

The Heart's Overflow

Luke 6:43–45 (NASB 1995)

⁴³ For there is no good tree which produces bad fruit, nor, on the other hand, a bad tree which produces good fruit. ⁴⁴ For each tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they pick grapes from a briar bush. ⁴⁵ The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth what is evil; for his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart.

Introduction: The Water Well

Imagine that you have a well in your backyard. One day you lower a bucket into the well and pull it back up. To your surprise, the water is brown, foul-smelling, and contaminated.

What would you do?

Would you paint the bucket? Would you polish the crank? Would you buy a prettier rope?

Of course not.

The problem is not the bucket. The problem is the water source. You would have to go down deep into the well and discover what is contaminating the water.

Jesus says our mouths are like that bucket.

If angry words, critical words, hurtful words, or bitter words keep coming out of us, the problem is not ultimately our speech. The problem lies deeper. It is a problem of the heart.

That is why our Lord teaches: "For the mouth speaks from that which fills the heart (v. 45)."

The Big Idea of today's message is this:

We don't have a speech problem; we have a source problem. To change the words coming out, we must surrender to the Lord the heart that is fueling them.

Let us look at three truths from our Lord's teaching.

I. The Fruit and the Root

(Luke 6:43-44)

Jesus says: No good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit.

This is a simple truth from nature. You don't go to an apple tree expecting oranges. You don't go to a thornbush looking for figs. The fruit always reveals the tree.

Likewise, our words reveal our hearts.

Many people try to solve a speech problem by managing their behavior. "I need to stop yelling." "I need to stop gossiping." "I need to stop complaining."

Those are good goals, but Jesus says we must go deeper.

The fruit is only the symptom. The root is the issue.

A tree can look healthy on the outside yet be diseased on the inside.

Likewise, people can speak kindly in church on Sunday and then speak harshly at home on Monday. Eventually, the true fruit always appears.

Illustration: The Thermometer

Think about a thermometer. A thermometer does not create the temperature. It simply reveals it. If it reads one hundred degrees, we don't get angry at the thermometer. The thermometer is only telling us what is already there.

Our tongue is the thermometer of the soul. When we are impatient, angry, critical, or sarcastic, our words reveal the temperature of our hearts.

The problem is deeper than our lips. The issue is our hearts.

Application

Perhaps your words have been sharp lately. Perhaps you have been complaining more than usual. Perhaps you have been impatient with your spouse or children.

Don't simply say: "I need to try harder."

Instead ask: "Lord, what is happening inside my heart that is producing this fruit?"

Is it resentment? Is it fear? Is it disappointment? Is it pride?

Jesus invites us to go beneath the surface and deal with the root. Because when God changes the root, the fruit will follow.

II. The Warehouse of the Soul

(Luke 6:45a)

Jesus continues: "The good man out of the good **treasure** of his heart brings forth what is good; and the evil man out of the evil **treasure** brings forth what is evil." Notice here: the word "treasure" means a storehouse or warehouse.

Imagine your heart as a giant warehouse. Every day something is being stored there. Everything we read. Everything we watch. Everything we listen to.

Every conversation. Every hurt. Every resentment. Every act of worship. Every verse of Scripture. Everything goes into the warehouse the heart.

And sooner or later, what is stored inside comes back out.

Illustration: The Squeezed Orange

If you squeeze an orange, what comes out? Orange juice. Why? Because that's what is inside. If apple juice comes out, we know something is wrong.

Likewise, when life squeezes us, whatever inside us comes out.

When we are tired... When we are stressed... When someone criticizes us... When we are disappointed... Life squeezes us.

And what comes out? Anger? Fear? Complaining? Bitterness? Or faith? Grace? Patience? Kindness? Or, even love? The squeeze does not create the content. It only reveals what was already there.

Many of us blame our circumstances. "He made me angry." "That situation made me say it."

No. The circumstance only squeezed what was already in the heart.

Biblical Example: Peter

Before Pentecost, Peter was impulsive, fearful, and quick to speak. He denied the Lord three times. But after being filled with the Holy Spirit, his speech changed. He became bold. Gracious. Filled with truth.

Why? Because God had changed his heart. Because He was filled with the Holy Spirit. The same mouth that once denied Jesus became a mouth that proclaimed Jesus. Changed hearts produce changed words.

Application

Ask yourself: What am I storing in my heart these days? Am I feeding on fear? Am I consuming negativity all day long? Am I replaying old hurts and resentments? Or am I storing God's truth? Am I storing good and godly thoughts in my heart?

Why would you do that? Because what fills your heart eventually flows out of your mouth. Garbage in, garbage out. Gospel in, Gospel out. God's Word in, God's Word out.

III. The Overflow Principle

(Luke 6:45b)

Jesus concludes: "For his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart."

Notice the word "fills." The mouth speaks from what fills the heart. Whatever dominates our hearts eventually dominates our speech. If bitterness fills the heart, bitterness comes out. If fear fills the heart, fearful words come out. If anger fills the heart, angry words come out.

But if Christ fills the heart, then Christ-like words come out. If the Holy Spirit fills your heart, then you will bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit such as love, joy, peace, gentleness, ..., and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). If God's Word fills your heart, you will be transformed to Christ's image.

Illustration: The Overflowing Cup

Imagine holding a cup filled to the very top with water. If someone bumps into you, what spills out? Water. Why? Because that's what filled the cup.

Likewise, when life bumps into us, what spills out? That depends on what fills us. If we are filled with Christ's peace, peace spills out. If we are filled with grace, grace spills out. If we are filled with thanksgiving, gratitude spills out.

Illustration: Fresh Water

Suppose a well has become contaminated. How do you clean it? One way is to continually pour fresh water into it until the old water is pushed out.

That is exactly what God does with our hearts. He fills us with His Word. He fills us with His Spirit. He fills us with His truth.

Over time, the old bitterness is pushed out. The old anger is pushed out. The old fear is pushed out. And a new overflow begins.

Paul says: "Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you" (Colossians 3:16).

Why? Because whatever richly dwells in us eventually richly flows out of us.

Application

Want to speak words of life? Then fill your heart with life. Want to stop complaining? Fill your heart with gratitude. Want to stop gossiping? Fill your heart with the gospel. Want to stop speaking fear? Fill your heart with God's promises.

The goal is not word management. The goal is heart filling.

Now, please listen carefully. This is important.

One day, Jesus was engaged in a debate with the religious leaders. They complained that Jesus' disciples were eating with unwashed hands. Jesus corrected them by saying that what enters the mouth doesn't defile a person. Instead, what comes out of the mouth does (Matthew 15:18).

And then He gives us a frightening list that defiles a person before God: Evil thoughts. Murders. Adulteries. Sexual immorality. Thefts. False witness. Slander.

Jesus is teaching us something fundamental about the human heart. The greatest spiritual problem isn't simply what's happening around us. It's what's happening **inside us**.

We sometimes spend enormous energy trying to keep ourselves externally clean while neglecting the condition of our hearts.

Jesus commands: **Pay attention to your heart. Take good care of your heart. Keep it clean and pure.**

Why? Because what is stored in the heart eventually comes out. If bad things come out of our mouth, they will defile us before God.

So, the real question is how to guard our hearts, right? There are two things we ought to do.

First: **Guard what you allow into your heart.**

Think of your heart as a place with gates. Your eyes are gates. Your ears are gates. Your mind is a gate.

You wouldn't knowingly allow someone to dump garbage into your living room. Why would we willingly fill our hearts with spiritual garbage?

We need to be careful about what we watch. What we listen to. What we repeatedly think about. What we allow to occupy our imagination. Because what goes into the heart doesn't

simply disappear. It stays there. And eventually, it comes out through your mouth. Guard your heart.

But don't merely keep darkness out. Fill your heart with God's light.

That leads us to a second thing we must do. That is, **Fill your heart with God's truth.**

Philippians 4:8 tells us to dwell on things that are true, honorable, right, pure, lovely, and of good repute.

And Psalm 119:11 says: **"Your word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against You."**

That's the answer. Don't leave your heart empty. Fill it with God's Word. Fill it with truth. Fill it with prayer. Fill it with gratitude. Fill it with things that honor Christ.

Because the heart eventually overflows.

Conclusion

Our mouths are merely the bucket. Our words reveal what is happening deep within the well of our hearts. If the water is bitter, don't paint the bucket.

Go to the source. Ask the Lord to search your heart (Psalm 139:23). Ask Him to remove bitterness. Ask Him to replace fear with faith. Ask Him to replace anger with grace. Ask Him to fill you with His Word and His Spirit. Also, be diligent in doing your part: guard your gates and fill your heart with God's Word.

Let me tell you this: When the Holy Spirit transforms your heart, the overflow changes. Grace comes out. Kindness comes out. Patience comes out. Truth comes out. Encouragement comes out.

And people begin to hear Jesus in our words because Jesus is filling our hearts.

The prayer of David becomes our prayer: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10).

May God cleanse our hearts. May He fill our hearts with His truth. And may our mouths overflow with words that honor Christ and bless others.

Amen.