



MISGUIDED TONGUES

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Dedicated to the Memory of Trisha Ruddick Stemple
(June 14, 1966-Oct 24, 1996)

October 24, 1996 is a date our family will never forget. It is the day our 30 year old daughter Trisha Stemple was brutally murdered. Trish, a beautiful young mother of two, was the administrator for an overseas disaster response ministry. She loved the Lord with all her heart.

This post was originally written days after her funeral. With some tweaks, it is being reposted, as its timely truth represents one of the more revealing since the start of SIGN.

During the time of shock and pain at her death, we had many questions. Yet, the Lord made it very clear that there are some issues, in terms of our need for answers that you simply don't touch. The only recourse is in turning to the Lord and in trusting Him. Some answers in this life will only be understood when we meet the Lord face to face. In a tragedy like this, those include the 'whys' and the 'if onlys'.

However, as a prophetic intercessor, the morning before Trish's funeral I asked the Lord for the context of what had been taking place in the spiritual realm. The answers I received have become even more applicable today than at the time we originally faced this tragedy. They reflect a truth foundational not only for those called as intercessors, but for those called to pave new ground for the Kingdom.

The Intensity of the Battle

My first impression after asking the Lord for an understanding of the broad context of what was taking place in the heavenlies was of an incredible increase in spiritual activity: turbulent spiritual warfare. It reflected a context of warfare that Scripture describes as when "the very elect might be deceived". At the time, I had a distinct sense that this warfare had been building to new heights and levels; and it has definitely continued escalating since that time.

Then, shortly after the funeral with my heart aching but on the alert for answers, a vision was shared that a friend with a prophetic gifting had just had. The vision was of a heavenly being's hand pointing and saying: "YOU TALK TOO MUCH". Not long after that, I was told of related dreams that two intercessors had had. In each dream, there was a fire raging; a fire set in motion due to loose, misguided tongues.

My prayerful discernment was that this vision and the dreams were directed to a broad spectrum of anointed members of the Body; those anointed for service.

The Firestorm Released

Then, the morning after these things were shared with me, as I was praying, additional revelation began coming forth. First, I realized that these clues pointed to the broader context by which loose tongues create open doors of vulnerability within the Body to attacks from the enemy. Indeed, they create a catalyst that sets in motion what can become raging firestorms.

I also recognized a critical need for the saints to bond together in intercession to put out these fires. This carries the requirement for reckless tongues; and the less-than-mature and soulish dispositions that guide them to become yielded to the Lord, together with the unrestrained 'thoughts' referred to in 2 Corinthians 10:5. This scripture refers to casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God; bringing into captivity 'every thought' to the obedience of Christ.

The Enemy's Target: Believers Anointed for Service

From the foundation of this revelation came more. Again, it was clear that the misguided tongues of primary concern were from among those 'called' to and anointed for ministry service; and zealous, well-meaning believers close to those with these mantles.

At the root of these soulishly-driven tongues is the lack adequate spiritual understanding of specific situations and

circumstances: with responses that backbite, accuse, criticize, gossip and pass judgment on persons and matters for which at best they don't understand. In short, far too many are serving as dupes of the devil through their reckless words.

The scripture comments on the prophet Samuel that: "The Lord let none of his words fall to the ground". The words of those anointed for service have potency. It is a potency the enemy wants to harness.

The Enemy's Goal: Harnessing the Anointing

Tragically, loose, misguided tongues from within the Body are being used by the enemy to harness the potency of the anointing to come against initiatives, pathways and even movements the Lord has been setting in motion.

James 3:6 addresses believers, which in the Amplified version reads: "And the tongue is a fire. The tongue is a world of wickedness set among our members, contaminating and depraving the whole Body and setting on fire the wheel of birth --- the cycle of man's nature --- being itself ignited by hell (Gehenna)."

Similarly, the truth outlined at the end of Proverbs 4 and beginning of Proverbs 5 presents the sequence by which the unsuspecting are seduced. Proverbs 4:23 begins the admonition to "Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life". But then without even getting to the doorway of seduction, the 24th verse deals with the role of the tongue: "Put away from you a deceitful mouth, and put perverse lips far from you". Likewise, in Proverbs 5:3 it is clear that the pathway to seduction involves "words" that are smooth, attractive --- and beguiling: "For the lips of an immoral woman drip honey, and her mouth is smoother than oil..."

This passage of Proverbs clearly outlines the dynamics in sexual seduction. However, the truth it reflects is equally applicable to the seduction of our misguided words to benefit the devil; specifically, the seduction by which the enemy deceives us into agreeing with his role as accuser of the brethren.

It is the enemy's means to appropriate power he doesn't otherwise have, by harnessing the anointing of those called to serve the Lord. The result is the same as seen in verses 9 and 10: "Lest you give your honor to others, and your years to the cruel one; lest aliens be filled with your wealth, and your labors go to the house of a foreigner."

We live in critical, pivotal and perilous times. The margin for error among those anointed for service is far less today than what it may have been a decade ago. The intensity of the battle is increasing, while the margin for error decreasing.

The Lord is setting in motion critical pathways, strategic alliances and moves of His Spirit --- that do not need to be diverted from their course --- or to have inroads of attacks opened by misguided, reckless tongues from the camp of those anointed for service.

Countering the Enemy's Strategy

Addressing and guarding against this issue begins with an awareness of this subtle deception. It is a strategy designed to deceive and gain 'agreement power' according to the principle in Matthew 18:19. As a major strategy of the devil, it is designed to seduce saints into redirecting and exploiting the power of the anointing into agreement with his intentions as the accuser of the brethren.

In most instances, it begins with the simplicity of yielding to the enemy, our 'most unruly members, our tongues'. It builds on the misguided words of well-intentioned saints who simply lack a realistic grasp of a given situation; or of the potentially negative impact that idle, foolish words can have spiritually on others and the Body corporate.

Driven by overzealous, religious spirits, its unrestrained practice digresses from simple misuses of the power of the anointing, into opening the door to abuses reflecting a progressive impact of witchcraft. Left unchecked, the process merges into overt collaboration with occult, Jezebelian influences. Such a blindness, with its lack of self-control and Body unity, opens the gates to "firestorms" against members of the Body with God-initiated agendas in its sites.

While we each need to more fully bring our thoughts and tongues captive to the Lord, and to be increasing the time spent in prayer that is yielded to His presence; there also needs to be an escalation of and increase in the potency of the intercession required to close this gap in Body maturity, while supporting those serving the Lord as pioneers.

Hearing God's voice with clarity is a process. That clarity increases as we and what we refer to as our fleshly desires decrease. Distortion comes from unaffordable luxuries grasped by those called by God: typically either the flesh or the ego. For that reason, the guidance and leadings we receive in prayer must be double-, triple- and quadruple-checked before acting on them. Likewise, when revelation is received, we need to avoid haste and impulse, and continue waiting before the Lord for the specifics on its illumination, instruction and timing.

As this diabolical strategy is countered, so his intentions will be thwarted as we progressively avoid the diversions and divisions and come together in unity, are strengthened and gain a greater grasp on the broader picture being orchestrated by the Holy Spirit.

Gap-Standers versus the Accuser

Ezekiel 22:30 calls us to stand in the gap against the accuser of the brethren. Yet, far too many --- even within intercessory circles; sometimes because of impulsive responses to preliminary revelations; sometimes in a perverted sense of self-righteousness; sometimes simply due to frustrations --- wind up functioning in alignment with Satan as gap-finders, rather than in their God-given role of standing in the gap. It is a tragic and short-sighted blindness resulting from misguided tongues.

Proverbs 10:18,19 provides the wisdom we need to face and embrace: "Whoever hides hatred has lying lips, and whoever spreads slander is a fool. In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, but he who restrains his lips is wise." Meekness and humility are requisites to being entrusted with His power. They are also gateways into Body maturity and unity as spoken of in Ephesians 4 and John 17. They mark the pathway toward the fullness outlined in Isaiah 58:9,10 (Amplified):

"If you take away from your midst the yokes of oppression, the finger pointed in scorn (toward the oppressed or the godly); and every form of false, harsh, unjust and wicked speaking; then shall your light rise in darkness and your obscurity and gloom become as the noonday."

Moving Onto the Offensive

Wielding the anointing responsibly requires dedication and obedience. It entails an ongoing intimacy with the Lord; that overcomes evil with good rather than being overwhelmed or allowing the natural responses of the soul to be triggered. It necessitates a brokenness before the Lord; a humility that refuses to take ourselves or the exploits of our callings too seriously; and a genuine servant's heart, always ready to forgive and always ready to repent.

The calling requires nothing less than that described by Paul, as being a living sacrifice. That means a maturity and wisdom in our response to pursuing the opportunities the Lord entrusts to us. It means being diligent to avoiding the traps set up by the evil one to divert and ensnare us. The words of John the Baptist underscore the wisdom needed to avoid such encounters when, in referring to the rise in Jesus' ministry, he stated that "He (Jesus) must increase, and I must decrease".

We need an accurate understanding of the times we have entered in order to know what to do, within the spheres of our callings. We likewise need to understand the boundaries of our authority. The spiritual battle underway is very real. Yet, so are the Lord's manifold means to equip and employ us as participants in His unfolding plans and purposes.

Loose, misguided tongues: the insights I sought during that time of personal grief in late 1996 point to a pathway to which we each need to be reaching. In counting the costs, as anointed servants of the Lord, we cannot underestimate the responsibility of the control of our tongues and of the corollary of bringing EVERY thought captive to the obedience of Jesus. It marks the dividing asunder between the many who are called and the few who are chosen.

"So for every idle word that men may speak, they will give an account in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified and by your words you will be condemned." Matthew 12:36-37

The Prayer

Lord God Almighty, in the Name that is above all Names, in the Name of Jesus, we approach your throne boldly on these matters. As we enter your Presence, we bow our hearts before You in repentance. Lord, we've failed in this area and we need Your help. Enable us each to take the moats and the beams out of our own eyes, before we consider noting the splinters in the eyes of others. Lord anoint us afresh as gap-standers for our brethren and deliver us from the trap of becoming gap-finders. Lord, we ask that You give us a right spirit in these matters.

Lord God, we purpose to forgive and to bless those who may have inadvertently, or even intentionally, cursed us by their words. We ask you to forgive them Lord. We purpose to trust You with these matters Lord, and not to align ourselves with the accuser. Help us Lord; help us to walk through these pathways in faith; and help us to overcome our unbelief. Help us to recognize and avoid what your Word speaks of as idle words and to bring every thought captive into alignment with Your will.

Deliver us O God, from impulsive and soulish responses, from selfish ambitions and misguided words and actions. Lord, we are nothing without You anyway, so we re-consecrate our callings, our ministries; and those things we have come to protect and consider precious before You. We put them into your very capable hands. In so doing, we die to our own selfish ideas and ambitions, and simply make ourselves available to you anew and say in deepest humility, "here I am Lord".

Holy Father, keep us in Your name, the name which You have given to the Lord Jesus, that we may be one, even as You are one. We do not ask that You take us out of the world, but that You make us instruments of Your

presence and a deterrent to the evil one's schemes. Sanctify us in Your truth. Your Word is truth. Make us one, even as You are one, that the world may know that Jesus the Messiah was indeed sent by You as Savior and Lord. The glory You have given to the Lord Jesus, we receive, as He gives it to us, for the purpose of being one, just as You are one.

Thank you Lord, that we will be perfected in unity, so that the world will see that we are Yours and are the objects of Your love. Lord, we ask for the Holy Spirit's anointing and infilling to go out into the world, to where you are sending us, to minister, to give our lives as a ransom for many, to seek and to save that which is lost and to do Your Holy will.

Lord, let trust and love flow within the Body. We need your supernatural intervention in this area Lord. We cry out to you to cleanse us Lord. Cleanse us individually and as a Body. Help us and enable us to be able to truly stand in the gap for and love our brethren across the Body. Bring us as a Body into that place in You, O Lord, that the Scripture refers to as the full knowledge of the Lord. Open the eyes of our understanding and give us the balance we need to operate in Spirit and in truth; in Spirit and in truth, O Lord.

And Lord as you bring us together, mobilize the intercessors to stand in the gap for those called to pioneer new pathways and agendas. Lord, put a guard over our tongues and give us a deeper revelation of Your heart on these matters, as well as the tasks before us. And contain us Lord, to operate within the sphere that You have called us to operate in.

Lord, we pray that by Your power; that an army of intercessors would be mobilized; that there would be significant changes of heart within each of us called to serve you; and that an axe might be laid to the root of this insidious strategy of the enemy: of releasing this firestorm of misguided tongues.

Lord, You are awesome and worthy of our praise. Nothing is too hard for You. Mature us as a Body and bring us to the place that when we, Your people, come on the scene, that the enemy will scatter. Reveal Your heart to us Lord and open the eyes of our understanding; that we may know what is the hope of Your calling; that we may align ourselves with your priorities and initiatives for the times we have entered.

May Your peace and presence be upon Your people Israel as You bring fulfillment to Your promises for Your chosen people. These are indeed incredible times to be about Your work, Lord. Release revival, we pray. Renew us and let revival reign in OUR hearts. We thank You Lord, for choosing us, for anointing us, and entrusting us to be used as instruments of Your purpose in the strategic times before us! Amen.

[www.strategic-initiatives.org/pages/publications/MisguidedTongues.htm]

Morris Ruddick has been a forerunner and spokesman for the call of God in the marketplace. He is author of "The Joseph-Daniel Calling" and "Gods Economy, Israel and the Nations," which address the mobilization of business and governmental leaders called to impact their communities with God's blessings. They are available from Amazon.com, BarnesandNoble.com and other popular outlets.

Mr. Ruddick is also the founder of the Global Equippers Entrepreneurial Program, which imparts hope and equips economic community builders where God's light is dim in both the Western and non-Western world. To schedule a speaking engagement, sponsor a workshop, make a donation or to get more information on how you can help, contact Global Initiatives at 303.741.9000.

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(response@strategic-initiatives.org)

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