



## *The Gospel and the War of Words*

by Pastor Bruce O'Neil

Words are not neutral. Words don't just sit and have no effect. Words are not like a vapor, once said then they disappear. I have heard people recount the ugly words others have said to them long ago and they weep as if they were said yesterday. In moments like these I am reminded of the effect of scary, painful, lasting, ugly and abusive words that we speak and the damage done to those whom hear these words. Proverbs 12 tells us that words either give life or bring death.

Texts, blogs, Facebook and emails were meant to make connection between human beings easier, but in many ways they have made it easier to say things we would have never said face-to-face. Some of us visit these sites on the Internet like some race fans go to the track to see a wreck. We may have never written such inflammatory comments and left them on a blog for the whole world to read, but we like to read what others have written thinking, "What is the harm?"

Every time we speak derisively or dismissively of one another, and whenever we allow ourselves to be sucked into blogs and forums where words of sarcasm and self-righteousness are the fare, we become less, not more. Every time we don't think about the impact of our words on others and carelessly spew them out, we become less, not more. Words matter and words matter to God; therefore, they should matter to us, too. The very first words ever uttered in this world were spoken by God: *In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth . . . and God said.* When the Apostle John wanted to describe the Incarnation of God he described Jesus as "the Word." *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

We are tricked into thinking that words are not really that important. Paul Tripp tells us that the reason we think this way is because words fill the little mundane moments of our lives. Maybe that's exactly why they are profoundly important. The truth is you will only make

## *EP Homecoming Picnic & Praise Celebration*

by Tom Beall

On Labor Day Sunday, **September 2, 4:30-8:00PM** we will celebrate together what God has done in the past, what he is doing among us now, and the vision He is giving us for the future, and to honor the people who have been faithful to God's call over the past 48 years here at EP Church. The cost is \$5.00 per person or \$25 per family.

Come join us for a great time to:

- Look back on God's vision for the growth of EP Church.
- Hear testimonies of those who followed God's lead in the early days of EP.
- Look forward to God's vision for where He is taking us; God's plan for EP is not yet done.
- Praise our Lord together at an "evening service" of Celebration and Praise led by Praise Band members from the past and present. Sing songs from the different generations of EPers.
- Enjoy a picnic of fried chicken, potato salad, cole slaw, and biscuits. Each family bring a dessert to share.
- Compete in the Dessert Bake-Off Contest – Bake your best dessert and submit it for judging.
- Fellowship – Invite your Bible Study, Small Group, Sunday School class, Ministry team, and friends to join you. If you know folks who have moved out of the area or are currently attending another church, invite them to come back for the homecoming.
- Meet some of the founders and early members of EP.

For more information contact me at ext. 117.



Salt Singers

three or four big decisions in your life. Most of us won't be written up in history books. Several decades after you die, the people you leave behind will struggle to remember the events of your life. You live your life in the utterly mundane. Tripp writes, "If God doesn't rule your mundane, he doesn't rule you, because that is where you live."

The war of words is not a vocabulary problem. We don't need more words or better words. The war of words is not a technique problem. We don't need new and better strategies or new mediums for the delivery of our words. The war of words is a heart problem.

I am convinced that because we have wrongly diagnosed the case of the disease we only treat the symptoms, meanwhile the patient is dying. Oz Guinness once said, "Repentance is the beginning of becoming undeceived." The beginning of repentance is understanding and confessing that my ugly, harmful words are the result of a war in my heart. People are not my problem. Situations are not my problem. Locations are not my problem. My problem is in my heart. It is only when you and I stand before Jesus and humbly say, regardless of the flawed people that we live with and the fallen world that is our address, that you and I are our greatest communication problem, that we become undeceived.

What is this war for the heart? In 2 Corinthians 5:15 Paul is giving a defense of his ministry, and he says, *Jesus died so that those who live would no longer live for themselves*. Sin does something terrible to us. Sin turns us in on ourselves. Sin shrinks our lives. Sin makes us obsessed with our wants, our needs, our feelings, our rights. Tripp says that sin is fundamentally antisocial because sin causes us to love ourselves more than anything else and to care for ourselves more than anything else. It causes us to care more about what we want, when we want it, how we want it, why we want it, and where we want it. Sin shrinks my life to "I want, I want, I want." This is bondage to the self. This is the false gospel of this world and sadly it resonates in our hearts.

And yet, the Bible tells us that we were called to be free. Free from the bondage of our own wants that drive so many of our actions . . . and our words. Paul in Galatians tells us that the entire law is summed up in a single command, *love your neighbor as yourself*. Then Paul gives this warning, *if you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other* (Galatians 5:13-15). Notice the words Paul uses. He doesn't say the relationship will be destroyed; he says people will be destroyed. We can crush the faith of people. We can destroy their hope. We can damage their identity. We can leave a legacy of darkness in the heart of others because of the evil of the communication that marked the relationship. What we say always produces some kind of harvest. What is the lasting legacy of our words?

It is important that we get this truth, because it is only when we love God above all else that we will love others more. It is only when God is in the rightful place in one's life that we will treat others with the love we have received from him. Here is the point: we don't first fix word problems horizontally, we first fix them vertically.

We do not define love by a set of abstract concepts. Love is defined by an event, and that event is the cross where Jesus Christ died. God calls us to a love that is defined and shaped by the cross. *Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends* (John 15:13). What is love? Love is willing to self-sacrifice for the redemptive good of another that doesn't demand reciprocation or that the person being loved is deserving. That is the love that took Christ to the cross of his death for our redemption. When my heart is filled with gratitude for what Christ did for me on the cross, motivated by his love for me, and when this love becomes my deepest joy and my most powerful motivation—it is the thing that gets me up in the morning and makes me rest at night—I will then look for opportunities to speak words of life and say no to words that harm. Words of love and grace flow out of a heart that is ruled by this kind of love.

The runners took their mark, got set and WENT! All 510 athletes and 250 coaches during the week of June 25-29! This week was a high-energy time where the athletes were encouraged to join God's Team and train to run the life-long and challenging Christian Marathon. Our Mission Project Goal was to help Rebecca Putnam and the Little Hands of Hope mission buy a bus to pick up children all over the area around Manguera, El Salvador. The total given was \$2582. We were able to webcam over to Rebecca and the kids. See part of our conversation below. With grateful hearts to all of the staff and volunteers! Amy Marshall, Tamar Cooper, Linda Cate



**EP:** We just announced that we raised \$2582! **Rebecca:** Awesome! Thank you all so much! **EP:** Is there anything you want us to share this evening? **Rebecca:** We really appreciate your prayers and support. The kids are so excited that they saw you all. Please pray for our health. A lot of the kids are sick this week and always pray that God will touch these children's hearts with his love.

## ACTS

by Theresa Doolan



ACTS, Annapolis Classical Tutorial Service, is still accepting applications for the upcoming school year for grades 2-10. ACTS assists homeschooling families in the classical Christian education of their children through twice-weekly classes and provides weekly lesson plans for parents to follow in teaching the subjects at home. Please visit our website at [http://www.edline.net/pages/Annapolis\\_Classical\\_Tutorial](http://www.edline.net/pages/Annapolis_Classical_Tutorial) for more details, or leave a message at 410-268-8091 Ext. 129, or email us at [actsinquiries@gmail.com](mailto:actsinquiries@gmail.com). We look forward to meeting you!

## Library Lines: Three Messages for You

by Ruth Burge

1. We have recently added **new material** in all our collections. Stop in at the library and see what books, CD's, or DVD's might be a blessing to you and your family. No matter what your reading interest is or where you are in your walk with the Lord, we have something for you.
2. We recently did an **inventory** of the library. A large number of items were missing. This is due to the fact that a number of people are taking material without properly checking it out. Some of this will eventually be returned, but some will get lost on shelves or in piles somewhere, and since we don't have a record of who has it, we won't be able to remind you to return it to the library. Using material this way also deprives us of the helpful information about what gets checked out and how much material gets checked out. If the computer check-out intimidates you, or for some reason the computer is not working, use the clip board on the desk and write your name and the EP barcode of the material you are checking out. We will check it out online later.
3. **Spread the word** about the library. We have a great collection of material, including classics and the newest releases. Many don't know about the library. When you use it, let others know. Like us on facebook: EP Annapolis Church Library. Go to that page and write a short book review there. Write a short review (paragraph) and we will send it out via e-mail.

The Library can be accessed almost any time during the week, but there are librarians available to assist you on Sunday morning before and after all services. The Library is located in the Library/Boardroom in the corner of the hall behind the Sanctuary between the Women's Ministry Office and the Pastors' Offices. You can browse our catalogue from your home computer by visiting the library website at [www.libraryworld.net/opac](http://www.libraryworld.net/opac). The library name is EPA Church Library, select the guest option, and no password is needed. Then search by keyword, title, author, or subject. If you have any questions please contact me at [riburge@epannapolis.org](mailto:riburge@epannapolis.org).

<b>Wednesday, August 1</b> 6:00 AM Men's Bible Study 9:00 AM Body & Soul 7:00 PM Prayer Meeting Men's Bible Study	<b>9:00 AM Terrific Tuesdays</b> <b>Wednesday, August 8</b> 6:00 AM Men's Bible Study 9:00 AM Body & Soul 7:00 PM Prayer Meeting Men's Bible Study	7:00 PM Prayer Meeting Men's Bible Study <b>Thursday, August 16</b> 7:00 AM Men's Bible Study 9:00 AM Women's Bible Study <b>Friday, August 17</b> 9:00 AM Men's Bible Study <b>Saturday, August 18</b> 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study	9:00 AM Women's Bible Study <b>Friday, August 24</b> 9:00 AM Men's Bible Study <b>Saturday, August 25</b> 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study
<b>Thursday, August 2</b> 7:00 AM Men's Bible Study 9:00 AM Women's Bible Study <b>Friday, August 3</b> 9:00 AM Men's Bible Study <b>Saturday, August 4</b> 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study	<b>Thursday, August 9</b> 7:00 AM Men's Bible Study 9:00 AM Women's Bible Study <b>Friday, August 10</b> 9:00 AM Men's Bible Study <b>Saturday, August 11</b> 7:30 AM Men's Bible Study	<b>Sunday, August 19</b> 8:00 AM Worship (Chapel) 9:15 AM Worship (Sanctuary) 11:00 AM Worship (Sanctuary) 5:00 PM Worship Service with Communion (Chapel) <b>Monday, August 20</b> 7:30 PM Men's Bible Study <b>Wednesday, August 22</b> 6:00 AM Men's Bible Study 9:00 AM Body & Soul 7:00 PM Prayer Meeting Men's Bible Study <b>Thursday, August 23</b> 7:00 AM Men's Bible Study	<b>Sunday, August 26</b> 8:00 AM Worship (Chapel) 9:15 AM Worship (Sanctuary) 11:00 AM Worship (Sanctuary) 5:00 PM Worship Service with Communion (Chapel) <b>Monday, August 27</b> 7:30 PM Men's Bible Study <b>Wednesday, August 29</b> 6:00 AM Men's Bible Study 9:00 AM Body & Soul 7:00 PM Prayer Meeting Men's Bible Study <b>Thursday, August 30</b> 7:00 AM Men's Bible Study 9:00 AM Women's Bible Study <b>Friday, August 31</b> 9:00 AM Men's Bible Study
<b>Sunday, August 5</b> 8:00 AM Worship with Communion (Chapel) 9:15 AM Worship with Communion (Sanctuary) 11:00 AM Worship with Communion (Sanctuary) 5:00 PM Worship Service with Communion (Chapel) <b>Monday, August 6</b> 7:30 PM Men's Bible Study <b>Tuesday, August 7</b>	<b>Sunday, August 12</b> 8:00 AM Worship (Chapel) 9:15 AM Worship (Sanctuary) 11:00 AM Worship (Sanctuary) 5:00 PM Worship Service with Communion (Chapel) <b>Monday, August 13</b> 7:30 PM Men's Bible Study <b>Wednesday, August 15</b> 6:00 AM Men's Bible Study 9:00 AM Body & Soul		

Events that are open to the congregation to join at anytime are listed above. For a list of weekly Small Groups, Bible Studies, and Sunday School classes, call the Church Office or check the brochure rack in the Narthex .

sign-up at [www.epannapolis.org](http://www.epannapolis.org).  
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