The Power of Words

Luke 1:37 (ASV) “For no word from God shall be void of power.”

The Quakers say, “Of your unspoken words, you are the master; of your spoken words, the servant; of your written words, the slave.”

I. Introduction: Barclay’s Commentary on John relates extraordinary information for the Jewish concept of the Word of God.
   A. No language is without meaning and the meaning of language is its power (1st Cor. 14:10-11).
   B. Spiritually gifted communicators speak the utterances of God (1st Pet. 4:11).
   C. Old Testament communicators spoke with omnipotent power when they spoke the Word of God, but Church communicators combine the empowerment of their gifting with the intrinsic power of the message.

II. Development: Warren Wiersbe in Proverbs “Solomon was right: ‘Death and life are in the power of the tongue’ (Prov. 18:21). No wonder James compared the tongue to a destroying fire, a dangerous beast, and a deadly poison (James 3:5–8). Speech is a matter of life or death.”

Wiersbe goes on to summarize what Proverbs teaches about human speech into four categories.
   A. Speech is an awesome gift from God.
      1. Made in the image of a God who communicates, human beings have the wonderful gift of speech.
      2. Mastery of rhetoric is valuable in temporal life (Ecc. 12:9-11).
         a. The ability to communicate with wisdom is of great value (Prov. 10:20; 25:11-12).
         c. Right words are like nourishing food (Prov. 10:15; 15:4; 16:24; 18:20; Ps. 119:103).
   B. Speech can be used to do good.
      1. Our words can bring peace instead of war (Prov. 15:1,18).
      2. Our words can help restore those who have sinned (Prov. 25:12; 28:23; Matt. 18:15-20; Gal. 6:1).
      3. Our words can instruct the ignorant (Prov. 15:7; 16:21).
      4. Our words can rescue the perishing (Prov. 14:25; Zech. 3:2; Jude 23).
   C. Speech can be used to do evil.
      2. We hurt others by gossiping (Lev. 19:16; Prov. 11:13; 16:27-28; 17:9; 18:18; 20:19; 26:20,22).
      3. We hurt others by flattery (Prov. 5:3; 7:5,21; 14:20; 19:4,6; 26:28; 27:6; 28:23; 29:5). If it weren’t for our pride, flattery wouldn’t affect us. We privately enjoy hearing somebody agree with what we think of ourselves!
      4. We hurt others by speaking in anger (Prov. 26:21,23; 29:22).
      6. We hurt others by talking too much (Prov. 10:19; 11:12-13; 15:2; 17:28; Ecc. 3:7).
      7. We hurt others by talking instead of working (Prov. 14:23).
   D. Only God can help us use speech to do good.
      1. Mastery of the tongue is the mark of a perfect man who goes to the Lord in prayer for this miracle (Ps. 141:3; Jas. 3:2).
      2. Presenting your bodies begins with the tongue (Rom. 12:1).
      3. A good heart is the key to good words coming forth from the mouth (Prov. 15:28; Matt. 12:34; 15:18).

III. Conclusion: Henry M. Morris article in BibSac describes the power of God’s Word in sustaining the universe.

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