apt words. An apt word could be defined as . . .

- The right words at the right time in the right way

"The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable." (Proverbs 10:32).

"To make an apt answer is a joy to a man, and a word in season, how good it is!" (Proverbs 15:23).

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver. Like a gold ring or an ornament of gold is a wise reprove to a listening ear." (Proverbs 25:11-12).

This last verse is so picturesque. Gold speaks of value and attractiveness—winsome words. "Apples of gold" suggest skilled craftsmanship reflected in a form pleasing to the eye. Skillful words. "Setting" speaks of something which is "well-suited" for the circumstances. Timely words, appropriate words. And silver speaks of beauty. Apt words are beautiful words. The right words at the right time in the right way.

- **Don't speak hasty words**

“At the right time words!” Proverbs addresses this plainly.

"The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things." (Proverbs 15:28).

"If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame." (Proverbs 18:13).

"Do you see a man who is hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him." (Proverbs 29:20).

- **Some questions**

“Right words at the right time in the right way” means we need to have ask some probing questions before we speak, specifically words of rebuke, correction or discipline:

- Is it better to remain silent? [This has been covered under few words]
- Do I have the right to speak? [Have I gotten the “log” out of my own eye]
- Is there a relationship of trust? [The stronger the relationship, the better]
- Have I asked for permission? [A humble heart, a serving heart]

Much more could be said about giving and receiving instruction, but this wise word is always 'in season': "Faithful are the wounds of a friends" (Proverbs 27:6).

Speaking few words and speaking apt words, knowing what to say and when to say it, is part of growing in biblical wisdom. The best way to do this is to be Word-centered and Word-saturated. "On the lips of him who has understanding, wisdom is found." (Proverbs 10:13). "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom." (Colossians 3:16).

Let your words be few, and let them be apt or appropriate! Were your words appropriate this week?

- **Speak calm words (Proverbs 14:29; 17:27; 29:11)**

Thirdly, speak calm words! Calm words!

"Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who has a hasty temper exalts folly." (Proverbs 14:29).

"Whoever restrains his words has knowledge, and he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding." (Proverbs 17:27).

"A fool gives full vent to his spirit, but a wise man quietly holds it back." (Proverbs 29:11).

- **Don't be angry (Proverbs 12:18; 15:18; 29:22)**

What are the opposite of calm words? I can think of at least three: angry words, quarrelsome words, and profane words.

"There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts." (Proverbs 12:18).

"A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but he who is slow to anger quiets contention. " (Proverbs 15:18).

"A man of wrath stirs up strife, and one given to anger causes much transgression. " (Proverbs 29:22).

"Speak when you are angry," wrote Ambrose Pierce, "and you will make the best speech you will ever regret." Oh, how great our sin is alone due to angry words.

- **Don't be quarrelsome** (Proverbs 15:1; 17:1; 14; 25:15)

Related and yet somewhat distinct: don't speak quarrelsome words. How much quarreling did you experience this week? Oh, was our Savior grieved this week in your life, brother or sister, husband and wife, children because of your quarreling. "It was his fault, he started it!" "But I don't want to do that!" "Why can't you ever help out in the kitchen?" "Where did you ever get that idea?"

Oh, what peace we often forfeit, oh what needless pain we bear because we forget that "a soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger" (Proverbs 15:1). How many Christian homes this week enjoyed plenty of food but also were houses full of strife? (Proverbs 17:1). Listen to biblical wisdom, "The beginning of strife is like letting out water, so quit before the quarrel breaks out. " (Proverbs 17:14). You don't have to yell and scream. You really don't! You don't have to rant and rave. Really, you don't. There is a better path. Hear this husbands, wives, teens, employees, dissatisfied citizens: "With patience a ruler may be persuaded, and a soft tongue will break a bone. " (Proverbs 25:15). And beware of saying, "That doesn't work." Are you saying God doesn't know what He is talking about?"

- **Don't be profane (Proverbs 26:2)**

And calm words would mean that we not use profanity. Cursing and inappropriate language should never cross the lips of Christians. We should put such improper speech far from us, which may be very difficult since some of you are surrounded by it in this world continually. But if you want to glorify God and enjoy His favor, live these words of wisdom. "Like a sparrow in its flitting, like a swallow in its flying, a curse that is causeless does not alight. " (Proverbs 26:2)."Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place." (Ephesians 5:4). After all, profanity is nothing more than a weak mind trying to express itself forcefully.

The world says, "Crank it up! Make yourself heard!" Biblical wisdom teaches, "Tone it down." The world says, "Fight fire with fire!" Biblical wisdom counters, "Fight fire with water." "Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city." (Proverbs 16:32).

How about this morning? Were your words calm? Did they have an edge? Did you speak words of anger on your way out the door to church? Are you prone to quarreling at the drop of a hat? You have blessed the Lord this week? Out of the same mouth did

cursing flow earlier this week? Or just plain mean words to others made in the image of God?

- **Speak true words**

- **Don't lie (Proverbs 12:19, 22; 24:26)**

The “t” in just the facts stands for “true” words. Speak true words. That means that we must put off sinful speech such as lying, gossip, and slander. This is the law of God and the wisdom of God. “Thou shalt not lie!”

"Truthful lips endure forever, but a lying tongue is but for a moment." (Proverbs 12:19).

"Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, but those who act faithfully are his delight." (Proverbs 12:22).

"Whoever gives an honest answer kisses the lips." (Proverbs 24:26).

Are you putting off falsehood? Are you learning to speak the truth in love? Outright lies are wrong and so are “little” lies or “white lies” of which the Bible knows nothing of. God desires truth in the inward parts and in our speech.

- **Don't gossip (Proverbs 18:8; 20:19; 26:20)**

"The words of a whisperer are like delicious morsels; they go down into the inner parts of the body." (Proverbs 18:8).

"For lack of wood the fire goes out, and where there is no whisperer, quarreling ceases." (Proverbs 26:20).

Gossip is the spreading of information that is usually unflattering or unproven. Gossip could be true. But truth isn't the only criteria for our speech. So is motive, intent, and timing.

- **Don't slander (Proverbs 10:18)**

Related to gossip by sinful bloodline is slander. Gossip, slander, rumor and insult are all cousins in the family of sin. Slander, however, is an intentionally false statement, aimed at hurting another's reputation. Slander is so destructive. If the gossiper is the terrorist who engages in guerrilla warfare, then the slanderer is the suicide bomber who is intent on destroying others and he doesn't mind going down with them.

Have you ever been the target of gossip or slander? I have. If you have, you know how much it hurts. I have had things said of my character, my intents, or my actions that got back to me somehow or another and there were so far-fetched, I wondered if they were really talking about me. Have you ever had that happen? If you have, you know that the saying, “Sticks and stones can break my bones, but words can never hurt me” is ridiculous. In modern words it's “NOT!”

"Whoever utters slander is a fool." (Proverbs 10:18). So why do we gossip and slander and lie? Two reasons: we think they are minor offenses somehow and it feeds our pride. We slander or gossip because it makes another person look bad and it makes us

look better. That's the bottom line. And we categorize a little gossip or slander as a little sin. But did you know that these sins are listed in the same lists alongside "murderers, haters of God, the sexually immoral, idolators, adulterers, men who practice homosexuality"—that such will not enter the kingdom of God (Romans 1:29-31; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10). Along the same line, listen to the sins of the flesh as cataloged in Galatians 5, "Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God." (Galatians 5:19-21). Sandwiched between immorality, sorcery and drunkenness and orgies are words related to angry, quarrelsome words. Oh, brothers and sisters, let us repent of unwise words and deeds—now!

How do we repent of such sins? How do we battle them? Two thoughts. Watch what you say. "For lack of wood the fire goes out, and where there is no whisperer, quarreling ceases." (Proverbs 26:20). And watch what you eat: "The words of a whisperer are like delicious morsels; they go down into the inner parts of the body." (Proverbs 18:8).

Did you gossip this week on your on-line chats? Did you slander someone else's character over the phone or in personal conversation? Did you lie—even a little?

- **Speak sweet words**

This leads to the final letter of the acronym: "S" for sweet words. Few, Apt, Calm, True, and finally sweet words. The ESV calls these "gracious words." "Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body." (Proverbs 16:24). "He . . . whose speech is gracious, will have the king as his friend." (Proverbs 22:11). What can sweet words do?

- **Peaceful words** (Proverbs 15:1)

Sweet words can bring peace instead of war. This is "the soft answer that diffuses wrath." Or the wisdom according to James that is "from above . . . peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy." (James 3:17).

- **Restoring words** (Proverbs 10:17; **25:12**; 28:23)

Sweet words can restore those who have sinned. "Like a gold ring or an ornament of gold is a wise reprove to a listening ear." (**Proverbs 25:12**).

- **Instructing words** (**Proverbs 15:7**; 13:14; 31:26)

Sweet words can instruct the ignorant, the simple, the young. "The lips of the wise spread knowledge." (Proverbs 15:7). Of the virtuous woman we learn, "She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue." (Proverbs 31:26). Sweet, instructing words involve parents teaching children, older women instructing younger women, godly men disciplining younger men, and spiritual leaders training the next generation. We are all teaching something to the next generation. Every local church is but one generation from extinction. So is every godly family.

- **Rescuing words (Proverbs 14:25; 24:11-12)**

Sweet words rescue the perishing.

"A truthful witness saves lives, but one who breathes out lies is deceitful." (Proverbs 14:25).

"Rescue those who are being taken away to death; hold back those who are stumbling to the slaughter. If you say, "Behold, we did not know this," does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who keeps watch over your soul know it, and will he not repay man according to his work?" (Proverbs 24:11-12).

Are you using your tongue to evangelize, to proclaim the gospel? If your words could be used of God to save one person and you were silent, would that not be a terrible sin? I know God is going to save whom He will, but the disobedience of silence is a sin nonetheless. Don't be disobedient to the heavenly command to proclaim the truth.

I confess my lack of passion in this area. I was so convicted this week by these words of Charles Spurgeon:

"Can you go through this world and always have a blind eye to the case of lost sinners? Can you come in and out of this Tabernacle and never speak to the strangers who throng these aisles? Will you let them go to hell unwarned and uninstructed? Can you hide yourselves from them! How dare you call yourselves Christians? How will you answer for it at last? Brothers, sisters, let us shake off this inhuman indifference, and, deny ourselves rest, ease, credit, that we may save poor sinking souls."

"Oh my brothers and sisters in Christ, if sinners will be damned, at least let them leap to hell over our bodies and if they will perish, let them perish with our arms about their knees, imploring them to stay, and not madly to destroy themselves. If hell must be filled, at least let it be filled in the teeth of our exertions, and let not one go there unwarned and unprayed for."

- **Encouraging words (Proverbs 12:25; 15:23; 16:24)**

"Anxiety in a man's heart weighs him down, but a good word makes him glad." (Proverbs 12:25). "To make an apt answer is a joy to a man, and a word in season, how good it is!" (Proverbs 15:23).

Who can you encourage this week with a personal word face-to face pointing out an evidence of grace in their lives? Who can you send a note, an e-mail, or call just to encourage them in some way. It won't cost you a dollar, won't take more than a few minutes, but it may just be what someone needs that day or this week. A word of encouragement is priceless and precious! Why do we express encouragement so rarely?

- **Delivering words (Proverbs 31:8-9)**

Sweet words can deliver those in oppression—physically or spiritually. "Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute. Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy." (Proverbs 31:8-9). Who is God calling you to speak up for?

- **Gentle words (Proverbs 15:4)**

"A gentle tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit." (Proverbs 15:4).

Christ, the Gospel, and our Words (Proverbs 4:23; 10:11, 23)

Now if you are not feeling conviction by now (like I am), you better have your pulse check or you better cry out to God to deliver you from the hardest of hard hearts! Ask him to resuscitate you (because you are dead) or to send a tsunami of mercy to break up the soil of your heart.

The rest of us are saying, "Who is capable of such speech? Who is this wise in his words?" Or you might be saying, "Who can deliver me from such sin? I am guilty, I sin in many ways, but surely the tongue is one of my biggest struggles."

This is where Christ and the gospel enters. The law has convicted us all. God's law declares us "guilty!" None are righteous when it comes to this standard! We have sinned and are sinning and coming short of the perfection, the glory of God!" Why can't we stop sinning with our tongues?

As I have said earlier--the reason our speech gets us into trouble has little to do with the tongue. We sin in our speech because we are sinners by nature who don't properly fear God. Before your speech patterns can be changed, your heart must be transformed." How can that happen? Pastor Jim Newheiser explains,

One of the names of Jesus is 'the Word' (John 1:1; see also Prov. 8:6-7). He is the perfect and final revelation from God. When on earth, he was the master of wise speech. Never once did he flatter, lie, gossip, or speak with sinful anger. Even when people tried to entrap or provoke him, 'while being reviled, He did not revile in return ... but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously' (1 Peter 2:23). Every word Jesus spoke was true. Out of his mouth flowed wisdom (10:31 a; John 7:38). His wise words continue to build up and give life to those who listen (John 6:63). Just as in Proverbs a sagacious king teaches wisdom to his people, King Jesus teaches you how to become wise and speak well. Ask God for wisdom through Christ, and he will answer abundantly

The good news is that the one and only God, who is holy, made us in his image to know Him. Part of his image was speech and language. God communicates His law to us and we were designed to be in relationship with Him. The first man and woman walked with God in the Garden. But we sinned and cut ourselves off from him. In His great love, God became a man in Jesus, lived a perfect life, and died on the cross, thus fulfilling the law Himself and taking on Himself the punishment for the sins of all those who would ever turn and trust in Him. He rose again from the dead, showing that God accepted Christ's sacrifice and that God's wrath against us had been exhausted. He now calls us to repent of our sins and to trust in Christ alone for the forgiveness of our sins. If we repent of our sin and trust in Christ, we are born again into a new life, an eternal life with God. Will you call on Christ today to save you? It is your only hope of everlasting life. Once you die, you have no second chance.

We have no righteous to offer God, but He offers us the righteousness of His Son, Jesus Christ. When we repent and trust Christ we become righteous and are reconciled to God. And God redeems our mouth so that "The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life." (Proverbs 10:11). Until that time, "Doing wrong is like a joke to a fool." (Proverbs 10:23). We can't speak good out of our evil hearts.

But when God saves we "will keep our hearts with all vigilance, for from it flows the springs of life." (Proverbs 4:23).

Growing wiser with our words

Brothers and sister in Christ, do you want to grow wiser in Christ. I highly recommend that you read and apply Paul Tripp's book for more insights in your war on words. He expands upon the following process for growing wiser with our words. I will give them to you and then read a final passage that summarizes all these points beautifully.

- Remember you speak for the King
- Repent of sinful words
 - Consider
 - Confess
 - Commit
 - Change
- Start speaking with the goal to serve others
- Choose words of truth, love, restraint, grace, and forgiveness

"Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. But that is not the way you learned Christ!— assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil. Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you." (Ephesians 4:15-32).

Oh, beloved remember this day, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits." (Proverbs 18:21).