

THE FRUIT OF THE VINE

³⁴ You offspring of vipers! How can you speak good things when you are evil (wicked)? For out of the fullness (the overflow, the "superabundance") of the heart the mouth speaks. ³⁵ The good man from his inner good treasure flings forth good things, and the evil man out of his inner evil storehouse flings forth evil things. ³⁶ But I tell you, on the Day of Judgment men will have to give account for every idle (inoperative, non-working) word they speak. ³⁷ For by your words you will be justified and acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned and sentenced. (Matthew 12:34-37 Amp.) The Message translation reads "You have minds like a snake pit! How do you suppose what you say is worth anything when you are so foul-minded? It's your heart, not the dictionary that gives meaning to your words. A good person produces good deeds and words season after season. An evil person is a blight on the orchard. Let me tell you something: Every one of these careless words is going to come back to haunt you. There will be a time of Reckoning. Words are powerful; take them seriously. Words can be your salvation. Words can be your damnation!"

Throughout the scriptures, God has given us examples of how powerful words are. Words carry a creative force or they can carry a destructive force, but they do carry a force that brings to pass whatever is spoken.

In the book of Genesis, God spoke and it came to pass – creation came into being. God made man in his image, we speak and what we say comes to pass. Things other people speak over you, things you speak over yourself and your family will all come to pass. This is why as we read the Old Covenant (Testament) we see God changing the names of people he used. Abram was changed to Abraham, Jacob was changed to Israel. Every time you call your child's name, you speak over their lives what they will become. Do you know the meaning of your children's names? In the Bible, the name "Nabal" means "fool" and we are told that is just what he was. (1 Samuel 25:25). The name "David" means "beloved" and that is what he was.

Apart from names, words we speak daily manifest in some form. Many of us are reaping today what we sowed in words in the past. Sickness comes on us very often because of our words. If gastroenteritis, dengue, flu or any other virus is stirring, as soon as we feel a symptom we say "I hope I am not catching the flu (or whatever) then our minds become so focused on the symptom that we end up accepting the sickness! At the first sign we need to confess the word of God and rebuke that lying symptom in the name of Jesus! Then, when anyone asks us how we are we speak the truth and we can safely say "I am well", The Word of God says that "by His stripes ye were healed". If Jesus took my sickness on Himself 2000 years ago, why should I be confessing that I have it today? I believe the Word of God is the truth and therefore when I speak the Word of God I am speaking the truth. If I have to state facts then I must say the symptom, however after doing so my declaration is still "I am healed!"

We need to get a revelation of the difference between truth and fact. Pilate asked Jesus "What is truth?", when standing in front of him in bodily form was the Truth, the Word of God made flesh (John 1:14) Jesus said I am the Way, and the Truth and the Life. (John 14:6)

Whenever anyone asks us how we are, we say "Blessed and highly favored!" That sounds strange to many people and even evokes indignation from the religious crowd but that is what God says we are in Christ, (Ephesians 1:2-8) and even if we are feeling symptoms in our bodies, or going through any form of difficulty we do not speak it out. Very often our responses give the opportunity for ministry to others.

Jesus was very careful about the words he spoke. He spoke what the Father said. He spoke Spirit and life. When he pronounced death and destruction, that also came to pass. According to what Jesus' declared in Matthew 12:34-37, our words are the fruit of what is in our hearts. If we are connected to the Vine, our hearts will be that of the Vine, what is in the Vine will flow into and come out of us. Our fruit will be that of the Vine. In John 8:31 Jesus said, "So Jesus said to those Jews who had believed in Him, If you abide in My word [hold fast to My teachings and live in accordance with them], you are truly My disciples. (Amp.)

Jesus did not call mere followers, He called disciples. Followers take a passive role. A disciple is one who walks in the disciplines of the teacher. In other words, the disciple is trained in the way of life that conforms to that of the teacher. We must be trained in

Jesus' way of life. We must act as He acted, speak as He spoke, do the things He commands us to do. We are His army. The soldier does not argue with the Commander in Chief. The soldier's only response to an order is "Yes, Sir!"

At the end of it all, according to Jesus, we will have to give account for every idle (inoperative, non-working) word we speak. So let us transform ourselves by renewing our minds so that only the things God says will flow out of us. (Romans 12:2)

Like Jesus, let us make our speech conform to the Word of God. Confess all He says we have, believe we are all He says we are. God is a positive God. In the words of a prominent minister, "Confessions of faith become possessions by faith".

In God's words, *"Make your words good-- you will be glad you did. Words can bring death or life! Talk too much, and you will eat everything you say."* (Proverbs 20-21 CEV)

