

WISE WORDS are like DEEP WATERS; wisdom flows from the wise like a...

Bubbling Brook

Ministries

Proverbs 18:4

RIPPLES

BIBLES GIFTED	566
BOOKS GIFTED	556
DISCIPLING VISITS	910

We work [for our living], working hard with our own hands. When we are reviled and verbally abused, we bless. When we are persecuted, we take it patiently and endure. When we are slandered, we try to be conciliatory and answer softly. 1 Corinthians 4:12-13a

BUBBLES

"Hi, I wanted to thank you for all the time and effort you all put out in order to reach out and correspond with us! The newsletters, crosswords, word searches, Bibles, devotionals are all so greatly appreciated and such a blessing. I'm grateful that in being here God directed me to you. A positive correspondence I look forward to!"

"I received a little Bible, and I realized that Jesus sits beside me. I just opened my heart and eyes and there He was. I had tears once again, but of joy and happiness. I would very much like to give my life to serve God and spread his Word."



Raw Words

We've all gone through some form or another of verbal assault in our lives. It's left us reeling in emotion. Anger boiling in response, or a slow, menacing simmer. Utter shame, or reactive pride. Festering, exhausting inner turmoil. It leaves us raw. We can all agree that words have power. Proverbs 18:21 tells us that death and life are wrapped up in the power of the tongue. When you're in the midst of verbal onslaught, have you learned how to surrender your response to the divine direction of Holy Spirit? Do you recognize His prompt to refrain in emotional backlash from returning the barrage of unfair, selfish and destructive abuse that's been inflicted upon you? If so, there's a reason, an explanation, for that, and it's scattered all throughout His Word.

The Bible contains small, juicy morsels and nuggets about the tongue, but a great deal of them can be found in the Proverbs (there's definitely something to obtaining authority, and exerting it, over one's own mouth that leads to the attainment of wisdom). The ways in which we use ours, from a place of self-control or foolishness, has either great benefit or severe detriment. Proverbs 10:11, 19; 13:3; 14:3; 15:4, just to name a (very) few.

Paul and Apollos, in their ministry to the Corinthians, stressed the importance of keeping a way of life that exhibited humility and rejected boastfulness. Even in the face of horrible, undue abuse. First Corinthians chapter 4 contains a list of physical, emotional and verbal suffering that these Apostles faced as they lived in obedience to the calls of God on their lives. They were burdened with an intense desire to teach, express, and reflect Christ, not just in their preaching and teaching, but in the way they lived out each day. And they pressed into that burden knowing full well they were driving into the storm, not away from it. Imagine what kind of discipline it took them, after the first time they were viciously mocked by a crowd of angry, stubborn, refusing-to-listen lost, to first see their assailants from eyes of compassion and love, and then stand up again, maybe even the same

day, to keep on speaking Life. To make Him, and His salvation, known, and to set the example for the new Corinthian Believers, the early Church, who were watching. Talk about examples! Talk about harnessing verbal power!

I've been the target of verbal abuse for many years of my adult life. Most of it as a result of my own blindness and refusal to reject and stand up for myself (I really didn't know the me-in-Christ well enough yet). I stayed in relationships (romantic and platonic) where I was the catch-all for every mental health struggle of those with whom I shared my time and energy. Myself—and others—faced cruel and unusual emotional and mental abuse as a result of words, without cause or consequence. Being lost spiritually didn't help, either.

Recent events in my life have put me again on the receiving end of verbal assault; however, my response, or lack thereof, is a result of the training I have received from my Father and His Word. I know who I am in Him, and I know what He desires to work through me. As children of God, our identity isn't based in the natural—it's supernatural. We are REFLECTIONS of Christ. In my case, I don't answer to the abuser anymore. I don't have to defend myself to him either, even though that's usually the fleshly initial reflex.

It took me a very, very long time to be able to resist the temptation to mouth back. But I have an amazing example in Jesus, and in those from the Word like Paul who faced far greater abuse than I can ever imagine suffering. Let's face it, our ideas of pain don't compare to the list in 2 Corinthians 11. Instead, I find myself first seeking His refuge and guidance on how to express His love and character to the one who is trying to hurt me with their words. Sure, I still get angry, and I still vent to those closest to me who are willing (and consenting—that's important) to listen—I'm still growing (and will be until He comes back for me). But then, instead of looking for a solution somewhere in my own logic and ability, I find myself intimately conversing with, and ultimately asking

my Father, "How can I show Jesus in this situation?" This comes from a place of truly desiring never to wander from His side. Sure, we all do it, sometimes again and again, shamefully over the same distractions and temptations. Thankfully, blessedly, He never gets tired of reaching down and taking our little hands when we reach up and ask Papa to pick us up out of the dirt again.

There comes a point in your walk with the Lord where you've been to the end (the completely broken, hopeless, terrifying end) of yourself, you've stepped into Him as your real identity, and you have seen His mercy and grace and rescue. And then you move onward. You press in. It's a point in which you truly accept His desire for intimate, transformative relationship with you, and you reciprocate. And it's in that place, as you continue to spiritually develop, that you actually see that His love for you—in pulling you from the miry pit of mess that you were (and are)—is the same love that He has for every other human being, even for the ones who intentionally hurt you. It's there that you seek to share the overflowing love He's poured out on you, so that somehow, someday, that pitiful, broken individual lashing out at you might see themselves through the mirror of Jesus Christ, too. It's there that expansive growth takes place, in seeing through His eyes, loving with His love. It's there that you come to be expectant of, and even welcoming toward, that raw feeling, because you know it means progress. Even to the point of honestly and earnestly asking Him to redirect with His gentle hand of correction, knowing that in so asking, it might mean a painful pruning, one that might leave you feeling raw, but in a favorable way.

It is my dear hope that, as the Seed of the Word is sown in the soil of your heart, you allow it's shoots to take hold and hungrily yearn for the deep, penetrating growth of solid, strong roots. As you do, you'll discover, access and learn to utilize powers, like that of the tongue, to show Jesus to the people around you, even the abusers. ☺

Redirected Hindsight

The day after big events in our lives, we have a tendency to pause and reflect on our exhaustion, stress, worry, and fears. Maybe we just overextended our emotions, finances, expectations, and our physical bodies. As a result of this tendency, we may experience a lag in our emotions because we sometimes give all we have and doing so leaves us with our emotional account overdrawn. We may begin to realize we are overspent—emotionally, physically, and financially—which often leaves us anxious and depleted. Maybe the expectations of family and friends causes physical and mental stress.

So, how can we refocus, move forward and recover in every area of our life all at the same time? By remembering, praising and worshipping our Lord Jesus Christ! In Him, we have rest, peace, and stability. He has equipped us with everything we need to endure and run the race set before us. He wouldn't give us a race to run without knowing we could certainly win. Oftentimes, we focus on ourselves in personal ways and begin to self-doubt and self-discourage. However, we can choose to press into His promises, begin to then look forward to the next big life event, and the anticipated aftermath, and draw on our ability to recall the past with positive eyes. In that place, we ask, what could I, or should I, do differently? How could things have been better or made easier? Where should my focus truly rest next time?

God knows all that you would ever experience, feel, and need. His provision is multi-faceted in that not only does He know everything (past,

present and future). He has also made provision for you to receive everything necessary to help you recover, reset and begin again. You simply have to look!

A few simple self-care helps from His Word include:

Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you. 1 Peter 5:7

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses [who by faith have testified to the truth of God's absolute faithfulness], stripping off every unnecessary weight and the sin which so easily and cleverly entangles us, let us run with endurance and active persistence the race that is set before us. Hebrews 12:1

...in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, continue to make your requests known to God.. Philippians 4:6b

Will you run this race, reach beyond what you see and feel, and exercise active faith in the promise of complete and total support from the One who has designed all that you have, do, and will ever encounter on this journey? Will you seek with all your heart and strive for the prize?

I have fought the good and worthy and noble fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith [firmly guarding the gospel against error]. 1 Timothy 4:7

And he said to him, "Well done, good servant! Because you proved yourself faithful and trustworthy in a very little thing, you shall [now] have authority over ten cities [in my kingdom]." Luke 19:17 ☺

I have given to them the glory and honor which You have given Me, that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected and completed into one, so that the world may know [without any doubt] that You sent Me, and [that You] have loved them, just as You have loved Me. John 17:22-23

"I've experienced His Presence in the deepest, darkest hell that man can create...I have tested the promises of the Bible, and believe me, you can count on them."
—Corrie Ten Boom



ANNOUNCEMENTS

OUR PHONE NUMBER HAS CHANGED: (888) 580-7701

We are now blessing Beloveds in 4 states and 20 locations!

Anniversary Drawing: To celebrate our fourth year in ministry, on 3/14/22 we will be drawing two names from those currently on our monthly mailing list. One lady and one gentleman will be blessed with a new Bible to keep or share!

It is always an honor to receive your artwork—send in your pieces with permission to use, and it may be published in an upcoming newsletter!

Please note:

- We ship 2x/month, on or about the 15th and last day.
- If you have recently been transferred to a State prison, remember to send a letter requesting our services, so that you can continue receiving monthly newsletters!

GIVING

Glorify God with all your wealth, honoring him with your firstfruits, with every increase that comes to you. Proverbs 3:9


All giving is wrapped in love!

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