

Pastor Scott

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**SERIES: LOVE NOW**  
**Part 3, "LOVE SPEAKS"**

Good morning, and welcome back home to your CVCHURCH family. We are a multicultural and intergenerational church. We're in our 3<sup>rd</sup> week of this exciting series I have entitled LOVE NOW, and I want to look at with you the idea that **LOVE SPEAKS**. Three weeks ago we studied the idea that God says **LOVE MATTERS**. Then last week our topic was **LOVE LASTS**.

This morning I want us to look at what the Bible has to say concerning how we love each other with our words. The Bible has a lot to say about the power of our mouths. Please look at Point I...

**I. The power of my mouth**

Would you please read out loud with me James 3:2, "**Indeed we all make many mistakes. For if we could control our tongues, we would be perfect and could also control ourselves in every other way.**"

God says that my tongue, your tongue, has the ability to heal or to destroy, to encourage or to discourage. Here, James teaches us that what we say and what we don't say are both important. The godly use of our tongues will bring encouragement, strength, direction, guidance, protection, and health and wholeness. Examples of a tongue that is out of control and untamed include gossiping, putting others down, bragging, manipulating, false teaching, exaggeration, complaining, flattering, and lying. James tells us that, before I speak, I need to ask myself three questions: **1) Is what I want to say true? 2) Is it necessary? 3) Is it kind?** James says if we can control our tongues we will become truly mature and can gain self mastery of ourselves in other areas. This is just how powerful our tongues are, and they can control us if we're not aware of their power.

In this passage of James he gives three examples of just how powerful yours and my mouths are.

### **A. My mouth directs where I go**

In James 3:3-4, he gives us two examples of the power of our tongue. A person can make a huge horse go wherever they want by means of a small bit. A huge ship can be made to go wherever its captain wants it to go with a small rudder. The point is, where is the direction of your life going right now? Loved ones, the Bible says it is your tongue that is taking you there. Are you depressed, are you negative, are you despondent, angry, unforgiving, fearful, anxious, worried, lost for direction? Take an inventory on what your tongue is saying. You might find that if you change what you're saying the direction of your life will change.

### **B. My mouth can destroy what I have**

James 3:5-6 says our words have the power to destroy our lives and others. James uses the metaphor of fire. Fire can be a good thing. But as we have all just witnessed in some terrifying ways, it can be devastating. How many of us have either said things or had things said about us that had a scorching effect? We've all seen how words have burned up careers, burned through relationships and have ruined dreams.

### **C. My mouth demonstrates who I really am**

In James 3:10-11, James uses the metaphor of a spring of water that will either have fresh water or bitter water, but it can't produce both. This is the problem James says with every one of us. There are times the words that come out of our mouths are fresh, clean and life giving. Other times the words are toxic, damning and destructive. Where does this ability to produce to different sources of water come from?

Jesus helps us to understand it. Look at what Jesus has to say about our communication. Where do our words come from? He tells us in Matthew 12:34, **"For whatever is in your heart will come out your mouth."** Whatever's in my

heart is going to spill out in my words. It's inevitable. You can try to keep it bottled up, but it eventually spills out in some little phrase, some little way you say something—it just comes out. What's in my heart spills out in my words. But that's not all.

There's another truth Jesus teaches us. In Mark 7:15, Jesus says, **“It's not what goes into your body that defiles you; you are defiled by what comes from your heart.”** You might be caught in this trap right now. It's an easy trap to get caught in. How do you change it? How do you get some hope with it?

You say, “Jesus Christ, will You change my heart? Because I want to speak life-giving words. And, will You change my words? Because I want to have the right kind of heart.

You ask for His help with both your heart and your words. And He will help. He will come and He will make a difference. God cares about our words, because He cares about the way that we love. Let's look at...

## **II. How to speak the language of love**

### **A. Love people with words that are honest**

That example comes from Jesus. Jesus, God in human flesh, walked this earth. He had dozens of conversations. In those conversations, you can see how He talked to people. And Jesus was honest. So, when we talk about learning how to communicate, we're talking about learning from the expert. We need an expert.

What really hit me as I looked at the honesty of the conversations of Jesus was I looked at my own life, and I realized that at times it can be a temptation to be nice and not honest. If I am just nice then there is no confrontation and we don't have to hash it out. The problem with this is I might be nice, but I'm not being honest, and the truth will not win out because being nice to avoid confronting hurts and disappointments is not acting in love.

Nice doesn't change anything. Nice doesn't move the relationship ahead. Nice doesn't change my heart or anybody else's heart. You don't learn anything through just being nice. The challenge in what Jesus said is that if I want to impact lives, I've got to be lovingly honest. How do you do it? How does this honesty thing work?

A phrase in Ephesians talks about how this works. Ephesians 4:15 says, **“Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of His body, the church.”** That's how it works. It takes truth, and it takes love. It takes both of those things—both truth and love. It can't be one or the other. With some people, all they have is truth. In fact, you're loving this part of the teaching. If you love being brutally honest with people, that very well could be a problem for you. When you're brutal with someone, they will walk away feeling like they have been beaten with the truth, and it can harden their heart towards the truth.

It takes speaking the truth in love. People need to know that what I'm saying to them might hurt, but I am saying it because I care so deeply for them, and I know that what they need to succeed in life is the truth.

It takes truth and love. However, there are some of us that focus so much on love creating a warm, safe, accepting place that we shy away from saying things to each other that really need to be said. Here is the strange thing. When I withhold the truth from you I am actually creating an unsafe place for you, because you know something should be said, and I am not saying it. You can actually walk away feeling unloved by me.

Proverbs 27:5, **“An open rebuke is better than hidden love!”** Loved ones, when push comes to shove in those intimate relationships and those really close friendships—true friendships—we want honest words. You want somebody who's going to tell you the truth when you're being rude, or condescending, or angry or selfish. Or, when you have the wrong perspective, and you're just not seeing things clearly. We all need those people in our lives who will dare to be honest with us. They're important. I want to encourage you to make the commitment to be more honest in how you relate to God, yourself and to others.

Please read with me 1 Corinthians 13:6, **“Love does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out.”** Love derives great joy from the truth and what it does in our lives and what it can do in other people’s lives. Love’s commitment to the truth is one source of its joy and the difference it can make to transform people’s lives.

Honest words have to start with the truth and honesty in my own heart first. If I’m going to be honest with other people, I’ve got to first be honest with myself. If not, they’re going to pick up on it in a second. So, first I ask myself, “Have I looked at this issue in my own life honestly?” Then I say to somebody else, “How about this?”

You love people with honest words. There’s a second way you and I love the people in our lives.

## **B. Love people with words that are strategic...**

...intentional and are meant to be a blessing. I say strategic words, because they are so powerful and potentially dangerous that we must be directed by the Holy Spirit how we speak to each other and even ourselves. Proverbs 12:18 says, **“Some people make cutting remarks, (NIV *“Reckless words pierce like a sword”*) but the words of the wise bring healing.”**

There are three areas where we must be extremely careful with our words: Anger, gossip and when we speak too many words.

**Anger.** Ephesians 4:26-27, **“And don’t sin by letting anger control you. Don’t let the sun go down while you are still angry, 27 for anger gives a foothold to the devil.”**

There is a poem by Will Rogers that said, **“Be careful of the words you say. Keep them soft and sweet. You never know from day to day, which ones you’ll have to eat.”** That is a very good one to remember.

Ogden Nash writes, **“To keep your marriage brimming with love in a loving cup, whenever you are wrong, admit it; whenever you’re right, shut up.”**

Another area that we need to be strategic in is in the area of **gossip**. There are a lot of areas of gossip to work on in our lives. It is disruptive to relationships.

Anger is often times a form of gossip. Please read with me Proverbs 16:28b, **“A troublemaker plants seeds of strife; gossip separates the best of friends.”**

Gossip is a dagger in a person’s soul. Here is the rule I want all of us who call CVCHURCH their home church to live by. If what I am going to say about someone puts them in a negative light or demeans or diminishes them in any way by their not being there, it is gossip, and it will destroy the relationship and unity in our CVCHURCH family. If you feel you must speak those words, Jesus says you must say it to the person yourself.

The third area of choosing to be more strategic is in just **saying too much**.

Words are so important that saying too much can get you in trouble. Proverbs

21:23 says, **“Watch your tongue and keep your mouth shut, and you will stay out of trouble.”** Here is another powerful verse, Proverbs 17:28, **“Even**

**fools are thought wise when they keep silent; with their mouths shut, they seem intelligent.”** We love each other by choosing honest words, by loving

people with strategically chosen words, and also a third way...

### **C. Love people with words that encourage**

Ephesians 4:29, **“Don’t use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.”**

Look under letter C where it says action homework: “This week I will choose...” If this is going to make any difference in our lives this week it’s only going to come as you and I choose to speak in certain ways in the relationships in our lives. It’s nice to talk about it here, but the difference comes in the words you and I choose to say this next week.

So as we close I'd like to do this together. I have listed for you five kinds of word groups that will help each one of us in how to SPEAK THE LANGUAGE OF LOVE. So as we walk through these, recognizing Jesus Christ wants to be a part of our words, wants to help us and strengthen us in this; it's really an exercise in saying, here's where I'm asking Him to strengthen me this week.

For instance, it might be with...

### **Encouraging words: Transform worry to joy**

Proverbs 12:25, "**Worry weighs a person down; an encouraging word cheers a person up.**" Lots of times when people are worried, we tend to get anxious, too, and want to get them through it. "Come on! Get over it! You don't have that much to worry about!" We use unkind words. But kind words when somebody's worried have the power to transform that worry into joy. Maybe that's the one for you this week you need to work on. Kind words are incredibly powerful.

### **Gentle words: Stop anger** (break through anger)

Proverbs 15:1 says, "**A gentle answer deflects anger, but harsh words make tempers flare.**" Gentle words break through anger. They're incredibly powerful. Harsh words are easy. But gentle words? It takes great courage. It takes incredible strength to say gentle words. In fact the word "gentle" literally means power under control. It takes incredible courage to say the gentle thing. When you're trying to do the right thing and somebody's unkind to you, it takes real strength to say back to them, "I understand why you'd be suspicious. I might be too. But I really am." Gentle words.

### **Pleasant words: Promote instruction**

Pleasant words encourage learning. Proverbs 16:21, "**The wise are known for their understanding, and pleasant words are persuasive.**"

Or maybe it's the next one...

## **Honest words: Make us feel loved**

Proverbs 24:26 says, “**An honest answer is like a kiss of friendship.**” What many husbands will do is not tell their wives the truth or approach an issue that they know she is not going to like, so they just avoid being honest and truthful with their soul mate. Notice the Bible says an honest answer is like a kiss of friendship. When we’re not honest with each other, there is some element of dishonesty and betrayal in the relationship. Here is the problem, love ones. It undermines our ability to grow in love with each other because the truth makes us feel loved, if we’re willing to hear it. We all like the easy truth. We all need to hear the hard truth also at times. There needs to be the appropriate mixture, but that is where using all five categories strategically will build cushion in your relationships to speak things at times you know will create tension.

## **Wise words: Heal broken hearts**

Proverbs 12:18, “**Thoughtless words can wound as deeply as any sword, but wisely spoken words can heal.**”

I know there are those of us today who have been deeply wounded by those who mean the most to us from conception to today. Here is the exciting thing, as you are consistent in reading God’s Word each day and you learn to talk to God throughout your day and listen to Him through impressions, leadings, picture and ideas, God can use your Holy Spirit inspired words to heal people’s broken minds, hearts and will. Wise words about God, wise words about God’s Word, wise words about God’s work—that’s the power in our words—the power to heal a broken heart, the power to promote learning in somebody’s life, to break through anger.

If you have the tendency to be overwhelmed with change, growth and being flexible, please just ask the Holy Spirit to help you be honest about which one is the best place for you to begin. Because I am the one who studied to teach this morning I have a headstart. I have been practicing with people in all five of these groups to touch, heal, encourage, strengthen and comfort them. I live for that—to be loved by God and to receive His love and then to share His love with others.



Prayer:

“Lord, do something with my words this week. Instead of me trying to control my tongue, I’m trusting You. I’m trusting You to guide my words. I’m asking for Your help. I’m asking for Your strength. Jesus, guide me into honest words—honest words of love. Guide me into careful words of love. Guide me into building words of love. I’m asking for Your help because I know You love me. I ask for it in Jesus’ name. Amen.”