

First Steps to Healing



Does Your Tongue Need Healing? (Part 8)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again, sharing with you on this week's important, but challenging theme: Does Your Tongue Need Healing?

In my talk yesterday we saw the clear and unequivocal testimony of Scripture: the root of every problem affecting our tongues is in our hearts.

We looked at the words of Jesus in Matthew 12:33, 34:

> "Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit. You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks." (NIV)

In other words, the mouth is the indicator of what's in the heart. If the heart is good, the words will be good. If the words are evil, then the heart is evil. An evil heart cannot produce good words nor can a good heart produce evil words. It's either good all the way or evil all the way.

We also saw that the whole course of our lives is determined by what we have in our hearts. Proverbs 4:23:

> "Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life. [the source of your whole life]." (NIV)

Another translation:

> "Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life." (NASB)

In closing yesterday, we identified some problems in our hearts that are frequently expressed through out tongues: bitterness, resentment, unbelief, impurity, pride.

Today I'm going to explain the first steps to the healing of our tongues. I'm going to give you three simple, practical, scriptural steps to dealing with that problem of your tongue.

Step number 1: Call your problem by its right name: sin.

See, it's very important that we become honest at this point. As long as we use some fancy, psychological terminology to cover up our problem, as long as we try in some way to condone it, or excuse it, or pretend that it isn't really there, or that it isn't a serious problem, nothing will happen. We have to come to the moment of honesty. I've seen this so many times in God's dealings both with me and with many other people. When we come to the moment of truth, God moves in and helps us. As long as we try to excuse or cover up or misrepresent our problem, God doesn't do anything for us. Sometimes we say, "Well God, why don't you help me?" God replies, we may not hear him, but God replies, "I'm waiting for you to be honest, honest with yourself and honest with me." So that's the first step and it's really the most important in a way, because once you take that step, you're well on the way to those that follow. Call your problem by its right name, and the name is sin. See, religious people have got many different ways of excusing or glossing over the misuse of our tongues. We kind of think that it doesn't matter much what we say. God says it makes all the difference. In fact, we've seen that by what you say, you settle your destiny. Jesus said, "By your words you will be justified; by your words you will be condemned." It's a serious matter. Don't trifle with it. Face reality. Come to the moment of truth and say, "I have a problem, it's sin." When you've come there, you're ready to take Step Number 2.

Step number 2 I express this way: confess, receive forgiveness and cleansing.

Let's say that once more. Confess your sin as sin, then receive forgiveness and cleansing.

Let me read you some of my favorite words from Scripture in the first epistle of John, chapter 1, verses 7 through 9:

> "If we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (NASB)

Again you see the importance of being honest. The blood of Jesus does not cleanse in the dark. That's a profound truth. Only when we come to the light can we receive the cleansing of the blood of Jesus. If we're walking in the light, then the blood of Jesus Christ continually cleanses us, keeps us pure from all sin. If we say that we have no sin—and I've pointed out that's really the problem, with our tongues we don't acknowledge the problems with our tongues to be sins—we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves. The truth is not in us. We're not in the light. We're still in the dark and God's provision doesn't work in the dark. But then we come to the alternative. If we confess our sins, if we come to the light, if we acknowledge the real nature and the seriousness of our problem, then we have this wonderful statement: "God is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to clean us from all unrighteousness." Two words are used, "faithful" and "righteous" or just. God is faithful because He's promised and He'll keep His promise. He's righteous or just because Jesus has already paid the penalty for our sins, therefore He can forgive us without compromising His justice. If we confess our sins, this is the guarantee of Scripture, God in faithfulness and in justice will do two things: forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. God not merely forgives, that's wonderful, but in a sense, even more important, He cleanses. Once our hearts are cleansed, because the heart is the well spring of life, we don't go on committing the same sins.

If you believe that your sins are forgiven, but you find experientially that you have not been cleansed, I would like to question whether you've really been forgiven, because the same God who forgives, cleanses. The same Scripture that promises forgiveness promises also cleansing. I question whether God ever stops halfway. If we meet the conditions, we get the packet. If we don't meet the conditions, we don't get half, we get nothing. If we confess our sins, God is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Once our hearts are cleansed, then the problem will not be there. You remember the condition of the heart determines what comes out of the mouth. A clean heart cannot produce unclean utterances. Unclean utterances indicate an unclean heart. If we come to the light, if we confess, if we face up to the problem and turn to God with the problem, then God is faithful and righteous, He forgives, the record of the past is blotted out, all those things you wish you'd never said are blotted out. And secondly, God cleanses your heart. And out of a clean, pure heart, that which comes through your lips will be clean and pure. If your heart glorifies God your lips will glorify God. God solves the problem of the tongue and of the lips by dealing with the condition of the heart.

We come now to the third step and it's this: refuse sin, yield to God.

There's a negative and a positive and they go together like the two opposite sides of the same coin. You have to refuse sin. God does the forgiving. God does the cleansing, but then you have to exercise your will. You have to exercise your will both ways. You have to say "No" to sin and "Yes" to God. And you must do both. You cannot say "No" to sin without saying

"Yes" to God because you'll be in a vacuum and a vacuum will be filled again with the same problem. You cannot escape from sin without yielding to God.

Listen to what Paul says in Romans 6:12 through 14:

> "Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members [or the parts of your body] as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law, but under grace." (NASB)

all right, when sin challenges you, you say "No, I will not yield to you; I will not yield the parts of my body, above all I will not yield that member that causes most of the trouble, the tongue. Sin, you cannot control my tongue any longer." Then you turn to God and say, "God, I yield my tongue to you and I ask you to control the member which I cannot control."

Let's look at what James says. We've seen it already. James 3: 7 and 8:

> "For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed, and has been tamed by the human race. But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison." (NASB)

Do you accept that fact? You cannot tame your own tongue. You cannot control your own tongue. Are you willing to face the truth? All right there's only one power that can control your tongue for good—it's the power of God. It's the power of the Holy Spirit. So you have been forgiven. You have been cleansed. Now, when you're challenged again to use your tongue sinfully, you say to sin, "You cannot have my tongue; I refuse it to you." And then you say to the Holy Spirit, "Holy Spirit, I yield my tongue to you; I cannot control my tongue, but I ask you to control my tongue for me."

Let's just briefly recapitulate those three steps. First, call your problem by it's right name. Call it sin. Second, confess, receive forgiveness and cleansing, and third, refuse to yield to sin, determine to yield to God. That's the climax of the process of deliverance and of healing. It's yielding to God, the Holy Spirit, the member that you can never control.

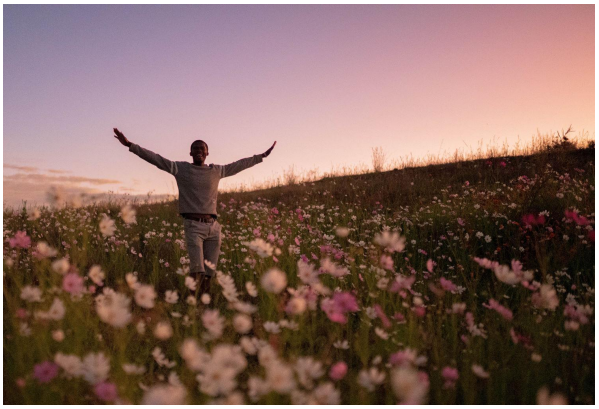
Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this time. Tomorrow I'll be explaining the real reason you have a tongue.

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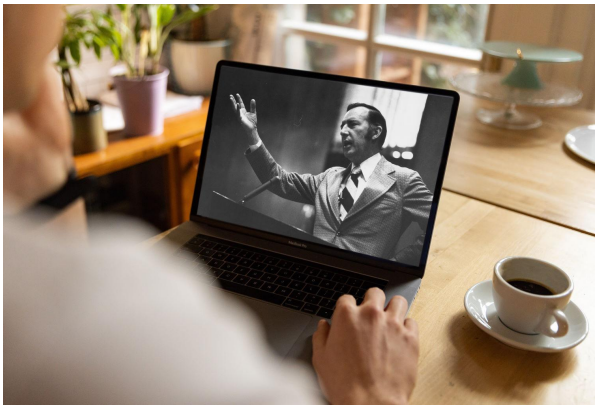
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