

Sermon Pastor Jordan 9/12/21 Mark 827-38

Talented tongues of all creation. Woodpecker, pangolin, giraffe, chameleon

Specialized, Useful, Powerful, Needed, Life giving

Now with how unique all those animals' tongues are I'm sure your thinking we'll probably one of 2 things, 1 your pastor has lost it and decided to become the next Steve Irwin, or our simple human tongues are just so boring in comparison.

And so, I'll start by saying that I take umbrage with both of your thoughts. First there is no way I could ever even come close to the incredible Steve Irwin's passion, knowledge, or ability.

And second, you are probably massively undervaluing your tongue.

It's insanely complex, filled to the brim with nerves to feel the smallest sensation, it's packed with muscle tissue which makes it one of the nimblest parts of your body, reaching almost every crevice of your mouth, except just that one spot where that popcorn kernel got stuck...

It's vital for our digestion and health, it's vital for how we communicate, and here is where we reach the true power of our tongues.

It is how we communicate where we take hold of the biggest strength our corner of creation has. For all their talents, I have yet to see a giraffe out and about proclaiming that Christ is King and helping share that good news with all the world. Now I'm going to be using our tongues as the example for today but we communicate in so many more ways than that. On our live stream you might have closed captions on and you here before us we can see another way that we communicate, but through every way it is the Word that has more power than any of us can truly understand.

This is not some new thought or idea but one that must be revisited, and more often than we should really be comfortable with. We teach our kids from an early age what we are supposed to say and not say, and about the power that our words have on others. About how the pen is mightier than the sword. About how words can cut deeper than any knife. And yet again and again in our own lives, we find ourselves, to so often our own disgust, using these power tools to hurt others, deeply, tremendously, with a precision that no bullet could ever match.

We know how badly we can hurt others, hurt those whom God loves, whom God died for. But we also know how much just a single word can make. To offer encouragement, to build up, to strengthen, to heal. For all the times you were hurt, those times that you were lifted up have stood all the clearer and raised you up so much more. EXAMPLE: Call.

And it's for this reason that we were created. In the beginning. In the beginning, we were created to help build and out words our tongues were used for the shaping of creation, for the proclaiming of the Gospel, for the telling of the Good News of Our God. Our God created us in a love that is indescribable, a passion that extends beyond the universe. And in the breaking of that world, the Word became the very thing for the ongoing destruction of the world.

WE didn't hear the creation story but it echoes all across our readings. In Isaiah, we hear: The Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word.

In our reading from James,

⁷For every species of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by the human species, ⁸but no one can tame the tongue—a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it, we curse those who are made in the likeness of God.

And in Mark, we hear from the disciple Peter, and of course, its Peter, the power of the confession that Jesus is Lord Jesus is the messiah, the message that will change the world, and from those same lips in the next breath selfishness and betrayal.

The blessing and cursing of our own tongue go back farther than we imagine but the battle we fight with our own tongues goes on today. But we do not battle our own tongues alone. Our God walks beside us. Our God gives us the opportunity with every breath to make that breath one that breathes the Gospel, to let our lips and our tongues, proclaim the Good news of our God to every person that we know and meet. May our words empower our neighbors, may they know that they are loved and cared for by their God and by us. And it goes even further, this proclamation is one that is taught and spread with every action we show our neighbors.

With everything we say and do, we proclaim the truth of our Lord Jesus Christ. We bring forth the hope that we know in our souls, we shout of the joy in our hearts, we share the words with our tongues that give life for the healing of the nations.

That is the 2-edged power we all hold. May we use it in kindness and love. Amen.