

2024 Lent 40 Days of Perfecting the Power of Our Words

Happy Lenten Season

Start: Wednesday, February 14th (Ash Wednesday)

End: Thursday, March 28th (Maundy Thursday)

Our words are incredibly powerful, and can be used for good or evil, to help or harm. Proverbs 18:21 reminds us that "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it and indulge it will eat its fruit and bear the consequences of their words". It's time to stop causing harm to others and ourselves. This Lenten season, let's follow Christ's example and use our words to uplift, encourage, inspire, and praise ourselves, others, and God.

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. PRAY AND ASK GOD FOR FORGIVENESS FOR HURTFUL WORDS TO YOURSELF OR OTHERS.**
- 2. WHAT WILL WE FAST FROM?**
 - This Lent we will give up speaking negative about our own or other people's situations.
 - We will not intentionally say hurtful, harmful things to or about ourselves or others.
- 3. WHAT ARE WE PRACTING?**
 - We will carefully choose our words we use in communication.
 - Being mindful of our words and tone when speaking to others
 - We choose to use our words to spread kindness, love, and positivity to ourselves and others.
 - We speak by faith about the things we are believing God for, both for ourselves and for others."

4. DAILY DEVOTIONALS

- Read a Scripture
- Meditate on the Reflection
- Participate in the Action
- Pray

WHAT DO WE HOPE TO LEARN FROM THIS?

- We pray we realize the significance of our words and their impact on our lives and others.
 - We pray we understand we have creative power, just as God demonstrated when He created the heavens and the earth with His words. Now, we have the authority to do the same thing here on earth.
 - We pray we begin to take control of our lives by getting control of our tongue.
 - We pray we refuse to speak anything other than the Word of God about your life or situations.
 - We pray we watch as everything we've been believing for begins to come to pass.
- Start each day with prayer. Pray that God opens your eyes, ears, mind, and heart to receive a revelation from Him about who you are in his eye sight. Read the scriptures several times to get it in your spirit. Pray that God reveals what He wants you learn or see out of these scriptures. Meditate or continue thinking throughout the day about how you can apply these scriptures to your life. How can knowing what God has said about you help you look at and engage with others?

Day 1

Scripture: Psalm 19:14 NASB

“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my rock and my Redeemer.”

Reflection: How can we speak words that are acceptable to God? Does God agree with what we say or what we choose to focus on?

Action: Whatever you are worried about right now, focus on positive outcomes and speak them outloud.

Pray: Lord let my words be acceptable to you. Please help me to remember you are my firm foundation.

DAY 2

Scripture: Psalm 34:13 NLT

“Then keep your tongue from speaking evil and your lips from telling lies!”

Reflection: You have the power to stop yourself from saying harmful things or telling lies. What can you say to yourself to keep you from saying something harmful to others?

Action: When you want to say something hurtful to others, stop and say something helpful or kind instead.

Prayer: Lord help me to understand the power of using my words for good and not evil.

DAY 3

Scripture: Psalm 141:3 NIV

“Set a guard over my mouth, Lord; keep watch over the door of my lips.”

Reflection: We have a responsibility to own our words and seek forgiveness if we offend someone. Our speech is within our control.

Action: Today, before speaking to others, remind yourself that your words should help and heal.

Prayer: Lord help me to remember I am responsible for what comes out of my mouth. And I have the power to help and heal those in engage with today.

DAY 4

Scripture: Proverbs 10:19 NLT

“Too much talk leads to sin. Be sensible and keep your mouth shut.”

Reflection: Are there times I speak too much? Or perhaps I share too much information?

Action: Ask someone you trust if they ever notice times when you might speak too much.

Prayer: Lord, help me to know when to speak and when to be silent.

DAY 5

Scripture: Proverbs 10:31

“The mouth of the godly person gives wise advice, but the tongue that deceives will be cut off.”

Reflection: Each individual possesses distinct wisdom, which is the ability to apply their experience, knowledge, and sound judgment to make decisions, bestowed upon them by God.

Action: Think about the area where you have knowledge and experience. Reflect on the decisions you made and the lessons you learned. Share your insights with others when you have the chance.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for the experience and knowledge I sometimes forget I have. Help me to use what I have learned to help others make wise decisions.

DAY 6

Scripture: Proverbs 12:14 NLT

“Wise words bring many benefits.”

Reflection: Choosing our words carefully helps ourselves and others by creating positive outcomes.

Action: Name the benefits of using your words wisely. Say them out loud.

Prayer: Lord, help me to remember the benefit I receive from choosing my words wisely far outweighs the immediate gratification of saying hurtful words.

Day 7

Scripture: Proverbs 12:18 NIV

“The words of the reckless pierce like swords, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.”

Reflection: A sword does not care who or where it cuts. Often times the wound is much severe under the surface than it may appear. Our reckless words can do the same thing. The true damage is much more severe than you will be able to see.

Action: Remember a time when someone’s words hurt you deeper than you let the person know. Do you want to do the same to others?

Prayer: "Lord, I understand the feeling of being hurt by someone's hurtful words and how it can affect the soul. I also realize that I have been guilty of using words as a weapon to hurt others. Please forgive me for my actions."

Day 8

Scripture: Proverbs 13:3 NASB

“The one who guards his mouth preserves his life; the one who opens wide his lips comes to ruin.”

Reflection: Words can make or break your chances in an interview or relationship. Ultimately, leaving us sad and disappointed. Don't be the cause of your own ruin. Choose to enhance your chances for success in everything you do by keeping those harmful words to yourself.

Action: Talk to someone you are in relationship with and ask them what they want to hear you say that would brighten their day.

Prayer: Lord, I know I have the choice to either build up or ruin my relationships with my words. Teach me how to speak words that preserve and keep my relationships in a healthy place.

Day 9

Scripture: Proverbs 15:1 NASB

“A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.”

Reflection: "This is my favorite scripture in Proverbs. I have seen it work in many hostile situations. When people become frustrated and their tone becomes more aggressive or they start screaming, I choose to take a breath and respond with a gentle, soft tone. This approach has helped me to de-escalate many situations."

Action: This week, respond to frustrated people with a gentle tone. It may take a few times, but notice their response.

Prayer: Lord, I know what it feels like to have someone's words pierce through my soul and I do not try to show I was hurt. I ask you to forgive me for when my words have been a weapon to wound others.

Day 10

Scripture: Proverbs 15:2 ESV

“The tongue of the wise commends knowledge, but the mouths of fools pour out folly.”

Reflection: The wise recognize when others are sharing their wisdom with them. When we allow our emotions to get in the way, we may miss out on wise words that could help us because we don't want to feel uncomfortable. Sometimes, the appropriate response to words of wisdom that make us reflect on ourselves should simply be “thank you.”

Action: Send a message of gratitude to the person who shared wise words with you, even if it was uncomfortable at first.

Prayer:

Day 11

Scripture: Proverbs 15:4 ESV

“A gentle tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit.”

Reflection: "A gentle tongue always seeks to find words that can promote peace and harmony. On the other hand, a perverse tongue always seeks to find ways to intentionally demonstrate how unreasonable and unacceptable it can be. Do your words reflect your tendency to be difficult or do they aim to find a solution?"

Action: This week, instead of complaining, choose words that will help find solutions and answers.

Prayer: Lord, I admit sometimes I am just being difficult. My words are not leading the conversation to a resolution. Help me to understand that I cause much more stress and anxiety when I don't try to move the conversation forward.

Day 12

Scripture: Proverbs 15:28 NLT

“The heart of the godly thinks carefully before speaking.”

Reflection: The heart is where our words come from. What is in your heart will come out in your words and deeds. If you have bitterness, anger, and unforgiveness in your heart, that is what will be behind all your frustrated words and attitude.

Action: Complete a heart check. Not of your physical heart, but of your spiritual heart. Ask yourself: Are you angry, sad, irritated, or disappointed about anything right now? Are you avoiding anything? If so, seek some help about working through those emotions.

Prayer: Lord, I wish I could say my heart is always in the right place, however, it's not. Sometimes my heart is filled with anger, guilt, shame, frustration, and fear. Help me to constantly have heart check ins so I can speak in a way that represents you.

Day 13

Scripture: Proverbs 16:24 NIV

“Gracious words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.”

Reflection: Kind words and compliments can bring positive energy to someone's day.

Action: Today, compliment someone on their clothes or something they do well. Or perhaps share with them the impact of the positive things they have done for you.

Prayer: Lord, sometimes I forget that you have given me the power to make someone's day. Help me to be intentional about saying something to someone that causes them to think about you and your goodness.

Day 14

Scripture: Proverbs 17:27 NASB

“He who restrains his words has knowledge, And he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding.”

Reflection: Restraint is sometimes misunderstood as a weakness. However, restraint is wise. Restraint shows the ability to hold back the strong powerful urge to lash out. However, when you show restraint, you show you are even stronger and wiser than your wild immediate emotional responses.

Action: Practice restraining yourself from lashing out or speaking before you fully understand what is going on. Ask questions and seek to get a better understanding of what the other person is saying or perhaps going through.

Prayer: Lord, help me to view restraint as a sign of getting closer to you. Help me practice restraint even in the most difficult stressful moments with others. I want you to be proud of me.

Day 15

Scripture: Proverbs 18:21 NIV

“The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit.”

Reflection: Our words are the source of how we experience every situation. We choose in our hearts and with our words how we are going to live out whatever situation we find ourselves in. When we understand that our words shape our thoughts and behaviors, our words become powerful change agents that can lead us to make the best or the worst out of every situation.

Action: What are you going through right now? Speak not of what you are seeing, but what you want to see. Speak not about how you are feeling, but what you want to accomplish as a result of enduring this situation. Speak of the strength, wisdom, and strategy you will have as a result of this season.

Prayer: Lord, help me to see there is purpose in all of the pain we have experienced. Our hope is in you and our faith is in the principle that you never

waste anything, not even our worst experience. Everything is going to work out for our good.

Day 16

Scripture: Proverbs 21:23 NLT

“Watch your tongue and keep your mouth shut, and you will stay out of trouble.”

Reflection: Some trouble is avoidable if we watch what we see. But how do you watch what you say? I thought about how we can watch and playback in our minds the reactions of others when we said hurtful things. So, perhaps we should remember the harm we caused in the past and avoid making the same mistake. We can learn from our mistakes and stay out of some trouble we got ourselves in the last time we were frustrated.

Action: Identify and list the lessons you have learned from the trouble you got yourself into in the past. What did you learn from the words that got you in trouble with a loved one, friend, co-worker, or your job? Decide you will not use those words in that type of situation again.

Prayer: Lord, sometimes trouble is not avoidable. Help us to be ready to navigate through that difficult time. However, sometimes we are the cause of our trouble. We allow our words to get us into a bind that cost more than it was worth. Help us to learn from our mistakes and help others grow as well.

Day 17

Scripture: Proverbs 25:11 NASB

“Like apples of gold in settings of silver is a word spoken in right circumstances.”

Reflection: Words can compliment the right circumstance or add to the beauty of an atmosphere. Words can add a depth and beauty to conversations that allow everyone in earshot to be blessed.

Action: Practice saying words that add to the depth and beauty of conversations you are a part of today. What can you say that will bring joy to all those in earshot of your conversation.

Prayer: Lord, teach me how to know the right time, and words to say in conversations. I want my words to reflect you and all your beauty. Help me to be open and courageous enough to share my thoughts and experiences with others.

Day 18

Scripture: Proverbs 25:25 NIV

“Like cold water to a weary soul is good news from a distant land.”

Reflection: Our words can be the most refreshing thing to someone who is desperate for connection and a comforting word. Words can demonstrate that we see and value a person for who they are. Our world doesn't teach us to do this well.

Action: Let your words show someone they are important not only to God, but you. Take the time to listen to someone share about their thoughts and beliefs. And before you start judging them because they think or believe differently than you, share how you appreciate their thought process and their strong beliefs. You don't have to agree, sometimes God calls us to just value others.

Prayer: Lord, help me to value others even when their opinions, ideas, lifestyles, and beliefs are different than mine. I realize holding space for someone else to be who they are is real ministry and shows the love of God.

Day 19

Scripture: Proverbs 29:20 NASB

“Do you see a man who is hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.”

Reflection: Sometimes we can make a decision about what someone meant before we actually know. It is easy to jump to conclusions about what someone is saying or thinking. However, assuming generally leads to us having to back track and apologize later. Let us save ourselves and others the embarrassment of jumping to conclusion and wait until things are clear before we respond.

Action: Today, ask others to further clarify what they mean even when you think you already know. Notice how often the conversation goes deeper and you have a better understanding of that person.

Prayer: Lord, I know sometimes I rush and jump to conclusions about what other people meant by what they said or did. The truth is, those interpretations are in my head. True relationship is not had in our minds, but in conversation.

Day 20

Scripture: Proverbs 31:26 NLT

“When she speaks, her words are wise, and she gives instructions with kindness.”

Reflection: Instructions can be difficult to communicate. Sometimes we think we are saying one thing, but the other person is interpreting something completely different. However, if we give instructions with the kindness to extend grace when the other person doesn't understand your instructions the way you meant, peace and harmony can be achieved.

Action: Practice giving instructions this week and show patience, by giving the other person grace when they do not understand or they misunderstand what you are saying.

Prayer: Lord, sometimes I get frustrated with others when they don't understand the instructions I am giving them. I get upset with loved ones and friends when they misunderstand me. I know you are calling for me to practice the same kind of patience you have with me when I misunderstand the instructions you are giving me.

Day 21

Scripture: Matthew 12:36 NASB

“But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment.”

Reflection: Our words have consequences. Every careless word we say has a cost that we will have to pay in the future. According to the Bible, we reap what we sow. This means that whatever we say and how we say it to others will be returned to us by someone else. And often, it will come from someone other than the person we hurt.

Action: Reflect on the careless words you have spoken to others in the past. Take note of those words and make a promise to yourself not to utter them again to anyone. These words should be strictly off-limits. The consequences of using them again in the future may be too high to bear.

Prayer: "Lord, I am aware that I have uttered hurtful and harmful statements to others in the past. I understand that I will face consequences for my words. I pray that you change my heart, so I can refrain from causing any more harm to others and to avoid any consequences from you."

Day 22

Scripture: Matthew 12:37 NLT

The words you say will either acquit you or condemn you.

Reflection: When we speak, our words can be recorded and used against us. Therefore, we should be mindful of what we say. Speaking truth and kind words will be beneficial in case our words are ever brought up in conversation.

Action: Before you speak, ensure that you won't regret your words if they are ever brought up in the future. Your words have a life beyond this conversation, so make sure you can stand by them and be proud of them in the future.

Prayer: Dear Lord, I must admit that sometimes I do not think about whether I can stand behind my words if they are ever repeated to me. I tend to speak impulsively without considering the consequences. Please help me to look beyond the present moment and choose my words wisely, so that they not only reflect the person I aspire to be, but also a child of God.

Day 23

Scripture: Matthew 15:11 NLT

“It’s not what goes into your mouth that defiles you; you are defiled by the words that come out of your mouth.”

Reflection: We live in a world where people are becoming increasingly conscious of their health. There is a lot of discussion about what we eat and how it affects our well-being. It is widely believed that our diet plays a crucial role in determining our overall health. However, it's not just our physical health that is affected by what we consume. Our words also have a significant impact on our spiritual health. What we say is a reflection of what's in our hearts and minds. In stressful situations, our true feelings are often revealed through the words we use.

Action: It's important to be mindful of what you are consuming, including what you watch, listen to, and meditate on. If you focus on negative, hateful, or harmful things, it can affect your heart and cause you to adopt similar attitudes. This week, try to limit your intake of shows or media that contain negative material. Instead, increase your consumption of music, shows, and books that encourage, inspire, and motivate you to become a better person and grow closer to God.

Prayer: Dear Lord, I confess that I sometimes consume too much negative entertainment, which results in me imitating negative attitudes, behaviors, and thoughts. Please help me to limit my exposure to such things that do not contribute to my spiritual growth. Help me to develop a desire for spiritual things that shape me to look, talk, and walk like you. Thank you.

Day 24

Scripture: Matthew 15:18 NASB

“But the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man.”

Reflection: "I have caught myself saying things like "Oops, I didn't mean to say that" or "That just slipped out of my mouth". But the truth is that I did mean to say those things, I was just perhaps embarrassed that the other person heard them. To regain control over what we say, we need to start with what we choose to think about. We need to check our thoughts: Are we judging someone? Are we jealous? Are we hurting? Are we tired? All of these things play a part in the inner conversation that happens before the words come out for others to hear. We need to constantly check our thoughts as we enter into conversations."

Action: As you engage in important conversations this week, make sure to take a moment and check how you're feeling. If you're experiencing exhaustion, feeling misunderstood, or have your mind elsewhere, it's crucial to express that at the beginning of the conversation. By doing so, the other person can understand your state of mind and decide whether they need to reschedule or provide support. This approach can make your conversations more productive and help you avoid any unnecessary misunderstandings.

Prayer: "Dear Lord, sometimes when I talk to others, my mind is preoccupied with something else or I may be upset about something, and this can affect my conversations in a negative way. I recognize that sometimes I am not emotionally ready or in a good space to talk. Please help me to have the courage to share with others where I am before the conversation starts, or to ask if I could speak to them another time when I am in a better space. Thank you."

Day 25

Scripture: Mark 11:23 NKJV

“For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, “Be removed and be cast into the sea,” and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.”

Reflection: Our words can move mountains. I always think of a mountain as any seemingly immovable or impossible situation, object, or person. Image if you knew the magical words to say to move or make anything possible. The truth is, we do have those words. But the source of that power is in the belief we have in our hearts. The words are meaningless without being connected to a powerful source called our belief or faith. If you believe it, it doesn't mean it will happen exactly the way or when you want it, but God, who is a good father will bring things that are good for us, to pass.

Action: Check your belief temperature. What do you really believe? Do you believe God can do anything but fail? Do you believe that God is for you and loves you? Do you believe that God wants you to have life and have it more abundantly? Do believe God did all those things in the Bible for others? Do you believe all things he did in the Bible he can and will do the same for you? If you believe, ask God for what you are believing God for.

Prayer: "Dear Lord, I sometimes feel like the father in Mark 9:14-27 where he said, “I believe, but help my unbelief.” I do have some belief, but I know I need to believe you more. Lord, increase my belief. Teach me, show me, how to believe in you more. I know that there are so many things I am missing out on that you have in store for me, because I don't believe. But I also ask that my belief leads to me boldly proclaiming to the world what you can do.

Day 26

Scripture: Romans 10:10 NKJV

“For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

Reflection: Confession leads to salvation. Some of the most powerful words we can say is, “God, please forgive. I make Jesus my Lord and savior!” Our confession is our acknowledgement that we need God and we need Jesus’ salvation. It’s not just confessing our sins, it is confessing our dependency on a God who gave his only son, Jesus Christ to not only die, but rise with all power in his hands. And after we confess, that some resurrection power, the ability to g Confession is a fundamental aspect of seeking salvation in the Christian faith. By acknowledging our need for God's forgiveness and accepting Jesus as our Lord and savior, we affirm our reliance on their grace and mercy. This is not simply a matter of confessing our sins, but of recognizing our dependence on a God who sacrificed his only son, Jesus Christ, to conquer death and grant us eternal life. Through this act of confession, we open ourselves up to the power of resurrection, which gives us the strength to overcome any obstacle and emerge victorious.

Action: Today, take some time to confess the things that you know you cannot do without God's help. Speak out loud to yourself or to someone you trust. Admit the things that you know you would not have been able to overcome without your relationship with Jesus Christ. Acknowledge that you are only here because of God's grace. Consider inviting someone else to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Prayer: " Dear Lord, I come to you confessing that I need you. I need Jesus because he is the only one who can save me and cleanse me from within, making me as pure as snow. I have realized that I have sinned and fallen short, and I have been arrogant in thinking that I can take care of myself. Now I understand how much I rely on you, even when I cannot see you. Thank you for watching over me and my family. I know that everything I am and everything I hope to be is because of you..

Day 27

Scripture: Ephesians 4:29 NIV

“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.”

Reflection: Our words should be used to uplift others according to their needs. They should not be used to just satisfy our own desires and boost our ego. To build others up according to their needs, we need to listen first to understand their needs. This requires us to actively listen without interrupting, to create a safe space for them to be vulnerable. We must hear their pain, fear, questions, hopes, joys, and concerns. When we listen like this, we not only uplift that person but also those who listen and learn from their experience later.

Action: Practice listening for other people’s pain, fears, questions, hopes, joys, and concerns. How do we do this? By asking questions about what you heard. Ask them to say more, or clarify what they are saying. You never know, you may just hear something that sounds familiar, like your own pain, fears, questions, hopes, joys, and concerns.

Prayer: " Dear Lord, I am aware that I sometimes come across as selfish and self-centered in my conversations with others. I tend to focus more on what I want to say or how I want to be understood, instead of trying to understand others. Please help me to change this behavior and make me more empathetic towards others. It is important for me to create a safe space for others to open up and be vulnerable. I wish to become an instrument through which others can receive a message from you.

Day 28

Scripture: James 1:26 NLT

“If you claim to be religious but don’t control your tongue, you are fooling yourself, and your religion is worthless.”

Reflection: If you consider yourself religious, that is, if you vow to live a life that is pleasing to God, then the way you talk to others should also be in line with this vow to God. Jesus made it clear in John 13:33-34 that our relationship with God is

measured by our relationships with others. We cannot say that we have a strong connection with God and at the same time use harmful language towards those we interact with in our daily lives. If we do so, our devotion to God will seem fake and not worth mentioning to anyone. Our words will render our devotion to God null and void.

Action: It's a good idea to ask a close friend or loved one if they think your words and behavior towards others reflect your religious beliefs. Be prepared to receive an honest answer, even if it hurts. If they indicate that there is a misalignment, ask them for suggestions on how to improve. You can also pray to God for guidance and assistance in changing your ways. Remember, the truth may be difficult to hear, but it can ultimately set you free.

Prayer: " Dear Lord, I must confess that I am not always sure if the words I use when I am upset or frustrated are in line with your teachings. There have been times when I have not represented you well and have even turned people away from you due to my language. I know that you expect more from me. I want to make you proud and lead others to Jesus. Please help me understand that my witness isn't just about what I say to others, but also about how I behave in my daily life.

Day 29

Scripture: James 3:3-6 NLT

“The tongue is a small thing that makes grand speeches. But a tiny spark can set a great forest on fire. And among all the parts of the body, the tongue is a flame of fire. It is a whole world of wickedness, corrupting your entire body. It can set your whole life on fire, for it is set on fire by hell itself.”

Reflection: I know there have been times when I set an entire situation and relationship on fire because of what I said. The trust I had built up over the years was destroyed in a matter of seconds. I said things that I could not recover from. I burned bridges and people's ability to see me as good. All because I felt some kind of way or did not know how to hold my tongue and speak when I was more calm.

Not only is the tongue itself small, but it only takes a small amount of time and a small comment to burn everything you worked for."

Action: Today, take some time to work on finding a scripture, phrase, or set of words that you can turn to when you feel angry, fearful, or sad. Write down your chosen scripture or words and recite them to yourself throughout the day. Allow these words to sink deep into your heart, mind, and spirit. You never know when you might need them to help you avoid burning bridges in important relationships or opportunities.

Prayer: Dear Lord, I am sorry for how I have ruined good friendships and relationships in the past. I realize now that I allowed small things to get in the way and I regret my actions. I have grown older, wiser and more mature since then, and I pray that you help me to embrace new scriptures or words which will enable me to pause before speaking. Please help me to value my relationships and opportunities more than the brief moments of satisfaction and relief that I may feel.

Day 30

Scripture: James 3:10 NLT

"And so blessing and cursing come pouring out of the same mouth. Surely, my brothers and sisters, this is not right!"

Reflection: It seems almost unbelievable that we can pray to God for someone's blessings or healing, and in the same day, hour, or even setting, we wish harm on someone using the same mouth. Who are we to use our power of words to wish ill on anyone? I remember Peter Parker's grandfather in Spider Man saying, "With great power, comes great responsibility." We have a responsibility not to use petty words that only intend to harm.

Action: "Imagine if every prayer you prayed for others came true for them. How would you pray? Take some time today to pray for your loved ones, friends, co-workers, strangers, and the world. Your words have the power to reach the ears of God. You never know how your prayers can help someone else."

Prayer: "Dear Lord, please help me to accept the responsibility that comes with the power of words you have gifted me with. I pray that I may refrain from saying

things that could cause harm to others. Today, I pray for my family, friends, loved ones, and the world we live in. I ask that you meet people at their point of need and reveal your presence to them."

Day 31

Scripture: 1 Peter 3:10 NLT

"If you want to enjoy life and see many happy days, keep your tongue from speaking evil and your lips from telling lies."

Reflections: Sometimes in life, we find ourselves in difficult situations that we could have avoided if we had been more careful with our words. We might make promises without fully understanding what is being asked of us, say things that offend others, tell white lies, or exaggerate the truth. These actions can lead to self-inflicted injuries and unnecessary drama. It's important to reflect on how we communicate with others and strive to be more thoughtful and mindful in our interactions.

Action: Think about a situation where you found yourself in trouble or a stressful place because of the words you used. Now, imagine what you could have done differently. At what point would you have stopped talking? Think about the reason why you didn't stop. It's important to reflect on this, because if you can name the emotion or thought that led you to keep speaking, you can prevent yourself from repeating the same mistake in the future.

Prayer: "Dear Lord, I often find myself being my own worst enemy. My words have put me in difficult and stressful situations. I recognize that there is an underlying emotion or thought that prompts me to say things that I later regret. Please help me to exercise more self-control and take my time before speaking."

Day 32

Scripture: Colossians 4:6

“Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.”

Reflection: I enjoy cooking and have learned that the right seasonings can make or break a meal. Even if I cook the chicken perfectly, without proper seasoning, it can taste bland or even bad. On the other hand, when I get the seasoning just right, it can cover up any mistakes I may have made in the cooking process. This reminds me of how our words can impact conversations. We should always aim to season our words with love, kindness, and appropriate scriptures when possible.

Action: "Today, try to pay attention to the way you contribute to conversations. Don't simply engage in gossip or talk about others. Instead, try to steer the conversation in a positive direction by saying something that helps to bring people back on the right track. Think about what you would like someone to say if they were talking about you in your absence, and try to incorporate something positive or a message from the word of God into the conversation. Season negative conversations with positivity and the teachings of God."

Prayer: "Dear Lord, I pray for the ability to infuse love, joy, peace, and healing into my conversations. Grant me the confidence to redirect negative and gossipy talk towards a positive path. Help me to use my words to reflect your glory and bring positivity to every discussion. Amen."

Day 33

Scripture: Psalm 98:1-4

“Oh, sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things! His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him. The Lord has made known his salvation; he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.”

Reflections: Singing allows us to express our gratitude towards God and share with others the blessings He has given. It has a healing effect on our soul. Music is a language of love that transcends all barriers. Even if we don't understand the lyrics of a song in a different language, we can still feel its emotional impact on our hearts.

Action: Today, take some time to sing a song that expresses your gratitude to God. You can sing along with a Gospel or Christian song. It doesn't matter how you sound because God enjoys your voice. Sing loudly and with great joy, and let the people in your house or on the block hear you. God has been too good to you to be silent, so this is your big moment to say thank you to God!

Prayer: "Dear Lord, first, I would like to say thank you! My heart is filled with joy and gratitude because there is none like you. I am blessed to have the maker of the entire universe know and love me. I am honored by how you care, protect, provide, and continue to work miracles in my life. I will shout it from the mountaintops, "I give you praise! Thank you, Jesus!!"

Day 34

Scripture: Proverbs 18:20-21

"From the fruit of their mouth a person's stomach is filled; with the harvest of their lips they are satisfied."

Reflections: It can be difficult to comprehend how God has given us the ability to create things simply by speaking words. However, our words have the power to create opportunities, open doors, and even ask for things that seem impossible. I am particularly fond of what Matthew 7:7 says, "Ask and you shall receive..." Our request can be the difference between having our needs met and going without. It can be the difference between a positive outcome and a negative one. The Bible states, "You do not have because you do not ask" (James 4:2), which is absolutely true.

Action: "Today, I want to encourage you to practice the art of asking. Some people believe that asking for help is a sign of weakness, but in reality, when you don't ask for what you need, it can be a sign of fear or arrogance. What if the thing you desire has already been given to you, and all you need to do is ask in order to

unlock what God has already ordained for you? So be bold and courageous, and don't be afraid to ask for the things that seem impossible. Who knows, you just might receive them!

Prayer: "Dear Lord, I confess that sometimes it's difficult for me to ask for things. I acknowledge that you have given me the ability to ask, but due to my past experiences of rejection and abandonment, I am afraid of being disappointed again. Please help me to trust that you are with me no matter what. I understand that whether I receive what I ask for or not, it doesn't define me. I believe that with you, anything is possible."

Day 35

Scripture: Proverbs 17:27-28

“Even fools are thought wise if they keep silent, and discerning if they hold their tongues.”

Reflections: There are times when it is best to remain silent if you don't know what to say. The ability to differentiate between when to speak and when to stay quiet, and what to say and what not to say, is a valuable skill. It requires courage, attentiveness, and a strong connection with God. The first step is to follow the principle of listening to God before you speak.

Action: Today, try to speak as little as possible. Instead, listen carefully to what God and others are saying. Be attentive and receptive to their words. You don't have to comment or give your opinion. Practice this discipline and pay attention to what you hear that you might have missed before..

Prayer: "Dear Lord, please grant me the discipline to speak only when necessary. Bless me with the discernment to know the right words to say or not say in any given situation. Help me to become a better listener and to hear your voice more clearly. I desire to become more like you in every way."

Day 36

Scripture: Proverbs 12:13-14

“From the fruit of their lips people are filled with good things, and the work of their hands brings them reward.”

Reflections: "Our words and actions are closely related. They form a partnership, which is why it is crucial to follow through on what you promise. Putting in the necessary effort behind your words will yield positive results and increase your chances of success."

Action: Finish what you started today, whether it's something you promised yourself or others. Your blessings may be on the other side of completion.

Prayer: " "Dear Lord, sometimes I say things with good intentions but later find them difficult to follow through with. Please help me to fulfill the promises I make. Grant me the strength, wisdom, and motivation to complete what I have started."

Day 37

Scripture: Proverbs 12:18-19

“Truthful lips endure forever, but a lying tongue lasts only a moment.”

Reflection: My father used to say, “Lies have wings and fly around quickly, but the truth has legs and will eventually reach everyone.” When our reputation is at stake, we may feel anxious for the truth to come out. However, it's not advisable to take matters into our own hands and fight our battles. Instead, we should trust in God and have faith that lies will be exposed. We should believe that God will fight for us."

Action: Today, please take a moment to pray for those who have spoken falsely about you. Ask God to soften their hearts and help them to speak the truth. Also, pray that God will heal any pain or hurt that they may be experiencing, as hurt people often hurt others..

Prayer: " "Dear Lord, please grant me the strength to trust that you are working in my favour in this situation. Although it may seem difficult to see the other side right now, please help me to feel your presence and know that I am not alone. I trust that eventually, things will be made right. Additionally, I pray for those individuals who have wronged me."

Day 38

Scripture: Psalms 119:171

“May my lips overflow with praise, for you teach me your decrees.”

Reflection: Praise is a result of acknowledging who God is and what He has done for us. It is beautiful and satisfying to know that God is constantly teaching us valuable lessons in every situation we face. This knowledge provides us with comfort and assurance that whatever we are going through has a purpose, and it will ultimately make us stronger and better.

Action: Today, reflect on the lessons you have learned from your struggles. Without them, you wouldn't be the person you are today.

Prayer: Dear God, please help me to listen and learn from every situation I find myself in. Though things may be difficult right now, I trust that everything will work out for my good.

Day 39

Scripture: Psalms 119:172

“May my tongue sing of your word, for all your commands are righteous.”

Reflection: God's word is always faithful and true. This is one thing that we can rely on and trust without any doubt. In a world where everything is continually changing and unpredictable, we can depend on the promises and word of God. Therefore, it is worth singing praises about His faithfulness.

Action: Today, I suggest finding a song that speaks to God's promises. One of my personal favorites is "The Promise" by Andrae Crouch, sung by Marvin Winans.

Prayer: Dear God, your word remains true to this day. Please help me develop a strong desire to read and understand your word. I aspire to be like David, who said,

"I have hidden your word in my heart so that I might not sin against you." I am committed to following you.

Day 40

Scripture: Psalm 66:1

"Shout for joy to God, all the earth; sing the glory of his name; give to him glorious praise!"

Reflection: It's common to associate shouting with sports games, moments of excitement, or arguments. However, we should reserve a shout of praise for God, who is bigger and better than anything else. He loved us so much that he sent his only son to die for our sins, and that kind of love deserves an exuberant shout at the top of our lungs.

Action: Today, shout praises to God like you were at a sporting event and your favorite team just scored the winning point. Shout like you know God has been good, is good, and will be good to you always.

Prayer: Dear God, I acknowledge that you deserve all my worship, glory, praise, and shouts of hallelujah! I love you for everything you have done for me. Please help me to continue spreading your goodness to the world. I am nothing without you. Thank you for helping me to choose words that please you!

WHAT IS LENT?

Lent is the six-week period leading to Easter. Lent is more frequently seen as a time of solemn observance and preparation for the celebration of the death and resurrection of Jesus at Easter. From its start on Ash Wednesday until its conclusion on Easter Sunday. Some traditions do not include Sundays in the 40 days of Lent. Lent has been a traditional time for fasting, giving something up, or abstinence. Lent helps us to prepare our hearts and minds for remembering Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. (Stewardship Services)

Lent is often observed with some type of fast. Fasting is willingly abstaining or denying yourself from a food, drink, or an act as a symbolism of your desire to get closer to God. Lent allows us the time to deny our flesh like Jesus denied his flesh to die for our sins. Some examples are: sugar, pop, coffee, alcohol, beef, chicken, candy, bread, extra financial spending, or other personal sacrifices, etc... Lent is also about adding some significant spiritual discipline to your life such as: prayer,

meditation, Bible reading, praying at specific times, praying for specific things, financial sacrifices, serving at church, volunteering, etc...