

# Words Create Worlds - 14-Day Bible Reading Plan by Ray Hintz

## Day 1 - When God Speaks

### READ

#### **Genesis 1:1-3**

**In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.**

#### **Matthew 4:4**

**"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."**

In the beginning, God spoke, and out of His word creation was formed. Words were meant to be filled with life. In fact, Jesus responded to the devil with this truth, reminding the enemy that God's Word is what fills us with life and light.

God is still speaking today through His Word, the Bible. As you read it over the next two weeks, consider the simple truth that every time God speaks, it is filled with life, love and hope.

Words are powerful, and we will see that they have the power to build up or tear down those around us, or even ourselves. It is only with God's Word at work in our life that we are able to find the strength to continue pressing forward.

### REFLECT

As you read God's Word, the Bible, what is something that God is showing you?

## Day 2 - The Enemy Attacks

### READ

#### Genesis 3:1-5

**Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made.**

**He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You[a] shall not eat of any tree in the garden’?”**

**And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”**

#### John 8:44

**You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.**

Notice that the serpent did not attack Eve, he attacked the validity of God's Word that was spoken to Eve. The enemy of our soul is crafty and rarely comes out of the gate in full force. Instead, he is subtle, working to bring discord and doubt.

One great thing about knowing God's voice is that you will also recognize the enemy's voice, for everything he says is a lie. There is no part of the devil that is good.

This week, examine where you may have subtly bought into the devil's lies. Has he convinced you that life would be better if you bailed on the people who love you? That your marriage will never last? Or that you've failed as a mother or father?

Work this week to tune into God's voice, but also to recognize the voice of the enemy, because when the devil speaks, rest assured, it's a lie.

## **REFLECT**

Think of one way that you can better hear from God this week?

## **Day 3 – The Living Word**

If you've want to declare Jesus as Lord, say this aloud:

“Jesus, I confess with my mouth that You are Lord and believe in my heart that you have risen and are alive today. I surrender fully to your will. Whatever you want for me and my family, I choose to trust you fully. Help me

### **John 1:1-5**

**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.**

### **John 1:14**

**And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.**

Today, we look upon the words of that open the book of John. He rightly points out that not only was the Word with God, but that the Word was God.

When we discuss words, it's important to draw the distinction between our words, which are often the substance of our opinion and understanding, versus the Word that is God. The latter is filled with timeless, absolute and perfect.

To further demonstrate this, Jesus steps out of the glory of heaven to walk amongst broken humanity. His life of service and sacrifice was a testament to John's statement that His light overwhelmed the darkness.

Every word that Jesus spoke is true, and we will discover that His words bring us hope and healing.

## **REFLECT**

Why is God's Word more valid than our thoughts, feelings or words?

## DAY 4 – Confession & Belief

### READ

#### **Romans 10:9**

**...if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.**

Part of joining the family of God happens when we open our mouth. In fact, we see that Paul rightly points out that confession isn't simply an understanding or belief, but it is to be done with our mouth.

There is and has always been something powerful about vocalizing our faith in Jesus. Not only does it let the world around us know that we belong to Him, but it is also a reminder to us that He is Lord.

The word Lord is incredibly important here. This is to mean that He is in absolute and utter control – that we are completely surrendered to Jesus. This is no small admission.

Maybe you're reading this and you've never really made Jesus, Lord. That's not to say that you don't go to church or haven't raised your hand when a pastor has given an opportunity to respond at the end of a service, but this is to say that you are fully surrendered to God and His will for your life and family. If this is the case, then today is a great day to confess that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that He is risen from the dead!

If you've want to declare Jesus as Lord, say this aloud:

“Jesus, I confess with my mouth that You are Lord and believe in my heart that you have risen and are alive today. I confess that I am a sinner and am in need of You. I surrender fully to Your will. Whatever you want for me and my family, I choose to trust You fully. I receive your love and grace. Help me to share that same love and grace with those around me. Amen.”

## **REFLECT**

What would it mean today to make Jesus Lord in your life?

## **Day 5 – God’s Word At Work In Our Lives**

### **READ**

#### **Romans 10:17**

**...faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.**

#### **Psalm 119:105**

**Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.**

In Romans 10, Paul speaks to the fact that when we are bold enough to introduce others to Jesus, faith is found. However, we also realize that faith builds our faith as well, and this is why hearing the word of Christ is so important.

The psalmist understood that God's Word was what would illuminate the path before him, some 450 years before Jesus officially stepped onto the scene.

Both these writers understood that it was God alone who brings light into our darkened hearts and lives. It is in this light that we see how to navigate the difficult decisions that life throws at us – what some might call wisdom.

Wisdom does not come from one's IQ or intuition, it comes from God. As we read our Bible, memorize verses and strive to live out what it says, we better understand the deeper truths contained within His Word to us.

Make the decision to pick up your Bible daily, but as you do, say a short prayer before starting and ask God to speak to you while keeping your humble so that you can hear from Him.

### **REFLECT**

Where is the best place and when is the best time for you to read your Bible? Find it and schedule it on your calendar every day.



## Day 6 – A Force To Be Reckoned With

### READ

#### Hebrews 4:12

**For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.**

Over the years, we've heard many share how they just can't read the Bible because it's antiquated or just plain boring. I always think that they must not be reading it right!

Did you know that the word of God isn't static or stale? On the contrary, the writer of Hebrews says it's living and active, and then compares it to an incredibly sharp sword.

The truth is the Bible reveals the intents of our hearts. It shows us the good... and the bad. Two words to describe this are clarity and conviction.

It brings great clarity to us because it becomes as simple as obedience. We need His Word to show us if there is anything. It's important to realize that Jesus is *the* Word, so what is spoken in the Bible is absolute and irrefutable truth.

But it also brings conviction, which is at the heart of this verse. When we come to the light, the dark spaces in our life are revealed. God doesn't do this to beat us up or condemn us, instead, He lovingly shows us through the Holy Spirit so we can make the appropriate changes in our life.

### REFLECT

After now having read your Bible, is there a particular area that you God has shown you that needs to be surrendered to Him.

## **Day 7 – The Purpose & Power Of God's Word**

### **READ**

#### **2 Timothy 3:16-17**

**All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.**

#### **James 1:22 - obedience & action**

**But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.**

When it comes down to it, God's Word is not meant to solely be read, it's meant to be lived out.

Paul reminds young Timothy that every part of God's Word has purpose, whether to bring correction or understanding. That understanding leads us to realize that our faith may be personal, but it was never meant to be private. In other words, faith needs room to breathe.

It's when we take in God's Word that it moves from understanding to action – from hearing to doing as James says here. To not be changed by God's Word is to miss its purpose.

Whenever you pick up your Bible, there is a lesson to not only be learned, but an opportunity to live it out! This is what makes living for Jesus so exciting.

As you read your Bible this week or memorize these verses, look for opportunities to live out what you've read.

### **REFLECT**

How could you best live out your faith this week by moving from hearing to doing?

## **Day 8 – Death & Life**

### **READ**

#### **Proverbs 18:21**

**Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits.**

#### **Matthew 12:36**

**I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak...**

As we move into the second half of this study, we shift to how we use our words. Proverbs gives us a deep truth, reminding us that there is great power in this thing we call the tongue.

All of us have memories of moments when our tongue got the best of us. It is with an unbridled tongue that relationships are ruined, marriages are destroyed, and families fall apart. It can seem impossible to get control over, but Jesus warns that we better start trying.

It's a sobering feeling to realize that one day we will stand before God and give an account for every careless thing we've said. Of course, God has made His grace and forgiveness to us through Jesus, but that does not give us a free pass to say whatever we want, whenever we want. All those words will be answered for one day.

Since this is the case, it might benefit us to start paying more attention to what we say and being intentional with speaking life instead of death.

### **REFLECT**

How can you use words to speak life to your family and friends today? Start by sending a text of encouragement or appreciation to someone you love.

## **Day 9 – Better Left Unsaid**

### **READ**

#### **Psalm 141:3**

**Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips!**

Not everything that can be said, needs to be said. In fact, even when we are right about something, we don't need to use words to point it out.

Words in the wrong setting or with the wrong timing can be damning. When I think about some of the things I've said over the years, I cringe. Even though we may instantly regret what we've said, we can not always undo the damage that is done with a simple apology.

In our marriage and family, sometimes tough things need to be said, but we want to constantly be working to make sure that the words that do leave our mouths are those that are filled with love and truth. Remember, our goal is not to show how much we know or to prove ourselves right, it is to love those around us well.

If you struggle to control your tongue, and most of us do at times, ask God to do the same as the Psalmist wrote in our verse today.

### **REFLECT**

How do others perceive you as harsh or humble when it comes to your words? Ask God to help you if there is work to be done.

#### **Proverbs 21:23**

**Whoever keeps his mouth and his tongue keeps himself out of trouble.**

## Day 10 – The Gift Of Gentleness

### READ

#### Proverbs 15:1

**A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.**

#### Proverbs 15:4

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

If I'm being honest, my bend is towards harshness – I like to call it being blunt. However, sometimes being “blunt” is just an excuse to be lazy with my words. I mean, why should I have to think about how to say what needs to be said, that seems like a lot of extra work!

Maybe you have a similar struggle. If so, the Bible warns us of the strife we may be stirring up by simply refusing to consider our answer before we spew it out.

In Proverbs 15, this idea is addressed twice, using the words soft and gentle to describe how we can diffuse what might otherwise be a contentious situation. We also see that these types of responses are not weak, but actually wield great power.

Notice that in verse one, a soft answer *turns* away wrath – literally steering yourself into a better situation. In verse four, a gentle tongue is said to be rooted in life. To contrast, a harsh answer or quick trigger brings about anger and breaks down those around us.

The question we have to ask is simple, what situation do we want to steer toward? I think the answer is clear. Today, use wisdom to exercise the right words at the right time, with the right tone, and let it bring life to the ones you love most.

## **REFLECT**

What was a situation in the last week that if you had answered softly or gently, could have turned out better?

## Day 11 – Sweet Like Honey

### READ

#### **Proverbs 16:24**

**Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body.**

#### **Proverbs 25:11**

**A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver.**

These two short verses are packed with truth. The first speaks to the power of grace at work in our lives, particularly with our words.

Here, the writer compares gracious words to honey, describing them as sweet. That sweetness to the soul actually brings health in the body. Think about that for a moment. Your words have the power to not only encourage a person, but to make them healthier!

In the latter verse we see that certain words are even more beneficial when given at the right time. The writer contrasts gold and silver, showing how these types of words stand out to others.

While we can always choose to be gracious with words, there will be divine moments where we speak a word to someone that is exactly what God wanted delivered in that moment. These tend to create vivid memories for those who hear the word. Pray that God would use to you be His messenger of grace, truth and love this week with the words you offer to others.

### REFLECT

Has there been a time in your life where someone shared something meaningful in the moment that has stuck with you? If possible, take a moment to text or call them to thank them.

## Day 12 – Who Are You Listening To?

### READ

#### Proverbs 15:2

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

We've talked a lot about God's Word and our words, but what about the words we listen to? Since we tend to listen to the people we're around most, start by asking yourself who you're surrounded by. Do they build you up or tear you down? Do they lead you closer to God or constantly try to keep you from Him?

These are important questions to ask, as the people around us influence us more than we'd like to admit. We want to strive to surround ourselves with wise people and either eliminate or minimize our exposure to troublesome and foolish people.

The Bible is filled with warnings about who we spend our time with. It's wildly important that we are honest with ourselves as we ask God to reveal His truth to us.

Remember this: It's nearly impossible to live the right life when you're surrounded by the wrong people.

### REFLECT

Who is a wise person that you want to start spending more time with? Ask them out for lunch or see if they have a time you can spend with them. During your time together, listen more than you talk and glean from their wisdom.



## Day 13 – The Mirror Of Our Heart

### READ

#### **Matthew 12:34**

**You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil?  
For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.**

#### **Matthew 15:18**

**But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person.**

Our words are merely a reflection of what is in our heart. Sure, we may be able to hold our tongue for a while, but eventually, who we are in our heart is revealed in our words.

In Matthew 12, Jesus condemns a group of religious people who are trying desperately to mask their words to sound good, but Jesus sees right through it.

Often, I meet people who want to change their behavior, maybe they want to stop yelling at their spouse or kids, or they want to go to church more – it could be just about anything.

It's in these moments that I try to help them see that working on the what without working on the who is an effort in futility. Jesus is highlighting this here.

Trying to change our exterior to look better without letting God change us on the inside is pointless. Even if we fool others, we never fool God. He knows who we are and what's in our heart. That might be a scary thought for you, but God knows His creation and He longs to help us.

Instead of asking God to help you change "x" or "y", try surrendering your heart fully to Him. If we want to change what we say, we must first change who we are – who before do.

## **REFLECT**

What is an area that you've been wanting to change? How can working on the inside out help you in this process?

## Day 14 – Submit Your Words To God

### READ

#### Psalm 19:14

**Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.**

We conclude this study with the beautiful desire of a man named David. We see a prayer aimed at his words and heart.

David understood that the two were connected. When he was doing well, his heart was aligned with God and his words were pure. However, when his heart strayed, his words were deceitful.

One trait of David is that he truly loved God and wanted to do His will. He was far from perfect, but he sought to offer the right words to those he was leading that reflected his desire to honor and lift God up.

This is something that we too should strive for. There is no doubt that our words will miss the mark many times over during our lifetime, but our heart must be to bring words before God that are acceptable and pleasing to Him.

This means recognizing who He is and who we are apart from Him, expressing gratitude for all He has done for us. Notice that David's prayer isn't centered around himself or what he could get, it is focused on pleasing God and declaring His goodness as His unshakable Rock and Redeemer!

We too must shift our prayers, using language that reflects our gratitude for who God is as well as for all He's done for us. It is God who deserves all the praise and worship we have, so let's give Him our very best!

**REFLECT**

What can you thank God for today? Verbalize it with prayers of thanks to Him.