Dear Open Door Family,

Sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me. That may be true on a very basic level especially, if you have a really thick skin and if the person saying harsh things to you is not important to you. That being said, the words spoken to us by people who matter to us, by people whose opinion we value, can have a HUGE impact in our lives. They can encourage us and give us hope -or- they can crush us and wound us deeply. James warns us about the POWER of our words.

James 3:5-8 (NET) Think how small a flame sets a huge forest ablaze. And the tongue is a fire! ...no human being can subdue the tongue; it is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse people made in God's image. ...These things should not be so, my brothers and sisters.

Commenting on these verses Hughes says this: *Those who MISUSE their WORDS are guilty of spiritual ARSON. ...The uncontrolled tongue has a direct pipeline from hell.* So what hope is there? If no human can control the tongue then why even try? I Love the fact that the Lord Jesus tells us HOW we can make sure there is a change in the words that come out of our mouths.

Luke 6:45 (NAS) The good man out of the good TREASURE of his heart brings forth what is good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth what is evil; for his mouth SPEAKS from that which FILLS his HEART.

What am I storing up in my heart - those things which lead to godliness - or things which lead to worldliness? What am I treasuring in MY heart?

Luke 6:45 (*NLT*) ... What you SAY flows from what is IN your HEART.

If I want to change the way that I speak. If I want my words to have an impact on others for good. Then I must FILL my HEART and MIND with GOOD things. I must saturate my heart and mind with God's Word as well as anything else that is godly and uplifting. If we watch, read, or listen to anything that is full of bad language even if we NEVER use bad language ourselves it is in our minds and at moments of stress it will pop to the surface. So, I must guard what I put into my heart and mind. Garbage in - Garbage out is true of programming and using computers. It is even more true of the things that we put into our hearts and minds.

PRAYER: Lord God, please give me YOUR words to speak. Keep me from spewing nonsense or sinful words when I am upset, depressed, angry, or stressed out. Please Lord Jesus, help me to fill my mind with those things which are good and wholesome and pure. Lord, please take control of my mind and my mouth. May I honor YOU with my thoughts and my words.

Pastor Mark Kieft