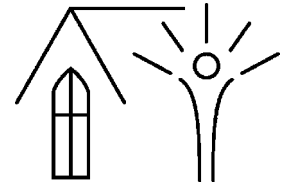




ROSELLE
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Our Mission Statement:

*“To Know Christ,
To Grow in Christ,
To Show Others Christ”*

September 10, 2006

Sermon: “Spiritual Power of the Word”

Proverbs 12:6–17

Reverend Thomas Kim

Last Sunday, I said, “Sales people often put it this way: Fake it until you make it. In other words, act successful and eventually you will be successful.” Some wondered if that was not hypocrite. That’s good question to ask. For the peace of your mind, I will begin with explanation of the word hypocrite. The word hypocrite was used in the theater to mean “one acting a part.” In the New Testament, Jesus cries “Hypocrite!” in three broad situations: 1) when someone’s actions are designed solely to impress others; 2) when someone is too focused on the trappings, on the outer rituals of religion, but does not have the right attitude; 3) when someone has impure motives, and covers up those inauthentic motives with lots of religious talk. (Richards, Lawrence O. *THE 365-DAY DEVOTIONAL COMMENTARY*, p. 645) So when John Wesley asked his followers to *act as if they had faith until they really did*—that was not as an attempt at deception, but as a commitment of the will with the knowledge that the heart would soon follow after, not as lip service, but as an act of commitment.

Ole and Olga lived on a farm in Iowa. Olga was starved for affection. Ole never gave her any signs of love, and Olga’s need to be appreciated went unfulfilled. At her wit’s end, Olga blurted out, “Ole, why don’t you ever tell me that you love me?” Ole stoically responded, “Olga, when we were married I told you that I loved you, and if I ever changed my mind, I’ll let you know.”

You see, it’s not enough just to think you love your children or spouse in your thoughts, you need to say it. What you think, you need to speak. If you want your children good future, bless them with the word as a farmer sow seeds. Miracles don’t just come full grown. They come from seed. Your words are seeds.

*In a country of a small village an altar boy serving the priest at Sunday Mass accidentally dropped the cruet of wine. The priest struck the altar boy sharply on the cheek and in a gruff voice shouted: “Leave the altar and don’t come back!” That boy became Tito, the Communist leader. In the cathedral of a large city an altar boy serving the bishop at Sunday Mass accidentally dropped the cruet of wine. With a warm twinkle in his eyes the bishop gently whispered: “Someday you will be a priest.” That boy grew up to become Archbishop Fulton Sheen. Oh, the power of words, be written or spoken! (Edited by James Hewett, *Illustrated United*, pp 492-493) Proverbs 18: 21, “Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits.” The boomerang effect!*

What are you saying to your kids right now? You can yell at them and tell them they’ll never be anything or you can speak God’s life to your kid. Your words are extremely important for your children. The words you say to your children influence the direction of their lives. Your words can be a blessing for your children or a curse. This is the power of what we say.

Thoughts come out in our words. Pay attention to what you’re saying because that will tell you what you have been thinking. You see, whatever you’re thinking becomes reality in your words. So what are you saying? Think about it. If you’re here with your spouse, what has your spouse been saying a lot lately? Well, that’s what they are thinking. In the Gospel of John, “The word became flesh” in the person of Jesus Christ.

Do you know that the Bible does not say you are saved by your works, but by your words? You may glorify Lord with your actions, not enough to earn your salvation. Doesn’t it surprise you? In Romans 10:9-10, Paul says, “*If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved.*” This is the Spiritual power of the Word. Do you love God? You communicate God’s love, first of all, with your confession by what you say.

By the age of twelve, Erik Weihenmayer had lost his sight to a rare disease. But Erik's father, Ed, encouraged his son to live as normal a life as possible. He gave his son every opportunity to try new things and take risks, and he was always there to help if Erik needed him. With that kind of encouragement behind him, Erik explored all kinds of activities, and soon became an accomplished mountain climber. He has climbed El Capitan, Camelback Mountain, and Mt. Kilimanjaro. He celebrated Helen Keller's birthday on June 27, 1995, by climbing Mt. McKinley in Alaska. In fact, Erik has become such a good climber, he led recently his father on his first rock-climbing expedition. This time around, Erik got to do the encouraging. (*LIFE*, "Summits in Sight," by Stephen Madden, February 1999, pp. 63-64.) When we encourage others, we are the voice of God. Living letters.

Kenneth H. Blanchard says in his book, *Whale Done! : The Power of Positive Relationships*, your encouraging words can make a whale dance. The best way to train a whale is to appreciate the whale's performance. Blanchard explains that both whales and people perform better when you accentuate the positive. The Bible says it in Job 4:4, "*Your words have supported those who were stumbling, and you have made firm the feeble knees.*"

The Kisi people of Liberia, West Africa, have a proverb that goes like this: "When a man steps into the center of the circle to dance and no one claps, he will soon tire and sit down; but if everyone claps, he will dance all night." Isn't that true? And it tells us so aptly what we need to do: We need to clap for one another. We need to encourage one another. We need to offer words of support. We seek to encourage others, so that we may be encouraged ourselves. In Ephesians 4:29, "*Let no evil talk come out of your mouths,*" Paul writes, "*but only what is useful for building up, as there is need so that your words may give grace to those who hear.*" Words can be powerful tools of both creation and destruction. As followers of Christ we must use them to create.

Maxie Dunnam tells a beautiful story about Thomas Moore, the nineteenth century Irish poet. Moore was married to a beautiful young woman to whom he was totally devoted. Shortly after they were married, Moore was called away on business that lasted some time. When he returned home, he found the doctor waiting on the doorstep with terrible news. His beautiful wife had contracted smallpox and the disease had left her scarred and ugly. She had commanded that the shutters be drawn and that her husband never be allowed to see her again.

Thankful that his bride was still alive, Moore rushed upstairs, heedless of his wife's request. He burst into her room and started to light the lamps. His wife cried out in surprise and begged him not to. "Go!" she pleaded. "Please go! This is the greatest gift I can give you now."

Moore reluctantly left the room and went down to his study where he sat down to write. From his mind and pen came the lyrics and melody of a song that is still heard today. The next morning he mounted the stairs and entered his wife's room. "Are you awake?" he asked. "I am," she replied softly. "But you must not ask to see me. You must not press me, Thomas." "I will sing to you, then," he said, and began his song.

*Believe me, if all those endearing young charms,
which I gaze on so fondly today,
Were to change by tomorrow and flee from my arms,
like fairy gifts fading away,
Thou wouldst still be adored, as this moment thou art.
Let thy loveliness fade as it will,
and round the dear ruin each wish of my heart
Would entwine itself verdantly still."*

As he finished the song there was a brief pause, and then Moore heard his wife get out of bed. Slowly she crossed the room to the window and opened the shutters. (*THE CHRISTIAN WAY*, Asbury Press, 1984). Don't you imagine his wife had more love in her heart than she had ever had before? Don't you imagine that love could easily overflow to others? That is the kind of love God calls us to. Words can be powerful tools of both creation and destruction.

Why did Jesus make the deaf to hear and the mute to speak? For the sake of the spiritual power of your word! As followers of Christ we must use the power of the word to create. Amen.