



Words are powerful. They evoke emotions, cause strife, or bring calm. Words speak life or death, induce laughter or tears. Without words communication would be hindered, thoughts unexpressed. At Christmas we use words to sing songs, share stories, and send sentiments to family and friends. And, there are certain words and phrases that are even exclusive to the season.

Words like ...

- *Merry Christmas!*
- *Noel!*
- *Happy Holidays!*
- *Tis the season!*

But there are certain words of Christmas that have a greater depth of meaning and express the true heart of the season; yet often they too are spoken as empty clichés and rote-like expressions.

Words like ...

- *The Hope of Christmas*
- *Peace on Earth*
- *Joy to the World*
- *The season of light*
- *Love in manger*
- *Adore Him*

We've all heard these phrases, but can we articulate well what each means? I'd like to infuse life back into these well-rehearsed words and expressions of Christmas in these days, so that the wonder and true meaning of the season will fall fresh like powdered snow over your worn and weary heart, spreading a blanket of hope, rest, and refuge on you each day.

But today, today I invite you to sit. Rest. Relax in the quiet of the morning or rush of the afternoon. Let's sit and ponder these words and phrases of Christmas. And as we do, let's think about the significance of not just these words, but all of our words.

Laced with meaning, permeated with power—words hurt or heal, condemn or build-up, cultivate love or grow hate. Our words matter. And even when we don't mean to splatter condemnation, hurt or hate, what spills out of our mouths reveals the truest condition of our heart.

“For out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks.” Luke 6:45



But Jesus—the Living Word ... Jesus took our empty words, our hateful words, our selfish words, sarcastic, hurtful words and nailed them to a cross.

Think about that thought for a moment. Jesus nailed our empty, hateful, hurtful, words to an old tree on Calvary. That means those words are dead words. They bring death. They kill relationships and unravel lives.

And we don't just speak these dead words to others, we speak them to ourselves at times. We cut ourselves to the core with our own self-destructive, self-talk.

But they are dead words. Jesus paid for them on that tree, so rather than breathing life back into those hate-filled words by speaking them out loud, shouldn't we shut them in the tomb?

But what is the remedy? How can we use our words to bring and build life, love, and even laughter? I think we follow the example of Jesus as we are told in 1 Peter 2.

*We entrust ourselves to the One who judges justly.*

Rather than speak words of hurt, we entrust ourselves to the Lord.

Can you imagine a world in which we speak only life and love?

As you go about your day today, commit to intentionally speak less and listen more. Seek to understand rather than to be understood. And when you do speak, let words of life sing forth from your lips. Allow words of praise and thanks to God and His Son Jesus, ring out. Sing rather than shout. Whisper a prayer rather than lashing out at the one you love. Let your words be few and your actions declare that you, my friend, are a child of the King of kings and Lord of lords—the Living Word who reigns forever.

Let's pray:

Father, we praise You today for the Living Word, Jesus. Thank You that because of Your Son, I can speak words of life and love. Give me wisdom to know when to speak and when to keep silent and help me to entrust myself to the One who judges justly. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Now ... go about your day listening and loving, singing and shouting praise, enjoying the day and embracing each moment.