

## 週一嗎哪 午間查經分享祈禱會

MONDAY MANNA

October 3, 2022

### USING WORDS AS A WEAPON - IN THE BEST WAY

By Rick Boxx

The late British Prime Minister Winston Churchill was a complicated man with a colorful history. He had many notable political experiences and accomplishments, but his early years also included some colossal failures. Fortunately for him, Churchill is remembered today because of his accomplishments later in life. His courageous leadership spurred Great Britain and its allies on to defeat Germany in World War II when victory seemed very unlikely.

Although strategy was an important part of Churchill's success, his best talent was his wise use of words. In fact, his skill at verbal communication became Britain's best weapon. Because of his careful selection of words, Churchill knew how to inspire people and rally them around unpopular ideas.

Here is a sampling of some of the famous statesman's most notable and sometimes humorous quotes:

"Success is not final; failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts."

"Men occasionally stumble over the truth, but most of them pick themselves up and hurry off as if nothing had happened."

"For myself I am an optimist – it does not seem to be much use to be anything else."

"Success is stumbling from failure to failure with no loss of enthusiasm."

"It is not enough that we do our best; sometimes we must do what is required."

And perhaps Churchill's best-known statement, made in 1941 during the midst of World War II: "Never give in. Never give in. Never, never, never, never – in nothing, great or small, large, or petty – give in, except to convictions of honor and good sense. Never yield to force. Never yield to the apparently overwhelming might of the enemy."

Each of those statements provokes much food for thought. The British leader certainly understood the power of words. But he was hardly the first person to recognize that. Thousands of years earlier, King Solomon of ancient Israel declared, "*The words of a person's mouth are deep waters; The fountain of wisdom is a bubbling brook*" (Proverbs 18:4). Some verses later, Solomon also observed, "*The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit*" (Proverbs 18:21).

A couple chapters later, we find this assessment of the value of the spoken word: "*Gold there is, and rubies in abundance, but lips that speak knowledge are a rare jewel*" (Proverbs 20:15).

We can all think of times when we heard people speak who did not have such high regard for the spoken word. Perhaps you have been victimized by someone who used words as a weapon

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for harm, rather than for the good of all who were listening. Perhaps this is why we also find this warning in Proverbs: *“He who guards his mouth and his tongue keeps himself from calamity”* (Proverbs 21:31).

The application of these truths is obvious: If we are seeking to lead or influence others, perhaps motivate them to move in a new direction, we need to remember that our words can make a great difference. The setting of goals and objectives is important, as are measuring productivity and keeping track of profits and losses. But our words – whether we use them to impart vision or to inspire and encourage – are among the greatest “weapons” at our disposal as we battle through the challenges of each day.

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### Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. Which of Winston Churchill’s quotations cited had the greatest impression on you? Why did it stand out in your mind?
2. Think of a time when someone used words as a weapon, but not in a way to spur the hearers on to greater enthusiasm and accomplishments? What was the impact on you at that time – did what you heard have a detrimental, even deflating effect?
3. An adage used to tell us, “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.” Do you think this is true? Why or why not?
4. One of the proverbs included in this “Monday Manna” says “lips that speak knowledge are a rare jewel,” suggesting they are more valuable than precious gems. Do you agree – and if so, in what ways?

#### **NOTE:**

*If you have a Bible and would like to read more, consider the following passages:*

Proverbs 4:24, 10:19-21,32, 12:14,18, 13:3, 15:4, 16:21, 17:27, 18:20

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