

SHARON JAYNES

THE  
POWER  
OF A  
WOMAN'S  
WORDS

WORKBOOK AND STUDY GUIDE



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## DIGGING DEEPER

I WAS 17 YEARS OLD. About 25 of my jean-clad friends and I sat crossed-legged on the floor of our Christian coffeehouse called *The Ancient of Days*. Bell-bottom hip-huggers, tie-dyed shirts, long straight hair (on boys and girls), platform shoes...we were a sight. We gathered each week for a Bible study led by a twentysomething fellow from the local college. After singing “Pass It On,” the leader grew very serious, lowered his voice, and posed the question: “Who came here tonight to have...fun?”

My hand was the first to shoot up in the air! As a matter of fact, mine was the *only* hand to shoot up in the air. I sheepishly looked around the room and mumbled, “Wrong answer?” I felt as though I had a neon sign over my head blinking HEATHEN! HEATHEN!

With a tsk-tsk look on his sullen face, the young man, just a few years my senior, announced, “We are not here to have fun! We are here to study God’s Word.”

But what that whippersnapper didn’t understand was, for me, studying God’s Word *was* fun! What could be more exciting than discovering answers to the mysteries of creation, seeing Jesus revealed in the Old Testament, and uncovering truths that can set you free! The Word is a love story, a murder mystery, a history lesson, a letter

from God, and the key to wisdom all wrapped into one. Wow! That is fun. The Bible is filled with treasures waiting to be discovered. It was exciting to me when I was 17, and it is still exciting to me today.

I am delighted you have chosen to dig deeper into God's Word to discover more about the power of a woman's words. And if you are studying this material in a group, I pray that you will...have fun!

### **How to Use This Study**

Except for lesson 1, each lesson is to be completed with the corresponding chapter in *The Power of a Woman's Words*. I realize that some days we have more time to study than others. Rather than break the lesson into days or segments, I have left them intact. However, I encourage you to spread out your study time of each lesson over the course of a week or two weeks.

When God provided manna for the Israelites who were in the desert for 40 years, He gave them a daily supply (Exodus 16:14-24). They could not gather enough for a week and then refrain from gathering the manna on the other days. If they tried it, the manna would spoil. They gathered the life-giving bread from heaven every day (except on the Sabbath).

Likewise, Jesus taught His disciples to pray, "Give us this day our *daily* bread" (Matthew 6:11). God's Word is like God's bread for us, and I believe the best diet is a daily supply. So I encourage you to spend time in God's Word every day. I can hardly wait for the feast! Let's get started.

# LITTLE WORDS, BIG INFLUENCE\*

**Power verse:**

*“Likewise the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts.”*

JAMES 3:5

A WORD HAS BEEN DESCRIBED AS the smallest unit of meaningful linguistic communication. But that little tiny entity has great potential.

1. Read James 3:2-6 and answer the following questions.

How is the tongue like the rudder of a ship?

Who is the ship? (There is not necessarily a right answer.)

On any given day, there are many travelers on our ship (our families and friends) or people we pass on the waterways of life. How do our words carry people along the same route we

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\* Lesson 1 corresponds to chapter 1, “Mixed Messages,” in *The Power of a Woman’s Words*.

are traveling? How do our words maneuver or bump into those that are passing by?

2. Read the following verses and note how words direct the course of a person's life.

Proverbs 12:5-8

Proverbs 12:13-22

Proverbs 22:6

3. If we want to steer our ship in the right direction, which way do we need to turn the rudder? Read 1 Peter 3:10-11 and fill in the blanks.

“For whoever would love life and see good days must keep his \_\_\_\_\_ from evil and his \_\_\_\_\_ from deceitful speech. He must \_\_\_\_\_ from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it.”

This verse tells us that we must turn the steering wheel from \_\_\_\_\_ and steer it toward \_\_\_\_\_.

4. What comes to mind when you hear the word “pursue”?

Is the idea of “pursuing” a passive activity or an active chasing after?

How do we pursue peace with our words?

5. Our words are also like the bit in a horse’s mouth. Read James 3:3-5 once again.

Look up and define “bit.”

Describe in your own words the purpose of a bit in a horse’s mouth.

How are your words like a bit in a horse’s mouth?

6. When a horse is on his way home from being out in the fields and sees the barn in the distance, he may have a tendency to bolt. The horse is comfortable in his stall and wants to go back to what he knows. It takes a practiced rider to keep such a horse under control and walking at a steady pace.

How does this relate to the words we speak?

Who is holding the reins of your bridle?

7. Read the following and note the difference between a woman who is holding the reins and the woman who has handed the reins over to the Holy Spirit.

Romans 8:5-6

Galatians 5:16-23

8. One day my husband, Steve, and I went on a trail ride on vacation. After assessing our experience with horses, they assigned each member of the group a horse that fit his or her ability. Steve was assigned Old Slow Joe. As we plodded down the dusty trail, Steve and Old Joe fell behind. Steve coaxed, prodded, and kicked the ancient steed in the ribs, but to no avail. Old Joe was more interested in munching on the shrubs along the road than keeping up with the gang. Old Joe was set in his ways, and no amount of urging from Steve was going to change him.

Lest you think your horse and pony show is too far gone to change, let me take you to one of the most comical scenes in the Bible. The prophet Balaam was just about to disobey God when He sent a messenger to confront him.

Read Numbers 22:24-31. Through whom did God speak?

Was Balaam surprised that the donkey was speaking?

If God can speak through a donkey, then, sister, He can take control of our tongues and speak through you and me as well! (I told you we were going to have fun.)

9. Read and record Proverbs 25:11.

The NIV translation states, “A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.”

Look up the word “aptly” in a dictionary. What new insight do you gather from the definition?

How important is wisdom in determining if a word would be “aptly” spoken?

10. In contrast to “apples of gold,” the writer of Proverbs paints another picture of words spoken without discretion. Read Proverbs 11:22 and note the difference.

Both verses compare words to precious gold. However, one is a treasure and one is a waste. Which do you want your words to be?

11. If you are doing this study in a group, consider sharing a story from your own life in which the words of a woman changed the course of your life for a day or for a lifetime. If you are doing this study on your own, use the following space to journal your thoughts.

I can't wait to delve into the Bible to see what God has to say about the words we speak. Let's pray before we begin this journey together.

*Dear Father, I know there is great power in the words I speak. I have seen looks of hurt and disappointment when I've spoken a careless word, and I have seen looks of hope and excitement when I have spoken an encouraging word. As I study what Your Word has to say about my words, I pray You will open my eyes to Your power, my heart to Your conviction, my mind to Your truth, and my ways to Your will. In Jesus' name, amen.*