

Impure Language Destroyed

Martin G. Collins

Given 04-Oct-09; Sermon #FT09-04

On our way to the Feast, Susan, Stacey, our three grandsons, and I visited the 'Creation Museum' near Cincinnati. Probably, because of my preparation for my subject today, I noticed there the impact that words have on the experience from the expression of this sinful society to the pure language of God in Scripture.

Generally speaking, the museum does a good job of presenting the truth. There is some Protestant influence there, so you have to overlook that. But what really struck me was the inadequacy of human language to express the glory and sovereignty of our God and Father, and Jesus Christ. When you are looking up at the ceiling, they show the video taking you through space, starting at earth and going out as far as the human mind has ever been able to grasp or see.

Seeing the pictures of the stars and the galaxies it is just awesome. But even seeing that, and hearing the words explaining how far away that is, that the scientists have recently discovered that the universe is multiple times larger than they ever imagined, words just cannot express the glory of God.

Evil, in contrast, has not come to this world with horns and fangs, and dressed up in a black cape. It has been codified into the laws of nations and written in the hearts of society.

Evil has come clothed in a three-piece suit, and brandished in an Ivy League degree. While we look for an army riding tanks and fighter jets, a force promoting perverse education and arts has overrun us. Using guns and bullets would have been too obvious; we would have seen it coming.

This war has been fought and won with words. Language was, and is, their weapon of mass destruction. We are in the middle of this war on words!

Almost two thousand years ago, the apostle Paul warned us of this.

Colossians 2:8 "Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ."

A major tool that has been used to bring us to where we are today with regard to the sins of society, such as immorality, abortion, euthanasia, homosexuality, pedophilia, and many other sins as a nation, and as a world, is that Satan has been able to take the words of the English language, and the languages of this world, and advance them gradually with the social re-engineering of all things decent and orderly.

Satan has been able to influence national and world leaders to produce public schools and manufacture universities that teach our children, through the use of politically correct language, the acceptance of sinful lifestyles. The media, Hollywood, music, art, literature, science, history, civic organizations, and seminaries are outlets for tsunamis of more of the same to continue to flood this world.

Satan and his minions have manipulated the worldview by changing the way we thought about words—tolerance, social justice, economic justice, peace, reproductive rights, sex education, safe-sex, safe schools, inclusion, diversity, and sensitivity, were and are linguistic weapons of Satan the Devil.

Such words permeate society today; and it was not by accident. Our children have been employed to impeach God. Through philosophy and the traditions of men and applying "Critical Theory" they attack all virtuous things, "Christians are bigots," "The Ten Commandments are judgmental," "Christian holy days are exclusive," and "Traditional marriage is discriminatory."

Professing Christians are brainwashed to be inclusive and tolerant, to believe truth is relative, to think all cultures are of equal value, and that homosexuality is not a sin. We even see Protestant churches accepting homosexual ministers. To be considered a good citizen all one has to do is to be tolerant of everything except Christianity, and just believe nothing except what the almighty state tells us.

Be sure you keep your words to yourself as certain thoughts are now called "hate crimes." This society will attack you and even destroy you if you dare to speak against them. And so, in the United States, the words of the Father and His Son Jesus Christ are muted; in Canada, they are all but banned; and in the United Kingdom, one does not dare mention God in public for fear of being reported, or even attacked. And, these are Israelitish nations, descendants of the children of Israel.

What other words have they perverted? Most of the words used in society today!

Tolerance means acceptance of sin.

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Pro-choice is pro-baby murder.

Reproductive rights is a buzzword for abortion.

Gays are sodomites.

Affirmative action is white male discrimination.

An undocumented worker is an illegal alien.

The religious left are humanistic socialists.

Social justice means advancement of homosexuality.

Sex education is destruction of natural childhood modesty.

Economic justice is welfare.

Government investment means taxation.

Change means Communism.

The entire language that we speak is being systematically changed to mean something different to what we originally learned it to mean. We must stop using their words, because words have power!

In the end, God's people win! The 'war on words' will end in the Millennium, beginning with a remnant of Israel. A pure language will be spoken beginning with the second coming of Christ when He sets up His Kingdom of God on earth. But the church will be already trained in this pure language, because this pure language presupposes the purification of the heart.

Looking ahead to the Millennium, God says that He will re-establish a pure language that God's Kingdom already has, and has had for eternity.

Zephaniah 3:9 "For then I will restore to the peoples a pure language, that they all may call on the name of the LOORD, to serve Him with one accord."

This indicates to us right now that it is impossible for the world, using the language that they have, to call upon the LOORD, because it has to do with purification of the heart.

This pure language is a language God Himself will restore and will be taught and used in the Millennium, and its rules and principles upheld. As co-rulers with Christ, part of our job will be to teach and uphold this pure language—this pure culture. But before we go on, let us spend some time looking at the effect of impure language.

According to Solomon, a person who speaks before he thinks is a fool because he blurts out thoughtless, insensitive remarks, sometimes answering before he listens. In fact, he is worse than a fool. Speaking before you think and being conceited are two things for which there is less hope than for being a fool. This kind of person brings trouble on himself and others.

Proverbs 29:20 Do you see a man hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

We have all experienced the humiliation, and the injury from demeaning or belittling, careless and harmful statements. And worse yet, we have said something like this to others. Careless words and statements do dreadful damage. Words like "always" and "never" get people in trouble, in this area.

Fill in the blanks:

You always_____.

You never_____.

The trouble with you is_____.

If you are so smart_____.

All you ever do is_____.

Why can't you be like_____?

You would forget your _____, if it was not_____.

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Sadly, these sound like some of the same daggers thrown back and forth in some marriages.

These, and many similar putdowns, seem automatically to pop out of our mouths at times of frustration or trouble with others, and it is amplified when it turns to gossip.

Someone once wrote,

"A bitter word blasted from our lips against another is like a pistol fired in the midst of mountains. The sharp report is caught up and intensified and echoed by the rocks until it sounds like thunder. In like manner, a thoughtless, unkind word, in passing from mouth to mouth, receives progressive exaggerations, and, snowball-like, it increases as it rolls."

Sarcasm, name-calling, putdowns, accusations, sweeping negative overstatements always antagonize—that is, provoke, irritate, annoy, upset, and alienate others.

Maybe, we have learned to treat others this way from our childhood, because many grow up with sarcasm, or a harsh tongue. Maybe we have formed such a habit that we do not even realize the harmful impact of what we say to people.

Some temperaments are more inclined to such harsh treatment of others. But that does not excuse rude treatment of others. No matter how bad a person's childhood was it is still a sin that must be repented of, and overcome!

When these types of negative comments are thrown at us, how do we feel, personally? Certainly not uplifted or encouraged! These are not words spoken in the spirit of love. They are destructive of the credibility of others and hinder their positive development. They discourage rather than hearten. It is an indirect way of saying, "I don't have any respect for you!" And, "I don't care if I insult you!" And, "I think that you're stupid!"

This is certainly not the 'pure language' of God's Kingdom.

Even a whispered slanderous word is like the fox that has a firebrand tied to its tail that Samson sent among the standing grain of the Philistines.

Judges 15:1-7 After a while, in the time of wheat harvest, it happened that Samson visited his wife with a young goat. And he said, "Let me go in to my wife, into her room." But her father would not permit him to go in. Her father

said, "I really thought that you thoroughly hated her; therefore I gave her to your companion. Is not her younger sister better than she? Please, take her instead." And Samson said to them, "This time I shall be blameless regarding the Philistines if I harm them!" Then Samson went and caught three hundred foxes; and he took torches, turned the foxes tail to tail, and put a torch between each pair of tails. When he had set the torches on fire, he let the foxes go into the standing grain of the Philistines, and burned up both the stocks and the standing grain, as well as the vineyards and olive groves. Then the Philistines said, "Who has done this?" And they answered, "Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite, because he has taken his wife and given her to his companion." So the Philistines came up and burned her and her father with fire.

This is the image that we are to have that harsh and negative words do to others. Gossip has a destructive affect that is every bit as damaging mentally and psychologically, as fire is to material things.

The attitude behind criticizing words, of course, is pride. It is human self-exaltation, and Satan, the accuser of the brethren, subtly plants such thoughts in us as he constantly bombards us. Or, we absorb this attitude from others who are affected by demonic influence, or they themselves are just plain negative. Have you ever walked into a room and noticed that the whole room is just negative, down, and depressing, and the bad spirit there?

Ephesians 2:2-3 "In which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others."

We have to move beyond this if we are really converted members of God's church. We are to live lives of overcoming, and moving on to perfection. We are all guilty, from time to time, of our verbal mistreatment of others—children and adults alike. It is something to be reminded of on a constant basis, because we can sit and listen to a sermon, and then a few hours after the sermon we can fall into the trap of negative comments or harsh words about someone. That is why it is mentioned so many times throughout Scripture, both in the Old and New Testaments.

One of our daughters was telling me some unexplainable thing that she had seen happen that day, to which I replied, "That doesn't make any sense!" I did not realize our grandsons Logan and Jordan (ages two and four at the time) were listening. I find that they do not miss anything, including the sermons, because sometimes they will make a comment during services about the sermon that is being preached.

Almost immediately Logan, the youngest looked over at Jordan, who was sitting next to him and verbally blasted Jordan with, "Jordan, you don't make any sense!"

Human nature can be seen in the raw in young children, as all parents know.

So Jordan verbally hammered back, "I do so make sense!"

Logan: "You do not!"

Jordan: "I do so!"

Logan: "You do not!"

Jordan: "I do so!"

And so on for a few more rounds.

And then Logan said, "Jordan hurt me," which he had not.

Jordan: "I did not hurt you!"

Logan: "You did so!"

Jordan: "I did not!"

Logan: "You did so!"

Jordan: "I did not!"

And so on for a few more rounds.

Then I decided to intervene. I said, "Logan! Jordan!"

Then all of a sudden their mood changed, and out of the blue —

Logan: "I love you, Granddad!"

Jordan: "I love you too, Granddad!"

The point is, that in the end neither of them made any sense during the conversation and their emotions mimicked and fed off one another. The emotions run wild and the confusion mounts; eventually no one really remembers how or why the harsh words started flowing.

When demeaning put-downs are repeated often enough, they get through the toughest skin and cause anything from a distorted sense of shame to blind rage. They may cause depression, mental illness, or even suicide. Words have power.

Proverbs 18:21 Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit.

There is a curse attached to the positive and negative use of the tongue, to the words that we use, to language that we are learning, whether it is positive or negative.

Often children bare the brunt of demeaning words from parents and others. If children are raised with constant negative criticism, they can be totally crushed, become introverted, socially backward persons who feel worthless the rest of their lives. What a dreadfully sad thing to do to our children.

Other children try to protect their tender egos from the hurts of such statements by hardening attitudes of disrespect to adults, or shouting more demeaning insults to other children. It is almost like a cancer that has spread through society and it can very easily spread through a family.

The habit of saying, "You always do something wrong!" or "You'll never learn!" can turn a talented child into a youth or adult of stunted intelligence and achievement; an individual with little confidence.

Children do need to feel our disapproval at times, but if our reaction is of such force or harshness that the child feels worthless and despised for his offense, then we have abused our authority as parents. How could we expect God to give us rule of ten cities if we abuse our own children?

There may even be a self-hatred that develops and warps the child's personality as a

result.

At this point, I am going to change direction slightly and talk about positive and negative thoughts and feelings. I think that you will find this very interesting, because it really has to do with what God has created within us, and within the world that we live in, and it is very eye opening.

Karol K. Truman wrote a book titled, *Feelings Buried Alive Never Die*, in which she writes about how our feelings and thoughts have "energy vibrations," which can be positive or negative. Although I do not agree with all of her conclusions, she presents some interesting and helpful scientific findings, which illustrate the impact that feelings, thoughts, and words have on our lives, and the lives of others. I think you will find this interesting, because it really shows the glory of God in His creation.

In this exciting, magnificent, electro-magnetic universe of ours, everything found in, on, under and above the universe has an energy vibration. Literally everything has unique energy! When energy is discussed, most people think of energy in relation to our bodies, such as "I ran out of energy before the day was half over." Or, they relate energy to an energy crisis—natural gas, gasoline, oil, propane or electricity.

These are definite sources of energy, but not energy in the true sense of the word. Real energy is an unknown force. It is used by each of us every day of our existence, and yet we still do not know exactly what it is.

We cannot see it. We cannot smell it, taste it, hear it, or hold it in our hands. We do experience manifestations of it every day in many ways, although it is still a mystery to the majority of the population. Light is energy, water is energy and electricity is energy. But, how do we explain it?

Energy is a force that takes many forms and can be manifested in many ways. Rocks have energy. Likewise, trees, plants, soil and insects have energy. The carpet on the floor has energy. So does the material in your sofa, and the wood that your tables are made of.

The glass in windows has energy vibrations, as well as the brick in the fireplace, the frame around the painting, and the paint in the painting. The food you eat, the clothes you wear, your hair, your nails, your glands, and your organs all have energy. Everything about you is energy.

Most importantly though, for the purpose of this sermon, it is imperative to understand that, *your feelings and your thoughts are also energy*.

Scientist and author Edward W. Russell postulates the actuality of thought-fields. In his book, *Vibrations*, we are told that a thought is an independent force all its own; that it can produce effects which form a field.

The energy of feelings and of thoughts can be changed. If the feeling or the thought is negative energy, it can be changed to positive energy.

If you wonder at the power of feelings and thoughts as energy, this may help you understand its ever-present vibrational influence. Scientists used to believe that energy traveled at the speed of light, or 186,000 miles per second.

They have recently discovered, however, that it travels 700 times faster! Thought being energy, therefore, means that thought travels at the same speed, which is 130,200,000 miles per second.

Energy moves in pulses like waves. The crest is the pulse of energy, and the trough is the pause. How close together the waves are, is called frequencies—how frequently the waves occur. This range of frequencies is called the electro-magnetic spectrum.

What we see, feel and experience materially is but a tiny part of the entire electro-magnetic spectrum. Beyond this range lies the largest part of the spectrum, heretofore immeasurable and undetectable. Here lies the frequency rate of gravity, magnetism, and thought itself!

All elements of the earth have different energies. Some have energy vibrations whose frequencies are very close together, and some have energy vibrations whose frequencies are very broad or far apart.

Dr. W. Jerome Stowell told a very vivid and profound illustration of the power of feeling and thought frequencies. Here is his story:

I was almost a devout atheist, I did not believe that God was any more than just a conglomeration of everyone's mind put together, and the good that was there—that was God as far as I was concerned. As for the real, all-

powerful God existing and loving us all, with power over everything, I did not believe that.

Then one day I had an experience that really set me thinking. I was in a large pathological laboratory where we were attempting to find the wavelength of the brain. We found a channel of wavelengths, and that channel has a mach room (unit of measure) in it wherein the different wavelengths of each individual's brain are further separated in identity more clearly than are the fingerprints of each individual's hand.

[This is a point to remember: God can actually keep in heaven a record of our thoughts as individuals, just as the FBI can keep a record of our fingerprints in Washington, D.C.]

We wanted to make an experiment to discover what took place in the brain at the moment of transition from life to death. We chose first a lady whose family had sent her to a mental institution but who had been discharged. The doctors could find nothing wrong with her other than the fact she had cancer of the brain.

This affected the balance of her body only. As far as her alertness of mind was concerned, and in every other way, she was exceptionally brilliant. We knew she was on the verge of death and she was informed, in this research hospital, that she was going to die.

We arranged a tiny pick-up in her room to ascertain what would take place in the transition of her brain from life to death. We also put a very small microphone, about the size of a shilling, in the rooms that we could hear what she said, if she had anything to say.

Five of us hardened scientists, perhaps I was the hardest of the group, were in an adjoining room with our instruments prepared to register and record what transpired. Our device had a needle pointing to "0" in the center of the scale. To the right the scale was calibrated to 500 points positive, to the left the scale was calibrated to 500 points negative.

We previously had recorded on this identical instrument the power used by a fifty-kilowatt broadcasting station in sending a message around the world. The needle then registered 9 points of the positive side.

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As the last moments of this woman's life arrived, she began to pray and praise the Lord. She asked the Lord to be merciful unto those who had spitefully used her; then she reaffirmed her faith in God, telling Him she knew He was the only power, and the only living power. He always had been and always would be.

She praised God and thanked Him for His power and for her knowledge of His reality. She told Him how much she loved Him.

We scientists had been so engrossed with this woman's prayer that we had forgotten our experiment. We looked at each other and saw tears streaming down scientific faces.

Suddenly we heard a clicking sound on our forgotten instrument. We looked and the needle was registering positive 500, desperately trying to go higher only to bounce against the 500 post in its attempt!

By actual instrumentation we had recorded that the brain of a woman alone and dying in communication with God had registered more than 55 times the power used by a fifty-kilowatt broadcasting station sending a message around the world.

This just shows that there are things in the brain that we just do not understand, and that can be proven scientifically. But if a fifty-kilowatt station can broadcast around the world what can fifty-five times that power do?

After this we decided to try a case very unlike the first one. We chose a man lying in the research hospital stricken with a deadly social disease. His brain had become atrophied to the very point of death. He was practically a maniac [the clinical term].

After we had set up our instruments, we arranged for one of the nurses to antagonize the man. Through her wiles, she attracted his interest in her, and then suddenly told him she did not want to have anything more to do with him.

He began to verbally abuse her, and the needle began to register on the negative side. Then he cursed her and took the name of God in vain. The needle then clicked back and forth against the 500 negative post.

By actual instrumentation we had registered what happened to the brain when that brain broke one of God's Ten Commandments, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."

We had established by instrumentation the positive power of God and the negative power of the adversary. We had found that beneficial truth is positive, and non-beneficial things covered by the "Thou shalt nots" of the Ten Commandments are negative.

If we scientists can record these things, I believe with all my heart that the Lord God can keep a record of our thoughts.

The experiment with the positive woman seems to indicate that the vibrational frequencies of positive feelings, thoughts, and words of the sick are somehow connected with increased peace of mind, joy, love, and contentment.

On the other hand, the experiment with the negative man seems to indicate that the vibrational frequencies of the negative feelings, thoughts, and words of the sick are somehow connected with repulsion and the breaking of God's laws.

In the process of becoming civilized it seems man has repelled himself further and further away from that which creates positive vibrations—the vibrations with the more desirable, closer frequencies. In our quest for comfort, success, riches, and gain we seem to have strayed far away from positive vibrations.

Even though good intentions motivate most people, "there is a way that seems right to a man," there is an increased inability to create and enjoy qualities of well-being in our lives (mostly speaking of society here), qualities which establish vibrations with the closer frequencies on a permanent basis. That means that there are people, individuals in society, that are living completely on the negative side of those vibrational frequencies.

Anything to gain seems to be a general rule with much of the human race today. Consequently, many themes on television, MTV, in movies, literature, magazines, and music, appeal to our more base, sordid, and depraved qualities.

If we add to that liquor, tobacco, and drugs, there is a further compounding of negative vibrational energy. That is, those things enhance the already negative feelings in a person. This is all in consequence of the evils and designs which exist in the hearts of

conspiring men in our time.

These men do not care who has to suffer, or who dies, just so long as their objectives are met. "Anything to get gain," is their motto. And, the gain is called greed or power.

The theme continues—anything to excite or satisfy my senses, my appetites. Anything goes, regardless of what it is. So, in accordance with natural laws, the disregard of other's welfare—the "anything to get gain" syndrome—is contributing to the negativity that permeates this society today, and it is taking its toll on the human family.

We know that we are suffering from the sins of society as we are overcoming sin and living God's way of life more and more perfectly all of the time. We are still suffering from disease, ailments, mental illness, and things like that from the sins of society, the things that have been perverted, the food, the air, and the water.

Could it be that the problem of disharmony and imbalance are further compounded? This disharmony has brought about a definite fragmentation of individuals, as well as families, cities, and nations. This is all the result of sin in thought, words, and language.

Another sad commentary that results from breaking natural law is the gross personal imbalance it causes, which subsequently undermines an individual's ability to have or maintain peace of mind and a continual sense of well being. Your feelings and your thoughts are energy.

At this point I am going to change direction again, and get back to our responsibility regarding thoughts, words, and impure language. Let us look at the practical application.

It is our Christian duty to avoid foolish disputes and backbiting. Paul emphasized to Timothy to let the members know that each of us is to blame if we argue over speculative things, and as a result damage the understanding of others.

II Timothy 2:14-16 Remind them of these things, charging them before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers. Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness.

Take note of the outcome of that kind of thing; what do they generate?

II Timothy 2:23 But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife.

There will not be strife in God's Kingdom, and the language, culture, and God's people will be pure. The test of everything must be whether it is profitable—of any value to our own lives, of any value to the lives of other people, and does it glorify God in the process.

Titus 3:9 But avoid foolish disputes, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and useless.

Useless means that they have no value. Often people who tell long drawn-out stories, or talk incessantly, are labeled time-wasters by their suffering audience. "The worst wheel of the cart makes the most noise," said Benjamin Franklin in *Poor Richard's Almanac*.

There is a lot of dissipation of energy, sheer waste of energy, in pointless disputes and backbiting. If we find we are not growing as a result of our activity—as a result of our efforts—then we should re-examine ourselves again. If we think we know so much, why is it not showing more in our lives? Knowledge, contending for the faith, and growing in grace, must always be together.

This is a very difficult matter because we are told two things in the Bible that seem to contradict. First, Jude exhorts us to, "Contend earnestly for the faith." The apostle Paul thanked the Philippians that they have stood with him, ". . . in the defense and proclamation of the gospel." We are to be bold in that area. We are called upon to do this. But we have to keep to a position that is between two extremes. There are some people who never defend the faith at all. They claim that they are just nice, good people, who do not argue, who do not want to differ with another's opinion. That is an unscriptural position to assume because we are meant to contend earnestly for the faith.

Nevertheless we have to answer a fool according to his folly, or not answer a fool according to his folly, depending on the attitude of the fool.

Proverbs 26:4-5 Do not answer a fool according to his folly, lest you also be like him. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes.

It can be a negative situation or it can be a positive one, and God gives us that

discernment to understand when to do which.

So that is one Christian duty, but there is also a second. We are never to become guilty of this "vain disputation," or "vain wrangling," over words, because words have power, and to use them vainly or to use them in a vain way goes to the negative side.

Benjamin Franklin, in his *Poor Richard's Almanac*, wrote, "Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing." We cannot allow ourselves to form the bad habit of constantly criticizing and always arguing.

II Timothy 2:24 And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient.

At one and the same time we have to contend for the faith, and to refrain from striving over words. "Striving" means that your spirit is wrong, and once your spirit is wrong your motive becomes wrong. You tend to pride yourself as being "a defender of the faith," and you lose your righteous spiritual quality.

We must contend, but we must never strive over words. We must do the one and avoid the other. The moment a person begins to strive, he is dissipating his energy and he is moving to a negative side of energy.

Benjamin Franklin, also wrote in *Poor Richard's Almanac* a couple more pearls of wisdom, "The heart of a fool is in his mouth, but the mouth of a wise man is in his heart," and "Well done is better than well said."

How important is it for us to meet our commitments, to honor our word, and our promises? Does it really matter if we tell somebody that we are going to be somewhere and we do not show up? It does to the person who is standing there waiting for us. We must honor our commitments, because we are to emulate our reliable God who is trustworthy.

A case in point is creation itself. The seasons come and go, right on schedule. We set our clocks by the movement of the stars. The tides are predictable. The sun sets and rises on time. So does the moon. Snow melts. Rain falls. Flowers blossom. Plants grow, bear seed, and die.

All of this is predictable. God's creation is reliable. And so is God. God honors His commitments. Whatever He says He will do, He fulfills. His word is binding, "as good as

gold," and even more so!

Numbers 23:19 "God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?"

That is a rhetorical question, of course. God absolutely will, with no doubt, fulfill His promises.

How good is your word? Since the word "good" derives from the word "God," meaning 'to be like God,' then we could ask, 'How much like God's Word is ours?' Scripture shows that God's Word is sure, reliable, and trustworthy.

1 Kings 8:54-61 And so it was, when Solomon had finished praying all this prayer and supplication to the Lord, that he arose from before the altar of the Lord, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven. Then he stood and blessed all the assembly of Israel with a loud voice, saying: "Blessed be the Lord, who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised. There has not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised through His servant Moses. May the Lord our God be with us, as He was with our fathers. May He not leave us nor forsake us, that He may incline our hearts to Himself, to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, which He commanded our fathers. And may these words of mine, with which I have made supplication before the Lord, be near the Lord our God day and night, that He may maintain the cause of His servant and the cause of His people Israel, as each day may require, that all the peoples of the earth may know that the Lord is God; there is no other. Let your heart therefore be loyal to the Lord our God, to walk in His statutes and keep His commandments, as at this day."

Notice the heart being mentioned a few times there. The key words here are word, promise, and hearts. This is an example of what it means to speak a pure language. It includes:

Prayer and supplication to God.

Not one word fails of all that we promise.

Hearts are inclined to God.

Walk in all His ways.

Keep His commandments, statutes, and judgments.

Know that the Lord is God.

The heart is loyal to God.

All of those are listed there in those scriptures.

Many people, on the other hand, do not keep their word. They renege on their promises. These people do not carry out their word if doing so would inconvenience them. They get hired, make a commitment to produce, but soon begin to goof off or slack off. They sign a volunteer list and promise to help, but do not show up. They join a club, and then quit halfway through. They promise their children a trip to the beach, and then do not take them. They say they will help set up for a social, and then do not show up.

Of such a person, God has nothing good to say. Remember words have power both ways, negative and positive.

Proverbs 25:19 Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a bad tooth and a foot out of joint.

Pain is involved in both. A promise breaker causes pain, and prevents the task from being completed well. Unreliable people can make costly errors that hurt a group or an organization.

God judges us on how we keep our commitments. Notice in David's psalm where he writes about what qualities of character a person must have to be in God's Kingdom.

Psalms 15:1-4 LORD, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill? He who walks uprightly, and works righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart; he who does not backbite with his tongue, nor does evil to his neighbor, nor does he take up a reproach against his friend; in whose eyes a vile person is despised, but he honors those who fear the LORD; he who swears to his own hurt and does not change.

Moffat translates it, "He who keeps to his oath, though he may lose by it."

The NIV has, "who keeps his oath even when it hurts."

In other words, this person promises something and, even if it turns out to be inconvenient for him, or messes up his plans, he does not go back on his word. Lacking these qualities of character can keep us out of God's Kingdom, according to Scripture. That is, of course, if it is a continual sin, God is ready and willing to forgive us multiple times over and over again. provided it is genuine repentance.

A person who does not keep his commitments now cannot be relied on in the future. If we are unfaithful in the smallest points now, how can God trust us with greater responsibilities in the future?

Luke 16:10 He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much.

This is a maxim that will almost universally hold true. A man that shows fidelity in small matters will also in large; and he that will cheat and defraud in little things will also in those involving more trust and responsibility. Fidelity is required in small matters as well as in those of more importance.

The same holds true for our words. Are we careful about the words we use regarding seemingly "insignificant" things in life? Many fall into this trap; they aimlessly throw around their promises to help with something, or to meet some place, but then do not show up and do not call.

God considers going back on our promises as sin. He keeps all His promises! We are better off not to make a promise if we think we might not be able to keep it. Most often those people who are the slowest to make promises are the most faithful in keeping them. God is the one we should fear when it comes to breaking our promises. Yes, we should fear hurting someone's feelings or causing someone grief, but it is God who we sin against as well as the individual.

In Ecclesiastes 5, the exhortation to "fear God" is motivated by God's holy and righteous character. Previously, the exhortation of Solomon the preacher writing this, was motivated by God's sovereignty. The preacher minced no words when he wrote about

being 'a person of your word.'

Ecclesiastes 5:1-7 Walk prudently when you go to the house of God; and draw near to hear rather than to give the sacrifice of fools, for they do not know that they do evil. Do not be rash with your mouth, and let not your heart utter anything hastily before God. For God is in heaven, and you on earth; therefore let your words be few. For a dream comes through much activity, and a fool's voice is known by his many words. When you make a vow to God, do not delay to pay it; for He has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you have vowed—better not to vow than to vow and not pay. Do not let your mouth cause your flesh to sin, nor say before the messenger of God that it was an error. Why should God be angry at your excuse and destroy the work of your hands? For in the multitude of dreams and many words there is also vanity. But fear God.

"When you vow a vow to God," or "Promise God you will do something," the preacher, here, wants to keep people from uttering rash or meaningless words during the worship of God, and in particular he has in mind the careless taking of a religious vow as an act of piousness or devotion. He also does not want us to memorize our prayers.

Deuteronomy 23:21-23 "When you make a vow to the Lord your God, you shall not delay to pay it; for the Lord your God will surely require it of you, and it would be sin to you. But if you abstain from vowing, it shall not be sin to you. That which has gone from your lips you shall keep and perform, for you voluntarily vowed to the Lord your God what you have promised with your mouth.

We are commanded that no one should "misuse the name of the Lord." When a vow using God's name is spoken, it brings God into contract with that person. As a result, any failure to carry out the stipulations of the vow breaks the contract and subjects that person to divine judgment.

By taking a vow, a worshipper would promise to perform a specific act (such as making a sacrifice) and they would do that only if God would respond favorably to a particular petition. Since making a sacrifice was costly, however, people often looked for some excuse to avoid following through with it.

This is why the preacher warns in Ecclesiastes 5:6, "Better not to vow, than to vow and

not pay." Vows must be kept because God keeps His promises and requires His people to imitate His moral character.

The instruction about vows, contained in Deuteronomy 23, is a wisdom statement similar in form to Ecclesiastes 5. It is designed as a caution against unwise speech, against foolish words. Regarding whatever we say, God is the one we must fear.

The New Testament also has something to say about not swearing by an oath. James clearly states the seriousness of swearing.

James 5:12 But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your "Yes" be "Yes," and your "No," "No," lest you fall into judgment.

Christ tells us that we should not make vows by swearing, and there are ample commands in Scripture that we are not to do this.

Matthew 5:33-37 "Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.' But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.

This scriptural instruction is not meant to imply that oaths by themselves are sin. To emphasize that we are often powerless to fulfill even our strongest intentions, God commands us not to swear by His name in any oath. Failing to fulfill an oath would be taking God's name in vain—a very, very serious sin.

We should simply say "Yes" or "No," according to what we honestly believe to be true, even in legal matters. The law of the United States permits affirmation; that is, saying "Yes" or "No"—without raising the hand to swear.

Especially as a Christian, our "Yes, I will" or "No, I will not" should be enough. We do not have to swear to tell the truth, because we believe in keeping the ninth commandment. Our "Yes, I will" is a commitment.

Many people misunderstand Jesus Christ and His teaching. In John 8, He gives the reason: it is because the world cannot bear or, that they are not able to hear Christ's word; by "hear" He means "hear and receive," or "hear and accept."

John 8:42-47 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it. But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me. Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me? He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God."

They do not hear in the sense of hearing, believing, and following. "He who is of God" is he who loves, fears, and honors God.

He who hears God's words, that is, listens to, and obeys the commandments of God, as a child who loves his parent, will regard and obey His commands. This is an evidence of true faithfulness. A willingness to receive all that God teaches us, and to obey all His commandments is an undoubted proof that we are His friends. God's friends keep their promises. If we are unfaithful, non-committed, and do not follow our promises, can we really be called a friend of God?

We must keep our promises, whether they are vows we made concerning our marriage, the covenant we made to other people in day-to-day life, or any other promises that we make.

We have to be dependable and reliable, like God is. We have to do what we say we will do, even if it turns out to be inconvenient. God hears all and judges.

It is essentially important to honor your commitments—to follow through on your promises, to be dependable in your guarantees, to be committed to your agreements, to be reliable in your testimonies, and to be trustworthy in giving your word.

The pure language God promises to restore is already beginning to be restored in His church, with you and me. In fact, it already exists, because it is the words that God already speaks—already lives.

Impure Language Destroyed by Martin G. Collins (<http://www.cgg.org>)

In my next sermon we will get into more detail on the foundation of the pure language.