

John 14:27-31 – “The Power of Words”

(Pew Bible Page: 901)

Intro: Words are powerful things because they are supernatural things. They come from the innermost part of man, the spirit, and they address the soul. This part of our being is eternal, unlike the material bodies that we think of as our true selves. But our bodies are *not* the real us. Our spirits and souls live eternally and words likewise endure forever. The first act of God in creation was to command, “*Let there be light*” and by these words God decreed that a knowledge of Him would be the first and abiding purpose of all He would do through the worlds He made. God’s purpose in creation was to reveal Himself, to make Himself known and the way that He does that most fully is through words. Words are living things when they spring from God. Spirit empowered speech is God’s way of making Himself known to us. Tonight we want to see the power of Words when they are spoken by God.

Proposition: Because words from God are supernatural, we ought to welcome God’s words as His Spirit speaks them to us.

Our study tonight will focus on four aspects of God’s power through words: (v.27) God’s Words Speak Peace; (v.28) God’s Words Speak Rejoicing; (v.29) God’s Words Speak Assurance; (vv.30-31) God’s Words Speak Authority.

(v.27) God’s Words Speak Peace – Jesus spoke peace to His disciples, promising to leave peace to them as His parting bequest and to create peace in their hearts by the coming of His Holy Spirit as a gift. **John 14:27 - 27** *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.* As we learned last Sunday morning, Jesus’ gift of peace came from His work of atonement for our sins through the Cross, bringing us peace with God and peace with other men (on our part, if not on theirs). He also promised His followers inner peace through the coming of the Holy Spirit. The result of these words of promise should have been peace in His disciples, for it is through His words that God gives us His peace. The Gospel is the Gospel of Peace. In the good news of Jesus we find that our sins have been forgiven and new life has been granted to all who believe. This should set our hearts at rest like nothing else. This is why Jesus followed His promise of peace with a command: “*Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.*”¹ The disciples of Jesus were to count on the truth of His promise. They were to use His words to rule over their unruly hearts. Our hearts will naturally be troubled and afraid when faced by circumstances out of our control, but Jesus words assure us that nothing can ultimately touch us. Our sins are forgiven and Christ’s life is now dwelling in us. Why shouldn’t we know peace in any circumstance?

[DOCTRINAL POINT] God’s promise of peace should bring peace to our hearts.

[ILLUSTRATION] The story is told of a Confederate soldier who came out of hiding behind Union lines, almost starved to death and pleading for food from Union troops that were passing where he was hiding. When asked why he hadn’t gone to his own companions for help, he admitted that he was a deserter, and feared being shot for his betrayal. The Union soldiers then told him, “Go on home, man! The war is over! No one will do you harm now!”² How many Christians are like that man? Their war with God is over. Peace has been declared, while they continue to live in fear of the wrath of God. But the wrath of God has been canceled at the Cross!

[APPLICATION] The great good news of the Gospel is that Jesus paid it all. At Calvary, He completely canceled our debt of sin for all time. Everything against us, past, present and future, was paid for at the Cross. God the Father has now declared us forgiven and reconciled with Himself because of the work of Jesus. Our

¹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 14:27). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

² Harry Ironside

John 14:27-31 – “The Power of Words”

(Pew Bible Page: 901)

weaknesses of today, are covered at the Cross as well. Christ has asked the Father to pour out the Holy Spirit on all who put their faith in Christ. We now have access to all the help we could ever wish for in our battle against the old nature. These things are true, whether we feel them in our hearts or not! Our hearts are masters of deception, joining Satan in accusing us, guiltting us, tempting us to hopelessness. But here, Jesus has given us a command: *“Let not your hearts be troubled.”* Don’t let your heart get away with troubling you any longer. We are called to rule over our hearts’ accusations by keeping our faith in Jesus’ precious promises. We sometimes sing a song, *“I Am Who You Say I Am.”* Remind yourself often that you are who Jesus says you are, not who your fallen heart tempts you to think you are. Let God’s truth sit in judgment over your feelings. Refuse to let your feelings sit in judgment over God’s promises.

(v.28) God’s Words Speak Rejoicing – Jesus had spoken words of peace to His disciples, but they had not received peace. **John 14:28 - 28** *You heard me say to you, ‘I am going away, and I will come to you.’ If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.* Instead of bringing them peace and rejoicing, Jesus words *“I am going away,”* had caused their hearts to tremble – fear had seized the high ground of their minds. Jesus’ words of peace had provoked in their hearts trembling and fear. How could this be? The secret lay in the focus of their hearts. God’s words of peace provoke differing reactions in the heart depending on who the listener loves: Does he love himself or God more? The disciples’ hearts were trembling, not because they didn’t belong to Jesus. They clearly did. But they were susceptible to fear because Jesus was not yet their primary love. They were still more in love with themselves than they were with Jesus. The man who loves himself trembles and fears when God speaks to him, but the one who loves God will find his heart leaping up in rejoicing at the sound of those very same words. The words Jesus had spoken to them should have produced rejoicing. After all, don’t we rejoice when someone we love receives a blessing? Think of it! Jesus was going back to His Father’s side. He would resume His rightful place at God’s right hand. In His incarnation Jesus had laid aside His prerogatives as God, humbling Himself to become a man, so that He could die for man’s sins. In this voluntary submission to His Father’s will Jesus had become for a moment, subservient to the Father. That was why He said, *“the Father is greater than I.”*³ When Christ ascended to the Father after accomplishing His work on the Cross, He resumed His full equality with God and took up again His preincarnate glory. Our Savior now is the risen Christ, interceding for us at His Father’s right hand. Why wouldn’t that truth bring rejoicing to His disciples’ hearts? Because they were focused on themselves. All they could see was that Jesus was going away and that would mean (as far as they could see at that moment) that all they had hoped *for themselves* would fall to the ground. God’s words create rejoicing in the prepared heart, but fear and trembling in a heart primarily concerned with its own desires.

[DOCTRINAL POINT] God’s words bring rejoicing to the prepared heart.

[ILLUSTRATION] An amazing thing usually happens when a child is born to first time parents. It isn’t unusual for young people to wonder whether they ought to have children. They say to themselves, *“This world is such a mess! Why should I bring another person into this dangerous, unhappy place?”* That’s what they say, but what they really mean of course is, *“I don’t want to be responsible for anyone but myself! This just sounds like trouble to me! Why should I put myself through it?”* But then the amazing thing happens. A little one comes along, and pretty soon you find that doubting mom and dad totally transformed. It isn’t long before they can’t imagine life without that little pooping, spitting, gurgling, sleep denying, bundle of joy. Does this make any sense? Of course it does! What just happened? They are being massively inconvenienced, but love blows all of that away; love for that new life completely replaces, for a while at least, love of self.

³ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 14:28). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

John 14:27-31 – “The Power of Words”

(Pew Bible Page: 901)

[APPLICATION] Anyone who has yet to learn the secret of self-forgetfulness needs to hear that when God speaks to us, our hearts will only begin to rejoice as we replace love of self with love for Christ. How is this transformation made to occur? It happens naturally, just the way it happens with that baby. The head rules over the heart. We do the things that Christ commands us to do, whether we feel like it or not. And one day we begin to realize that through this process Christ is becoming increasingly precious to us. Love for Him is gradually replacing love of self. The heart always follows the will, you know. Whatever we decide to give priority, eventually becomes beloved. When we choose to make Christ the center of our lives and follow through with that commitment, we take the first step toward Christ naturally becoming the center of our lives. Surely you don't think the new mom and dad naturally like hopping out of bed at two in the morning, do you? But every time they do it, they fall a little more in love with the child they've been blessed with. That's the way love works. That's the way it captures our hearts. The heart will rejoice at the voice of the one it has fallen in love with, no matter what it costs.

(v.29) God's Words Speak Assurance – Again Jesus referred to His words, signaling another product of God words to men – assurance. **John 14:29 - 29** *And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe.* Jesus realized that His disciples were about to undergo a severe test of faith. His arrest, torture, crucifixion and death would challenge all they believed about who He was. They would need assurance. He gave them this assurance through His words. Jesus told them ahead of time what would come to pass so that when it did come to pass they would believe. God's words create belief in the hearts of men when men are willing to receive them. How is it that faith is created in human hearts? God does it through the use of words. He speaks truth and by His Spirit opens the heart to believe. How is it that faith when challenged is strengthened? Again, it is through this same process: God's word is received and put into practice – through faith, in other words. Everything God wants to give us for our salvation comes to us through words.

[DOCTRINAL POINT] God's words bring assurance to the fainting heart.

[ILLUSTRATION] Some advertising guru came up with the slogan, “The best surprise, is no surprise.” I can't for the life of me remember what was being recommended to us by its use, but the slogan itself is burnt into my mind, because it's true, isn't it? Don't you love it when you already know what's going to happen before it happens? Doesn't that second cataract surgery seem much less intimidating than the first? Why is that? Because you already know the drill – you know what's going to happen, so you're not surprised and frightened by what's going on around you. God gives us insight through His words so that you and I can have that same assurance in the midst of the confusing, chaotic world in which we live.

[APPLICATION] Anyone looking around us at our world today must surely be tempted to feel insecure. Our world is a “hot mess” these days. Why doesn't God fix it? Why hasn't He stepped in? If you're beginning to feel a bit uneasy, it's time for you to pick up your Bible again. When we carefully read the Scriptures, we begin to understand that all we're witnessing around us is to be expected. Jesus has told us ahead of time what will come to pass, and He has done that for our assurance. He knows our weaknesses. He understands our hearts. He has written into His word prophecies, words of wisdom, examples of other believers living in chaotic times, all kinds of helps just waiting for us to “take up and read” so that our hearts may be strengthened in the midst of the storm. As we cling to the Book we find assurance and reassurance for our hearts. Are you getting a bit shaky? “Take up and read!”

(vv.30-31) God's Words Speak Authority – Jesus' time with His disciples was running out. At the close of this chapter we find Jesus beginning His final journey with His disciples before the Cross – the remainder of His discourse would apparently be spoken on the road to Gethsemane. **John 14:30–31 - 30** *I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim on me, 31 but I do as the Father has*

John 14:27-31 – “The Power of Words”

(Pew Bible Page: 901)

commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us go from here. Jesus realized that His time had come and that Satan, “*the ruler of this world,*” was coming quickly to play his part in the story of the Cross. The limitations of time were encroaching on the Savior. But though Satan was coming, he had no authority over the Lord Jesus. Words have spiritual authority subject to God’s sovereign disposition. Because of the sinless life and character of the Savior, Satan had no handle, no hold on Jesus. That is why Jesus said, “*He has no claim on me, but I do as the Father commanded me.*” Satan has no authority over God’s Son and as believers we are in Christ. We, of course, realize our imperfections, trespasses, and sins, but because the sinless Savior died for us, we are covered by His work on our behalf at the Cross. This means that Satan can only bother us if we give him ground; if we believe his lies, rather than trusting God’s words. Satan has no authority to command believers, but that doesn’t keep him from shouting out his commands! Our pathway is to follow the example of Jesus: Jesus responds only to the Father’s words. Only His Father’s words had authority for Jesus and He obeyed His Father’s words so that the world would know that He loved the Father. In like fashion, Satan’s words need never be intimidating to blood bought Christians, no matter how loudly he shouts. God’s words are our authority as they were for Jesus.

[DOCTRINAL POINT] God’s words alone are authoritative for believers.

[ILLUSTRATION] Have you ever had a job where there was someone working who thought they were in charge, acted like they were the boss, but actually had no authority at all? Annoying, isn’t it? They keep telling you what to do; giving you orders; sometimes even contradicting the real boss’s instructions! What should you do in a situation like that? Why don’t you tell them to take a hike; mind their own business; “make a new plan, Stan”? You don’t really have to take orders from pretenders. Only the real boss has the right to give authoritative commands.

[APPLICATION] Anyone confused about who’s commands to follow these days needs to be reminded that only Christ has authority to command His followers. There are lots of people trying to take charge of Christ’s Church today who have been given no authority at all by our Lord. Some are dressed as preachers and others as politicians. Some use religious language and others tell bold-faced lies. Some say wrong is now right; that what used to be true is now false, that what used to be certain is now relative. All these folks have one thing in common: they all work for the same boss – his name is Satan. Don’t fall into their trap! Know your Bible so well that you can smell sulfur on their breath the moment they open their mouths to speak. Christ alone has authority to command His people. Well taught Christians who know their Master’s voice will not be long fooled by such imposters. Stay close to the Book and you’ll find yourself close to the Savior.

Conclusion: Words are powerful, supernatural things. They are like a powerful weapon or a wonderful medicine: used properly they are a blessing; used carelessly or viciously they are a great curse. Believers can’t be too careful when it comes to words. We always know we are on solid ground, when we’re listening to Jesus alone, for His words are the most powerful words of all.