

Chapter 4

BREAKING WORD CURSES

CURSES THAT OTHERS HAVE SPOKEN AGAINST YOU

The ministering team said to Gloria, "God loves you!" "How can God love me when I'm so stupid?" she replied. They asked why she thought she was stupid. She said, "That's what my mother always said to me, 'You're stupid, you're stupid!'"

A bad root that can adversely affect many people is a "word curse". Consider the occasion when Jesus approached a fig tree on which He did not find figs and said to it, "*Let no one eat fruit from you ever again.*" (Mark 11:12-14) The next morning they passed the same place and noticed that the fig tree had dried up from the roots. Peter said to Jesus, "*Rabbi, look! The fig tree which you cursed has withered away.*" (Mark 11:21) Note that Jesus did not pronounce any sort of formulaic curse. He only spoke to the fig tree in a negative way, and Peter called His words a curse! In the same fashion, a word curse, in this chapter, refers not only to literal curses invoking the name of God or invoking the name of the devil or of another supposed deity, but also refers to verbal put downs, insults, and belittling remarks.

The Bible says: "*Death and life are in the power of the tongue.*"¹... The tongue "*is set on fire by hell,*" and "*it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.*"²... "*Their tongue is an arrow shot out,*" and there are those who "*smite...with the tongue.*"³...There are men "*Whose teeth are spears and arrows and their tongue a sharp sword*"⁴...There are men who "*shoot their arrows, bitter words.*"⁵... "*The words of talebearers are as wounds.*"⁶ A multitude of Scripture passages, in both the Old and New Testaments, emphasize the power of words to do good or evil. In essence, a curse is something said or done against someone which gives power to demonic forces. A curse is a type of demonic oppression.

In counseling situations people have told me some of the terrible words and statements that were regularly spoken to them as they were growing up. Many times they were assaulted with words like: worthless, loser, failure, lazy, dummy, little devil, and Judas. They also heard statements like: "You can't do anything right," "You will never amount to anything," "You're going to be just like your father," and "Everything is your fault." A man once told me that when his brother died, his father said to him at the funeral, "I wish it had been you." A woman once told me the same thing happened when her sister died. Another man said every time his mother was displeased with him she would call him an idiot and pinch him or tap him on the head with her knuckles.

Sometimes these words are spoken with hatred and vehemence and sometimes in a joking or sarcastic manner. Children are especially vulnerable to the words spoken to them by a parent, because parents are placed by God over their children to cover and protect them spiritually and physically. When such words are spoken to a child by a parent or authority figure they are like an arrow from the devil; in fact, they are from the devil. He is the accuser and can speak through any person's mouth, even as he spoke through

Peter when Jesus said, *"Get behind me, Satan!"* Destructive words have dark and demonic spiritual power, and they can lodge in a child's heart and mind and stay there for years with terrible effects. Most people have no idea of the impact their words have on others or how crucially important this matter is to God. Even most Christians pay scant attention to Jesus' teaching and His dire warning on this subject. Listen to what Jesus said plainly and clearly in the Sermon on the Mount: *"Whoever speaks contemptuously and insultingly to his brother shall be liable to....punishment...and whoever says, 'You cursed fool! (You empty-headed idiot!) shall be liable to and unable to escape the hell of fire.'"(AMP)*⁸

Last year we prayed for Gloria who was visiting the Bible School in Mexico. Part of the interview with her was used to introduce this chapter. The harsh words, "You are stupid!" flung at her by her mother on many occasions had been spoken 40 or so years before. However, that lie had stayed in her mind and heart and had affected her every day. It affected the way she thought about God and about herself.

Hurtful words that are spoken to people seem to have the power to cripple them, especially when they are heard countless times over the years. Spoken curses, as well as other types of curses, are taken with great seriousness in the Bible. There are over 200 references to curses in Strong's Concordance. Consider Balaam's attempts to curse the children of Israel,⁹ and Jesus' warning in the Sermon on the Mount that we should not curse men.¹⁰ Just as God has a solution for man's problem with sin through the crucifixion of Jesus, so God has an answer for the curses that impact our lives. The answer is found, in part, in Galatians 3:13, *"Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us, for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.'"*

Christ further demonstrated He was taking every curse upon Himself on behalf of sinful man by wearing the crown of thorns. When Adam rebelled against God's commandment in the garden, God pronounced a curse, not on Adam, but on the ground: *"Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you... in the sweat of your face you shall eat bread..."*¹¹ I believe that our Lord took that curse upon Himself symbolized by the crown of thorns that He wore on the cross.¹²

When we ministered to Gloria, we first led her to forgive her mother, to repent of all judgments against her, and to choose to honor her deceased mother's memory. Then we had her break the word curse against her by the authority of the cross of Christ and to renounce the lies that she was stupid and God could not love her. Finally, we encouraged her to continually resist and renounce the lies that had for so long controlled her life and to thank God for giving her the wisdom and the mind of Christ.

In another situation, we ministered to a lady who told us that she and her two sisters had been abandoned by their parents as children. Then they were taken into the homes of several uncles who despised them and constantly told them, "You are going to become prostitutes!" All three sisters did become prostitutes, I believe as a result of those words. In our time with her, we counseled the lady to forgive her parents and uncles. Then we helped her to break and renounce the word curses that had been controlling her life. The conclusion of her deliverance was the vitally important step of casting out spirits of rejection, abandonment, and prostitution. She was gloriously set free! We then prayed for her wounded heart, and finally, we counseled her to take steps to maintain her freedom.

While ministering in the beautiful resort city of Cuernavaca, a mother brought her 16 year old son to me. He looked very troubled and depressed, so I asked what was troubling him. She replied for him: "He is tormented by thoughts and temptations of homosexuality. He dreams about it. Men are always hitting on him to be a homosexual although he has never committed that sin." She continued, "His father always said to him, "You are going to be a homosexual!" Those words were a curse. The boy had been tormented by homosexuality all of his life. I led him to forgive his father, to repent of judging and condemning him, and to make an affirmation to honor and to respect his father. Then I had him break and renounce his father's curses. Sometimes I have people say, "I pull those arrows out of my heart and cast them down!" Then I commanded unclean spirits of homosexuality to come out of him, and he coughed and vomited while someone ran for a *basura*, a waste basket. Finally, he started to smile and said, "I felt it come out of me and I feel different!" Glory to God!

You might wonder why a father would curse his son in such a terrible way. Chances are good that he was treated the same way when he was a boy, or perhaps he had been attacked by a child molester which had deeply wounded his heart, resulting in his being full of self hatred. We must have mercy on those who have mistreated us so that God will have mercy on us.

A young woman who was in a prayer line after a service told me that she had suffered all of her life with a pain in her chest. After a few minutes of ministry, I could not figure out what was the bad root, so I asked her to wait until I had more time to spend with her. She sat down, and after we finished counseling other people she came up and said, "While I was sitting there God showed me why I have had this pain. When I was born my father wanted a boy and he cursed me!" We had her forgive her father, break the curse, cast out the spirit of pain, and she was instantly set free and healed of the pain. God is gracious to give us the authority and power to set the prisoners free!

When Christ died on the cross, according to Galatians 3:13, He became a curse for us. We must by faith appropriate his power over those curses and pronounce their effects broken over us and our children. Christ also died for our sins, but we must not only believe in our heart but "confess with our mouth" according to Romans 10:9-10. The provision of Christ accomplishes more than breaking curses, for Galatians 3:14 says, "*that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.*" Because of Christ's great sacrifice we Gentiles receive release from the curse of the law, and we receive the blessing of Abraham. Genesis 24:1 states that God blessed Abraham in all things! Additionally, we receive the greatest gift of all, the gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit. God be praised!

A TIME OF REFLECTION

As you were reading through this teaching about curses that people have spoken against someone, did some hurtful words from *your* past come to mind? By God's grace, forgive the ones who spoke those words to you. Now, say something like this: Heavenly Father, by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, who through dying on the cross became a curse for us, I break and forever renounce the power of the curses spoken against me by _____ who said _____. Now I pull the devil's arrows out of my heart and cast them down. I renounce any tormenting spirits connected with those memories. Lord, I ask you to heal my wounded heart. Give me the grace to resist those words whenever the accuser brings them into my mind. Amen!

CURSES THAT YOU HAVE SPOKEN AGAINST OTHERS, AGAINST GOD, AND AGAINST YOURSELF

Another aspect of this matter is the problem caused by curses that people speak against others. Psalm 109:17-18 was written by David about a particular man, but I strongly believe that it is a universal spiritual principle. It says: *"As he loved cursing, so let it come to him. As he did not delight in blessing so let it be far from him. As he clothed himself with cursing as with his garment so let it enter his body like water and like oil into his bones."* Another example is found in Deuteronomy 23:3-4 which says that because the nation of Moab hired Balaam to curse Israel as they were on their journey to the Promised Land, their curse was turned back against all of the descendants of Moab forever! Then there is the corroborating scriptural principle that says, *"Whatever we sow, that shall we also reap".¹³* This principle is expressed again and again in many different forms in God's Word to emphasize its importance: If we sow blessings to others, we will reap blessings, if we sow curses to others, we will reap curses. Give and it will be given to you. If you live by the sword you will die by the sword. Cast your bread upon the waters and it will return after many days. Forgive and you will be forgiven, if you do not forgive you will not be forgiven. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Take care of the poor and you will be taken care of. Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy. In like manner, if we curse others, we will be cursed.

It is a very serious matter to curse others. This is especially true when people have cursed God. Many people confess that at some point in their lives they spoke curses against God. Surprisingly, many Christians confess that they still carry a residue of resentment against God. Following are some of the reasons:

- They believe God is responsible for the death of a loved one
 - God did not answer a prayer in a way they expected, and they feel that He let them down
 - God did not protect them from abuse or abandonment when they were helpless
 - God did not warn them about a certain situation, for instance, a marriage or an investment
- A prayer of repentance for any resentment against God is in the "Time of Reflection" at the end of this teaching . Also see the chapter titled RESENTMENT AGAINST GOD.

Consider some examples of problems caused by curses that people speak against others:

- (1) I was ministering to a faithful Christian woman and she said that whenever she would try to pray or worship that blasphemous thoughts against God would come into her mind. I asked her, "Have you ever spoken curses against God." She said, "Yes, a number of times." That is very serious! In the Old Testament the penalty for cursing God was death by stoning. So I had her repent, renounce those words that she had spoken, and ask God to forgive her for this sin of cursing God. As she repeated this prayer after me, she said that she immediately sensed or saw a blackness leave her

mind, and she felt a great peace. She was set free from this problem.

- (2) As several of us were praying for a lady, she said that her arms felt paralyzed and her face and mouth became numb. I have learned that whenever a person has a problem of this kind during the time of ministry to them, particularly when their face or mouth or tongue or throat feels numb or painful or tingles, this is a clue from the Holy Spirit that something happened with that part of the body. When it is around the mouth area, it usually concerns things they have spoken. So I asked her, "Have you ever spoken curses against anyone?" And she said, "Yes, against my father and my husband." Jesus reminds us in Mark 7:10 how seriously God regards this matter: *"For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother', and, 'He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death...'"* We had her forgive her father, forgive her husband, and repent of the judgment and hatred she had for them. We had her repent of speaking those curses against them and renounce those words. Immediately the paralysis left her and she started weeping.
- (3) I read the testimony of a woman who went to her prayer group because she had many tumors that had been forming in her breasts. She had been to the doctors, and they said they did not understand why these tumors were multiplying and were afraid to operate. They said they could not help her. One of the women in the prayer group had a word of knowledge. She asked her, "Have you ever cursed your body?" The lady looked surprised and said, "Yes." She said, "The men where I work harrass the women sexually, and many times they made vulgar remarks about my large breasts. One day several months ago I went home after work, and I was so upset that I looked in the mirror and curses my breasts." Right after that tumors started forming in her breasts. She hadn't made the connection in her own mind until that moment. So how did they minister to her? They had her forgive the men at work and repent of judging them. They also had her renounce the words of her mouth and those curses she had spoken against her own body. Immediately she felt heat on her breasts, the tumors started dissolving and within 2 weeks they were all gone.
- (4) We recently prayed for a woman in her 30s who had chronic back pain. I felt led to ask her if she had ever cursed her own body. She said that she had done that all of her life. She explained that her mother had always been slim and beautiful, but that she had always been short and stout. Furthermore, her mother always called her "lumpy." That was a word curse and it deeply wounded her. She had always hated and rejected her own body and had constantly referred to herself as "lumpy and ugly." This is a self curse. I had her forgive her mother and break and renounce the curse that her mother had for years spoken against her. Then I had her repent and renounce the self-rejection and the way that she had cursed herself. Instantly the pain left and her back was healed.
- (5) I prayed in Mexico for a woman approximately 20 years old. She suffered with psoriasis and constant pain in her face. I felt led to ask her if she had ever cursed herself. She admitted that she had. She said she had two older sisters who had fair skin and blue eyes. She had darker skin and brown eyes, and her sisters taunted her by saying, "You are not the daughter of our father!" She felt so wounded by their words that she started looking in a mirror and cursing her face. When you curse your body or anything about yourself, you are inviting Satan to come and destroy you! I led her to forgive her sisters and to renounce all of the curses. Immediately all the pain left, and I am sure the psoriasis was also healed.

Many girls hate, reject and curse their own bodies because their father or mother wanted a boy and let them know about their disappointment. Cursing their own bodies can be the root of female problems, of confusion about sexual identity, of chronic physical or emotional problems. Of course, the same can be true of boys who were rejected because their parents wanted a girl. When ministering to homosexuals, I

always ask if their parents wanted a child of the other sex and if they rejected and cursed their own bodies. The fact is that God is the Creator and He did not make a mistake. Psalm 139:13-18 is a wonderful affirmation to assign to those who were not wanted by their parents.

A fascinating insight about the power of words was shared by my friend Al. He said that several years ago while cleaning up a pile of brush he stirred up a nest of hornets and was stung on the back of one hand three times and on the back of the other twice. Immediately he thought of the experience of Paul in Acts 28 when he was bitten by the viper. Paul simply shook the snake off into the fire and suffered no bad consequences. So Al just shook his hands and went on about his work. Time and again he looked at his hands and noticed that the five stings looked like mosquito bites. Four hours later Al went up to his house and told his wife about the hornet attack. He said that within 5 minutes of his talking about this experience each of his hands had swollen up to the size of softballs! Al believes that when we start talking about negative experiences, our words empower the evil one to have power over us. Note that in Paul's experience on the Isle of Malta, when the natives started talking about the viper biting Paul, he did not respond to them, nor did he even cry out to God for deliverance. He simply shook the viper off into the fire and ignored it! Words have the power of life and death. Think about it.

A TIME OF REFLECTION

Did you ever curse your father or mother? That is a very serious sin. Ask God to forgive you for Christ's sake. Repent and renounce those words. Forgive your father and mother and ask God to bless them or their memory.

Do you recognize a residue of resentment in your heart against God? Satan has lied to you about God. God has never been your enemy. Now is the time to ask His forgiveness and ask Him to heal your heart and straighten out your thinking.

Have you ever cursed God? Again the penalty was death by stoning. While God never abrogated His just penalty against sins, His Son fulfilled God's requirement for justice by paying the ultimate penalty for us on the cross. By virtue of Christ's sacrifice, ask God to forgive you and to have mercy on you. Renounce the words of your mouth. If you have ever made an agreement or pact with the devil, repent and renounce it forcefully.

Have you ever cursed yourself (cursed your body, your sex, the color of your skin, your intellect)? Have you ever said, "I wish I had never been born!?" "I wish I would die!" Have you ever attempted suicide? Have you ever said, "I will never forgive myself!" Or, "I will always have bad luck!" Or, "I will always be poor, or sick, or lonely!" Or, ?

If any of these apply to you, say, "Lord, forgive me. My life has been very painful, but I know that life is a gift and when I reject my life I am rejecting You. I repent and renounce the curses I have spoken against myself. I thank You for my life."

Then you need to resist the thoughts that come to your mind in the future. You may have developed a lifetime habit of hating and cursing yourself. Stop it! It is sin! Resist the devil! Praise and thank God for His many blessings that are coming your way. (See Chapters titled OVERCOMING SELF-HATRED and OVERCOMING SELF-CONDEMNATION.)

Ministry Note:

How are you to know if your counselee has been wounded by word curses or if he/she has spoken such curses against a parent, or God or himself/herself?

Listen carefully as you interview the counselee and take notes since their stories are frequently very long and convoluted and it is easy to forget important points without notes.

- a) Listen on two levels: listen to the counselee, and listen to promptings of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is the most important Person in this process, and He is vitally interested in setting the captives free since this is really His ministry and He is the only One who can do it. Impressions may come as words to your mind, as a picture, as a feeling – for instance, of anger or fear or lust. Don't repeat these impressions as a "Thus saith the Lord! You are full of anger or fear or lust!" You may be mistaken. Phrase your supposed insights or words of knowledge as a question: "Have you had problems with anger (or whatever)?"
- b) If the subject has not come up during the interview, specifically ask, perhaps during the time when you are talking about his relation with his father and mother – and I always talk about that relation because so many bad roots are found there – "Did your father ever curse you, belittle you, criticize you" "Did you ever curse your father or mother, God, yourself? Or consider or attempt suicide, or wish you would die?"
- c) Then, as a part of your ministry:
 - 1) Lead the person to forgive anyone who spoke any hurtful words to him and to repent of judgments against that person
 - 2) Briefly explain to the counselee the concept of word curses and their demonic power. Explain how the Bible says that Christ became a curse for us and by using His name and power we can break Satan's power to further inflict damage through those curses
 - 3) Have the person repeat your guiding words breaking those word curses "by the authority of Christ who became a curse for us." (Gal. 3:13)
 - 4) Guide him to repent and renounce his curses against anyone, including father or mother, against God, and against himself.

ENDNOTES

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| 1. <i>Proverbs 18:21</i> | 8. Matthew 5:22 (AMP) |
| 2. James 3:6-8 | 9. Numbers 22-24 |
| 3. Jeremiah 9:8, 18:18 | 10. Matthew 5:21-22 |
| 4. Psalms 57:4 | 11. Genesis 3:17-18 |
| 5. Psalms 164:3 | 12. Matthew 27:29 |
| 6. Proverbs 12:18 | 13. Galatians 6:7 |
| 7. Matthew 16:23 | |