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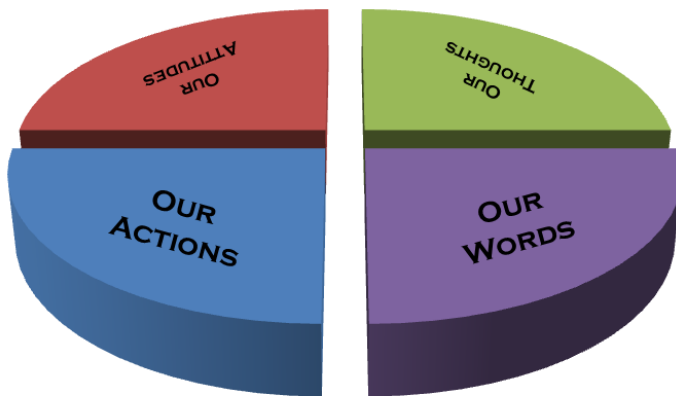


Should I be Committed? (Part II)

Proverbs 24:16: (NASB) *For a righteous man falls seven times, and rises again, but the wicked stumble in time of calamity.*

Two weeks ago, on New Year's morning, we did the first part of this program and laid out the importance of getting our thoughts and attitudes right in order to be able to execute the kind of changes we want to have stick in our lives. Thoughts and attitudes - they are the internal part of the equation. The second part - the external part - are our words and actions which not only hold a direct link to thoughts and attitudes, but they are also the barometer by which we are judged by those around us. Stay with us as we look into the life-altering power of words and the world-shaking power of actions!

Our Commitment



Just how powerful
are our words?



Matthew 12:33-37: (NASB) ³³*Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit. ³⁴You brood of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart. ³⁵The good man brings out of his good treasure what is good; and the evil man brings out of his evil treasure what is evil. ³⁶But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment. ³⁷For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.*

Jesus was talking to the Pharisees. But does this have an application to our Christian leaders today?

To be justified = rendered righteous
judged against

Condemned =

Our words have great power to those listening and how they affect our own self. So, according to Jesus, our words, being a primary source of the revealing of our true selves, become a primary source of judgment back to us. OUCH!!!

 **My word is my bond - during daughter's play, Hook (1991)**

- (Peter on the phone during his daughter's play)
Wife: Peter, you're missing it!
Peter (on the phone call): Ok a meeting tomorrow AM.
Son: Dad, my game! You promised!
Peter: I'll make it a short meeting. I'll be there - my word is my bond!

Peter's words were good! A promise was made and assurance was the result.

James 5:10-12: Here is a simple admonishing to look to the examples of those whose words were in the name of God, followed by the simple admonishing to speak out of your convictions and not out of your comfort.

James 3:1-2: We all mess up with our words. This is a warning against speaking things that do not produce growth or encouragement.

Can our words - even if they are from a positive intention -
still be destructive?



Let us find a basis in God's justice for our words - tempered with God's love (which tempers our attitudes) and God's wisdom (which tempers our thoughts):

Galatians 5:13-17: In the battle for our words, we literally have two sets of conflicting desires driving us - flesh vs. spirit!

 **My word is my bond - on the airplane, Hook (1991)**

- (Peter missed his son's baseball game) Peter: Jack, next season I'm coming to six games, I promise! Hey, Jack - my word is my bond! Son: Yeah, junk bond!



Our words can bring destruction - to us and to those around us: Proverbs 13:3: It is very easy to create discord with the things we say.

Our words can praise: Psalms 145:4-5 Psalms 145:21: (NKJV) *My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD, and all flesh shall bless His holy name forever and ever.*

What kinds of words are in our list of "10 Most-Used Phrases"? Are they praiseworthy?

What words do we *not* want to hear related to our lives?

How many more broken promises, Hook (1991)

- *Wife, after Peter takes another phone call: You promised the children some real time here. How many more broken promises Peter? (Cell phone rings yet again)
Peter: It's Brad Moira - I gotta take this call. I gotta fix this.
Wife: No you gotta fix your family first.*

Our words based in God's justice: Zechariah 8:16-17

The essence of a just God: Deuteronomy 7:9

James 3:3-6: Left unchecked, there may be nothing but utter destruction waiting as a result of our words!

A few precious years and you are missing it, Hook (1991)

- *Wife, throws Peter's cell phone out the window: Your children love you - they want to play with you. How long do you think that lasts? Soon Jack may not even want you to come to his games! We have a few special years with our children when they're the ones who want us around. After that you're going to be running after them for a bit of attention. It's so fast, Peter, and then it's over. You are not being careful, and you are missing it!*

Our words reflect what we are made of, so we don't want to speak idly.

James 3:7-12: We are, unless focused by that which is greater than ourselves, living contradictions. If we allow this condition to persist, what kind of witness to God's love are we?



What words do we want to hear describing our lives?

What words do we use most often when relating to others?
Are we positive, kind, and gentle? Do we build up or tear down?

Granny Wendy's achievement, Hook (1991)

- *Peter, giving a speech at the dedication of a hospital wing: Granny Wendy brought me in from the cold. She taught me to read and write - she even found people to be my parents and adopt me. She's loved so many children, so effortlessly - that's her achievement. Many of you here tonight were once lost children. But Granny Wendy found parents and homes for each of you and saved you. That's her miracle!*

Here we can see the interrelation of words and actions - the example of Granny Wendy's life was utterly profound in contrast to the struggles of Peter.

Matthew 7:24-27

Let us find a basis in God's power for our actions, also tempered with all of the above.

Let us **AVOID** what the fallen nature provokes us to do: Galatians 5:17-21: We want to act in accordance with our convictions, not out of comfort.



Just touch our fingers and we can go home, Hook (1991)

- *(Peter is trying to rescue his children from Captain Hook's ship, unaware he was Peter Pan.) Kids: All you have to do is touch our fingers and we'll be able to go home!*
- *(Peter reaches while clinging for dear life to the other mast.) C'mon Daddy, Mommy could do it! (Peter tries then gives up.)*



Sometimes we can have a lot of "want to" relating to our life's experiences. We want to fix this - we want to change that - we want to be better, stronger, thinner, happier, more courageous, more content. The secret of success lies in the transforming that "want to" into "living it now!"

Galatians 5:22-26



He missed the most important game of your life, Hook (1991)

- *(Hook wants Jack to consider himself as his new father) Jack, your father went to your sister's school play, did he not? But did he go to your baseball game? He missed the most important game on what might have been the most important day of your young life!*

God's power as a basis for our actions: Romans 12:1-2: (ASV) ¹I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service. ²And be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye **transformed** by the **renewing** of your mind, and ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Transformed = literally or figuratively, "metamorphose"

Renewing = renovation

We want to dedicate ourselves to God and transform ourselves so we can do the right things.

Words are powerful. Actions are powerful. What happens when you put both together?

Together they can be transformative or absolutely destructive.

James 3 was all about the damage that our words can produce. Now it focuses on the actions of our lives as the living testimony to what we stand for: James 3:13-18: The source of our "wisdom" gives power to our actions, therefore our ability to influence is based on those things that influence us...we can pick and choose which wisdom we want. We want that from above, not worldly wisdom.



Jack taking out his anger at his father by smashing clocks, Hook (1991)

- *Son: For never letting me jump on my own bed! (smash) For always making promises and breaking them! (smash) For never doing anything with me! (smash) Hook: For a father who's never there Jack? (smash) Jack, for a father who didn't save you on the ship! Son: He wouldn't save us. Hook: Who couldn't save you, Jack! Son: He wouldn't - he didn't even try - he was there and we were there and he wouldn't try...*

If Jack were to have stayed in this circumstance, what kind of influence would he grow to have?

1 Kings 18:20-21: (NASB) ²⁰So Ahab sent a message among all the sons of Israel and brought the prophets together at Mount Carmel. ²¹Elijah came near to all the people and said, How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him. But the people did not answer him a word.

The people were inactive and paralyzed from fear.



My happy thought was you, Hook (1991)

- *(Peter finally remembers he is Peter Pan and found his happy thought that enables him to fly.) Jack! You won't believe this! I found my happy thought! It took me three days to find it... guess what happened when I did! Do you know what my happy thought was? It was YOU!!!*

The Scriptures are full of our "happy thoughts." We should be a living testimony of what we stand for. John 13:13-17: It's a strange thing - the greatest source of power for our actions in all of human example was clothed in humility, sacrifice and love.



I have to climb a drain pipe, Hook (1991)

- *(Peter rescued his children and is back home. He hears his cell phone ring in the snow back where his wife threw it previously.) Brad, hi! Been holding this long? I'm incredible! Yeah ... Neverland ... lost boys... Jim Hook... duel to the death, I'll fill you in later. Listen, I'd love to chat, but I gotta climb a drain pipe right now! Why? Because I ran out of fairy dust - if not I would have flown up!*

Philippians 3:12-14: (NASB) ¹²Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. ¹³Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do:



forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.



What habits do we have? Which of these habits weaken us? Which make us stronger?



To live would be an adventure, *Hook* (1991)

- Wendy: So, your adventures are over.
Peter: Oh no! To live - to live would be an awfully big adventure!

2 Corinthians 10:3-5: Some thoughts might not be able to be destroyed, but we *can* "hold them captive." Our default thinking should be spiritually-based on the word of God rather than fleshly-based on the word of men.

1 Thessalonians 4:9-12: God's power in our actions provokes us towards responsibility - responsibility towards those of faith, towards our personal affairs - towards those outside the faith.

Hebrews 13:5-9: (NRSV) ⁵*Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have; for he has said, I will never leave you or forsake you.* ⁶*So we can say with confidence, The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?* ⁷*Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith.* ⁸*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.* ⁹*Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings; for it is well for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by regulations about food, which have not benefited those who observe them.*

This is why we can be so content - we have Jesus on our side. Philippians 4:4-7

Our thoughts, our attitudes, our words and our actions. If we find our center in the word of God and are focused on that, we will learn to be anxious for nothing. The God of Peace that surpasses all understanding will guard our hearts and our minds. Then our words and actions can be Godly. That's the key to success as a Christian. It's not money, it's not fame, it's not position, it is living in a humble way.

OUR ATTITUDES should be based in... GOD'S LOVE
OUR THOUGHTS should be based in... GOD'S WISDOM
OUR ACTIONS should be based in... GOD'S POWER
OUR WORDS should be based in... GOD'S JUSTICE

*Should I be committed?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*