

Today we're starting our next series: **Confess Powerfully**, as we look at going from strength to strength this year. This series will look at what it means to let your life be guided more effectively by your tongue. What is coming out of your mouth matters. Throughout this series, we'll look at 6 or 7 'diseases' of the tongue where we need healing, as well as powerful confessions to speak over your life.

Read James 3:1-8, Proverbs 18:21 and Proverbs 10:19

Words shape our lives, so it's important that we learn how to deal with and control our tongues. The first 'disease' of the tongue we're going to look at is excessive or too many words.

Why do you think the Bible encourages us not to be excessive in our words? What things can happen when we speak too much?

Read Ecclesiastes 5:1-3 and Matthew 6:7

The Bible encourages us not to be quick with our mouth and talk excessively, even in our communication with God. Like any relationship, our relationship with God needs to be two-way. If we are only coming to God and talking to Him, we are not allowing any time to hear from Him, receive from Him and understand Him. We need to learn to sit and wait and listen to God too. This comes through learning how to control our excessive tongue. Even if we have an excessive tongue, the good news is that God can heal us from it!

Why is it important to both talk and listen in a relationship? How can we become better listeners when it comes to our relationship with God?

What is in you will come out of you - Read 2 Corinthians 4:13

What is coming out of your mouth produces fruitfulness in your life. We have the same Holy Spirit in us that Christ had, and it's through this spirit of faith that we believe and speak what God says. As we speak with a spirit of faith, it then manifests in our life. Confessing the Word of God through speaking it out is standing in agreement with what God has said and coming into alignment with His will.

What is one thing from the Word of God that you are regularly confessing with your mouth in this season?

You will produce who you are - Read Luke 6:43-45 and Romans 10:9-10

Out of your heart will come words that shape your life. You first believe it in your heart, and then you speak it to seal it. So to confess powerfully, we must first believe then speak. As we learn to guard our mouth, it will help us turn our lives around by the words we say and those we choose not to say!

Think of a time where you chose to put a guard over your tongue. What benefit did that bring to the situation?

You get recognised by what's coming out of your mouth - Read Acts 4:13

Our language is connected to what we are following. When you follow somebody or something, you get their accent, their spirit, of the way they do life. As Christians, we are called to follow the way and words of Christ. The disciples were recognised as people that had been with Jesus because of what was coming out of their mouth. Our tongue should reflect that we too have been with God.

As Christians, we are representing God to non-believers. How then is it important that our words reflect a Christ-filled life?

Our words shape our life because life and death are in the power of the tongue. When we learn to speak the truth of God, we'll see God's results. There are many 'diseases' of the tongue that we are unpacking through our **Confess Powerfully** series. Today we will look at the 'disease' of careless words. Careless words are idle or barren words; they have no purpose, thought or direction on them. When we have careless words, it can hurt the person we are talking to or ourselves. The Bible explains that out of the heart, the mouth speaks (Luke 6:45). Therefore we need to address the issues of our heart if we want to get our tongue healed.

Read James 1:26 and Matthew 12:36-37

The Bible warns us about careless words; this is one thing that stopped Moses from entering the promise. We can miss out on something because we haven't learned to control our tongue. God wants us to use our tongue to glorify Him, not bring division or speak badly of others. It's important that as Christ-followers, we learn to control our tongue as there is an accountability on what we say.

Have you ever said something you later regretted? What was the impact of your hasty words? How can we learn to be more careful with our words?

Read Hebrews 11:13 and Hebrews 6:9-12

Hebrews 11 recounts many of the great men and women of faith in the Bible who continued to stand in faith and confess powerfully. When we are careless with our words and say, 'it's never going to happen for me,' we are no longer living by faith but are instead forming a negative mindset and often going against what the very Word of God says. **Who in the 'Hebrews Hall of Fame' inspires you in faith and why?**

Here are four things about these men and women of faith and their powerful confessions:

1. They had seen the promises far off

Our eyes of faith (seeing things before they become a reality) is the beginning of us being able to confess powerfully. These people had the ability to speak out the promises of God because they saw it with their spiritual eyes of faith. If we are going to get to a place where we are confessing powerful truths over our lives, we first have to see it.

Is there a promise that God has spoken over your life that you have seen far off?

2. They were assured

They were confident in God and His faithfulness to His word. This comes from a deep revelation of who God is. Jesus was confident in the storm, while the disciples were careless with their words because He knew who God was, and He knew His future in God. God wants to bring us to a place where we have this kind of confidence in Him.

Who is God to you? How are you growing in your knowledge of God this year?

3. They embraced

They weren't just assured, but they embraced them. They fully took on the promise that was spoken over them and held fast to it.

4. They confessed

They confessed that they were pilgrims and strangers on earth; they lived under a different Kingdom. They didn't live under the ways of the world but embraced being a citizen of heaven, with access to the rights and inheritance of the Kingdom of God. To walk in this Kingdom, we first have to start confessing the ways of the Kingdom.

In what ways does the Kingdom of God operate differently from the kingdom of the world?

Read James 3:1-12

We're talking about **Confess Powerfully**; how the tongue steers and shapes our life. The tongue is a very small part of the physical body but holds a great power and ability to move our life in a certain direction, because what is coming out of the mouth is creating the very existence of your life. So far we've covered a few different aspects of the tongue that need to be healed including excessive words and careless words. Today we're going to talk about gossip and then look at how a powerful confession can shape our life.

Stay away from gossip (Read Leviticus 19:16, Proverbs 18:8, Proverbs 20:19)

Gossip is malicious talk, it's something that is untrue, spun, or exaggerated, it can often be slanderous and is actually the work of the enemy! It is one of these areas in life that we all can fall into the trap of getting involved in or becoming a hearer of, and yet the Bible warns us against it many times, as it is a poison in our lives. The great news is as you walk with God, His power can set you free from a gossiping tongue or an ear to hear it!

What kind of talk would you define as gossip? When someone starts to gossip to you, what do you do?

Your mouth is the prophet of your future (Read Numbers 13:30-33)

This scripture is part of a great story in Numbers 13 and 14, where the spies are sent out to check out the Promised Land and to come back with a report. Of the 12 spies sent, 10 came back with a negative report saying they were not able to go up against the people of the land for they were stronger than them. Joshua and Caleb, however, gave a different report - they said they were 'well able'. If we read on in chapter 14 we see that the people of Israel cried out and complained after hearing the negative report. Their fear turned to complaining and negativity came forth from their mouths. Because of what they spoke they did not get to enter the Promised Land (see Numbers 14:27-40). The Children of Israel saw giants, difficulties and challenges and said we cannot overcome them. Joshua and Caleb saw the same things but they said, with God we are well able. Both the Children of Israel and Joshua and Caleb got what they spoke into existence.

What does this story help us to see about the power of our confession?

Read Mark 11:23-24

Jesus confirms that what comes out of your mouth sets the very course of your life in the gospels by saying: 'you shall have what you say'. Both our positive and negative confessions outwork in our life, sealing blessings or cursing over our lives. As children of God, God wants you to confess His Word powerfully and agree with the promises He's spoken over you.

What are some powerful confessions you have been speaking over your life in the last season? How have you seen the impact of speaking these out on a regular basis?

Read Hebrews 4:2, Psalm 112:7 and Romans 10:17

The Bible says that the righteous fear no bad report. However, if we are attracted to gossip we are often not able to handle a bad report because our heart is not conditioned to faith. We have to ignite our faith through hearing the Word of God. When our ears are bent towards truth this is a place of great strength.

How do you get the Word of God in you on a daily basis?

As we conclude our **Confess Powerfully** series, we're looking at diseases of the tongue that need to be healed.

Be healed of hasty words - Read Proverbs 29:20, James 1:19-20, Psalm 106:32-22

There is a powerful story in Numbers 20:1-13 where Moses had hasty words. He was in a season where he was likely tired, in grief and surrounded by negative talk. He was commanded to speak to the rock, but instead, he spoke rashly and forced it with His own strength, which misrepresented who God is. In his moment of hasty words, he lost his future.

Be healed of a lying tongue (Read Proverbs 6:16-19)

In this verse, we see seven things that the Lord detests; three of these come from the mouth: a lying tongue, a false witness who speaks lies and one who sows discord among the brethren. Lying is destructive, but the truth sets people free! God wants to heal us from a lying tongue through the redemptive word of Christ.

Why do you think God warns us against hasty words and lying tongues? What damage can these do to our and other peoples lives?

The tongue is made to glorify God (Read Acts 2:25-26, NKJV)

God gave us a tongue so that we could bring glory to His name. Our tongue is the one member of our body above all others by which we can glorify God. Every word that does not glorify God is a misuse of the tongue. The Bible shows us that there are two types of fire that can fall on the tongue. Firstly, the fire from hell (James 3:6) - its fruit and consequences are death. And secondly, the fire of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4). When the fire of the Holy Spirit fell in Acts, it drove out the fire of hell that was on the natural tongue, and the result of this was the disciples then used their tongue to glorify God by sharing the gospel. To yield our tongue to the Holy Spirit, we first need to be filled with the Spirit. When we live a life filled with the Holy Spirit, our language changes; instead of bending to gossip, lying, and careless words, we become one that uses our tongue to build others up.

How has your tongue changed since becoming a Christian? How is this series helping you to use your tongue to build your faith and others up more?

Hold fast to your confession (Read Hebrews 4:14)

Even when things don't seem to be going the way we want or plan, if we haven't experienced our breakthrough or healing yet, it's so important that we hold fast to the confession of our faith and continue to confess powerfully over our lives. When we say the opposite of what God says, we are contracting His word and removing the power of the confession. When we magnify weakness above God's ability to do what He has said, it enlarges the possibility for the enemy in our lives, and we destroy our own confidence in the Word of God.

What are some hurdles or challenges that can cause us not to want to confess powerfully with faith, and how do we overcome them?

You can't confess what you do not know.

Our confession centres around: what God has done for us, what God has done in us, what God will do through us and who our God says we are in Christ. We can only know these things as we begin to read and understand God's Word, so it's vital that we get the Word of God in our hearts and on our lips. We need to know our rights as Children of God if we are going to confess them over our lives.

Share with the group what God has done for you, in you or through you. Then share who God says you are in Christ.