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# Words of Truth

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## Hanging On Words

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I have not and do not always say things the best way possible. There has been and is often a better word or phrase than what I have used. Sometimes I realize this and sometimes I don't. Sometimes people point it out to me and sometimes they don't. How about you? Do you always say something the best way it could be said? Do you always use the clearest phrases? Do you always make your points in the most expedient manner possible?

I normally upload the sermon audio for the lesson I preach here on Sunday evenings. Normally, by the time Monday evening comes about, I have gotten at least one email criticizing something I said in the sermon. Generally, it is not a Scriptural charge that I said something unlawful. It is normally someone pointing out that I should have said something differently than how I said it. Sometimes the criticism is right and sometimes it is not. When I listen to what I am being criticized about I often think of ten ways I could have restated that statement. If you were to record yourself talking for over an hour, do you think you would be able to later listen to that and think of a better way you could have said something?

During the time Jesus was teaching on this earth we read this occurred: *“And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, to catch him in his words... And as he said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge him vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things: Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him”* (Mark 12:13 and Luke 11:53-54). Those opposed to Jesus were confident that when a man speaks enough he would eventually say something that they could hang on to and make a charge over. Even with Jesus, they eventually heard something that they were able to twist into a charge against Him.

### They Even Hung On To The Words Of Christ

Notice: *“Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death; But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses, And said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days. And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou*

*hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death” (Matthew 26:59-66).*

When Jesus spoke of destroying the temple and raising it in three days, He was not talking about the temple in Jerusalem. Jesus was talking about His body which was risen three days after He was murdered. The Jews misunderstood and twisted those words (John 2:13-22). Would you accuse Jesus of being too unclear and demand He change the way He worded that statement? Would you say that the sinless, spotless, righteous Lord (Hebrews 4:14-16, Hebrews 9:28, I Peter 2:21-25, and I John 2:1) we serve erred in His word choices? When answering their questioning of Him being the Christ, the Son of God; would you have chosen the same words as He did to answer their question?

My point is this, anyone (including Christ) who speaks enough in front of people will eventually make a statement that could be misunderstood, twisted, etc. The fault is often not on the one speaking. Could there be clearer phrases? Could there be a better way to state it? That is often a matter of opinion. What you think is the best way of stating something is not generally going to be what everyone would conclude is the best way of saying something. You could criticize Jesus and say He could have just said His body instead of using the word “temple”. Would you dare to do that? Ask yourself this: what happens when you criticize someone’s lawful way of stating something? That will eventually impact you.

### **If You Hang On Words, That Will Come Back At You**

In a context condemning hypocritical judgment, Jesus said: *“Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again” (Matthew 7:1-2).* Think about that. If you are critical of a person’s lawful statement, you judge them for that, what will happen the next time you could have made a clearer statement? The Lord says that when that moment arises you have condemned yourself! OH BOY! We’d better all think hard about that. Brethren, there is often a better way to say something or even do something. The fact is, what is most expedient often has so many factors to consider that each situation might warrant a different answer.

### **Conclusion**

We do have to carefully judge words and situations (Proverbs 18:13, Matthew 7:15-20, and John 7:24). When you judge the way someone said something; you have created a standard that will condemn you when you don’t say something “the best way” (Luke 19:11-27). Be careful. By your words you can be condemned (Matthew 12:34-37).