

# Piercing Words

by Dick Brogden

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*God intends our words to pierce through humanity's confusion and lies, cutting to the heart of the matter, but only through the repeated infilling of the Holy Spirit.*

**Scripture:** Zechariah 12:10, Acts 12:23, Acts 13:7, Acts 13:9, Hebrews 4:12, James 3:1

**Topics:** "Holy Spirit", "Powerful Speech"

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## Description

Dick Brogden emphasizes the power of words and the importance of allowing the Holy Spirit to control our tongues. He contrasts the folly of human speech, which can lead to destruction like in the case of Herod, with the magnification of God through empowered speech. The filling of the Spirit results in words that pierce through deception and lead to belief, as seen in Paul's encounter with Elymas and Sergius Paulus.

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## Transcript

God is continually pierced by the foolish things that come out of our mouths. Rather than grace and supplication (Zech. 12:10), we tend to speak the words of Herod-eloquent arrogance (Acts 12:23). We fall in love with the sound of our own voice and believe the flatterers who tell us we speak like a god. He who perseveres in his own words for his own glory ends up getting eaten by worms, as happened to Herod. By contrast "the word of God grew and multiplied" (v. 24). Men are fools and God alone is wise (Jude 25). One's folly is most evident when he opens his mouth and speaks. It is for this reason (the folly of people expressed in words) that God intentionally links the filling of the Holy Spirit with divine control of the tongue. Inescapably in Scripture, when man or woman is filled with the Spirit, there is an immediate effect on the tongue. We know God is in control of His vessels when their most unruly member (the tongue that is set on fire by hell) is now kindled by heaven (James 3:1-8). God's intention for the mouth is not that it should pierce Him or others in its folly, but that it should magnify the Lord in fiery praise. The human tongue magnifies himself and distorts God; the holy tongue magnifies God and diminishes humanity.

To speak of the empowered tongue is not to imply that only soft things emerge from the mouth. Our tongues are commissioned to proclaim the whole counsel of God. The Spirit fills us that we speak God's words, and God's words pierce even to the division of soul and spirit, joints and marrow (Heb. 4:12). In Cyprus Paul encounters the sorcerer Elymas who withstood the words of God. Paul, "filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him, and said: 'O full of deceit and all fraud, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness. Will you not stop perverting the straight ways of the Lord'" (Acts 13:9-10)? This too is empowered speech, the piercing words of heaven that cut through all the fraud and lies of man and devils.

The filling of the Spirit leads us to both magnify His name and to defend it. There comes a time when the wisdom of God is so provoked by the foolishness of man that empowered speech issues from His vessels with the authority of the Spirit. These rebukes are witness, too, and often lead to belief. The consul Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man, believed, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord (Acts 13:7, 12).

God intends our words to pierce-just not to pierce Him. God fills us with His Spirit that our words would pierce through all the clouded confusion of humanity, cut through all the lies and deceit, and stab the heart of the matter. Because our mouths are swords, they can do great harm or great good. Only the repeated infilling of the Holy Spirit ensures that we pierce with grace for God's glory.

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