

The Word of Faith: A Biblical Overview

It is known by many names: Word of Faith, positive confession, speaking the Word and the derisive term "Name it and claim it." Although the idea is controversial in some circles, the Bible draws an undeniable connection between our faith and the words we speak.

The purpose of this message is to examine exactly how much the Bible does say about this subject (you might be surprised)! This is not intended to simply be a list of "positive confession" proof texts (although it would include that). Rather, we simply want to show that practically every facet of the Christian life is connected to the words we speak. That being said, let's look at God's Word together:

Genesis 1 God creates the Universe by *speaking* it into existence. Note that God speaking to nothing and creating something involved an exercise of faith that what He spoke would happen. We will examine this "God kind of faith" later in our study.

Numbers 14:37 Many Israelites die because of the "evil report" they brought after being sent to spy out the land they were to conquer. In other words, the report was full of fear that they would not be able to do what God had called them to do (13:32-33).

Joshua 1:7-7 God tells Joshua that if he will meditate (Hebrew: "speak, mutter" see Strong's # 1897) on His Word day and night and observe to do the Word, his way will be prosperous and successful.

Psalms 34:12-13 "Whoever of you loves life, and desires to see many good days, keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking lies" (NIV)

Psalms 45:1 The psalmist describes his tongue as the "pen of a ready writer."

Psalms 91:2 Receiving the wonderful blessings of this Psalm are

dependant on who we say God is.

Psalm 107:2 "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy..."

Proverbs 4:20-22 God's words are life and health to our flesh.

Proverbs 12:6 "The words of the wicked are to lie in wait for blood: but the *mouth* of the upright shall deliver them."

Proverbs 12:14 "A man shall be satisfied with good by the *fruit of his mouth*..."

Proverbs 12:18 "There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the *tongue of the wise* is health."

Proverbs 13:2-3 "A man shall eat good by the fruit of his mouth...he who guards his mouth preserves his life, but he who opens wide his lips shall have destruction"

Proverbs 15:2 "The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness."

Proverbs 15:4 "A wholesome tongue is a tree of life..."

Proverbs 15:23 "A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth..."

Proverbs 18:20-21 "A man's belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth; and with the increase of his lips shall he be filled. Death and life are in the power of the tongue."

Proverbs 21:23 "Whoever guards his mouth and tongue keeps his soul from troubles."

Job- Anyone who is at all familiar with the Bible has heard of the horrible trials endured by this great man of God. Although we certainly do not know of the reasons why all of this happened, some have suggested that 3:25-26 may hold a clue: "For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me. I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came."

Previously, Job had been surrounded by a "hedge" of God's protection (1:10). Could the fact that Job gave fear such a place in his life have caused a breach in the hedge? While it is overly simplistic to say that Job's suffering was exclusively caused by his choice of words, we must remember the warnings of Ecclesiastes 10:8: "...whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him."

Isaiah 43:25-26 "I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; and I will not remember your sins. Put Me in remembrance; let us contend together; state your case, that you may be acquitted."

Jeremiah 1:12 God is watching over His Word to perform it.

Daniel 10:12 As the prophet Daniel prays, the angel comes in response to his *words*.

Joel 3:10 "...let the weak say, I am strong." This is an Old Testament preview of the concept of "calling those things that be not as though they were (Romans 4:17)," which we will examine shortly.

Malachi 3:13 God judges the backslidden nation because their *words* were "stout against Him."

Malachi 3:16 God records the words of His people in a book of remembrance.

Matthew 8:3 Jesus cleanses a leper with a command of faith.

Matthew 8:5-13 A similar faith command brings healing to a Roman military officer's servant. Notice the officer's request for Jesus to "...*speak the word* only, and my servant shall be healed (v 8)."

Matthew 8:26 Jesus stills a storm by speaking to it.

Matthew 8:32 Jesus' words bring deliverance to a demon possessed man.

Matthew 9:1-7 A similar command brings healing to a crippled man.

Matthew 12:34 "... out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

Whatever is on the inside will eventually come out, whether it be faith or unbelief.

Matthew 12:37 By our words we are justified and by our words we are condemned.

Mark 1:25 Jesus casts out another demon by speaking to it.

Mark 11:22-23 "And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God (Note: A more accurate translation would be 'Have the faith of God' or, as we previously mentioned, 'Have the God kind of faith'). For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he *saith*." Contrary to popular belief, this passage was not written by Kenneth Copeland. These stirring words from Jesus show that He was the original faith teacher! These verses are key in understanding Word of Faith theology. Just as God exercised His own power by speaking into nothing and creating the universe, we can use the "faith of God" within to speak to the "mountains" or other obstacles of life and cast them out of our way! Note that Jesus didn't simply say to pray that the mountain be removed. Our spoken words are the means by which we release our faith, and are an often overlooked facet of having a victorious prayer life.

Luke 7:14 A dead man raised by Jesus' words of faith.

Luke 11:2 Jesus begins the Lord's prayer by saying "When you pray, say..." Prayer is to be verbalized, not silent.

Luke 13:10-17 Jesus' words bring healing to a woman with an 18 year disability.

John 4:50 Jesus heals the nobleman's son through a faith command.

John 5:20 Jesus makes the astounding promise that believers will be able to do, not only the works He did, but even greater ones! As we shall see, this was strongly tied to speaking the Word in His name.

John 6:63 Jesus' Words are spirit and they are life.

Romans 4:17 A description of Abraham's faith in God, who "callet those things which be not as though they were."

Romans 10:8 "The word is nigh thee, even *in thy mouth*, and *in thy heart*: that is, the *word of faith*, which we preach..." Echoing Jesus' statements in Mark 11:22-23, we see that, in order to work, faith must be both in the heart, as well as in the mouth.

Romans 10:9 "... if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Notice that even our salvation is received in this same manner: by believing in our hearts, and confessing with our mouths.

1 Corinthians 4:10-13 I include this passage to show what Biblical confession is *not*. Confessing the Word is not simply ignoring the realities of life. Here the Apostle Paul vividly describes some of the many difficulties he faced. Are we going to accuse him of making a "negative confession?" Of course not. Faith is not denial. Faith acknowledges that negative circumstances do exist, but through our faith in God's power within us, we can overcome them.

1 Corinthians 10: 1-11 A sober reminder of the sufferings the Israelites endured in the wilderness. Although normally, this journey would have only taken a matter of days, it wound up taking forty hellish years (see Numbers 32:13). Among the reasons for this was misuse of the tongue, or "murmering" (v. 10).

2 Corinthians 4:13 It is written: "I believed; therefore I have spoken." With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak.

1 Timothy 6:12 "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses."

Hebrews 1:3 God upholds all things by the *Word* of His power. This is another clear indicator of the power of God's spoken words.

Hebrews 3:1 Here Jesus is called the "High Priest of our profession", i.e. our confession.

Hebrews 10:23 "Let us hold fast the profession (or confession) of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)" or, as another translation words it: "Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful."

James 3:2 A man who can bridle his tongue is a perfect man, able to bridle his whole body.

James 3:4-5 Just as a helm steers a ship, so do our tongues steer our lives.

Revelation 12:11 Believers overcome "by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony..."



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