

30 March 2014 Service : Mothering Sunday

Talk 1 : Destroy

Firstly, I'd like to say : being destructive is very easy. It is easily done without us even realising it. I hope to explain how we can be destructive in this talk – so I'm afraid this part will be focussing on some of the negative stuff so that we can hopefully see what we need to avoid doing. This is not an exhaustive list – just some of the ones I believe are key.

I'm going to be dipping in and out of the bible to support what I believe God wants us to hear this morning.

1. The tongue
2. Our attitude/behaviour
3. Misleading others with false teaching

1. The tongue : yes - that little waggly thing in your mouth can cause all sorts of problems.

[Get everyone to stick their tongue out!]

Psalm 57 v 4 tongues – sharp swords – dangerous.

James 1:19 This should be everyone's manifesto. I love James - a no-nonsense approach.

James 1:26

James 3:1-**9** Take note of v9. When we curse man – we curse God.

Proverbs 11:9a – see, we can destroy our neighbour by our mouth.

Ecclesiastes 9:18 – one sinner destroys much good. 1 person can do a lot of devastating.

1 Cor 3:17 Destruction of a church (caused by factions and quarrels, again the tongue coming into play). There are very serious consequences.

The Tongue : What we say reveals what is in our hearts. It is an outpouring of what is inside us. Good or bad. D.Clegg

I once knew of a church member say some pretty offensive things in a shop not realising that they were being overheard by someone working in the shop who goes to the same church! Pretty embarrassing hey? I think we are all capable of something similar. I think sometimes our language/attitude at work doesn't always match up to how we behave outwardly when we go to church on Sunday.

Our tongue can be literally like a flaming dart that can strike another person. We only have to say something negative about someone to someone else and the potential for a ravaging fire has started and that person can be destroyed. Have you ever gossiped to someone at work about someone else? Said something that wasn't kind?

Someone once said "We spend the first few years of our life learning to talk and the rest learning to shut up." I couldn't agree more.

As a parent we also have to be careful what we say to children: We should be setting a good example as they will copy what they see.

2. Our attitude/behaviour

Good Samaritan in bible – The two people you would have thought should have helped the person, who had been attacked don't, and the one person you don't expect to help does!

Ignoring a person or choosing to walk on the other side can be done without even realising it – it can be very subtle. We often exclude people who may be different to us or "may not meet our standards or expectations". We don't allow them to join in or have a say, we can form cliques, even in church dare I say it? "There's no way you're going to join our club." We can simply choose to ignore someone by avoiding them or not listening to them. We can also have a condescending attitude to others, thinking we are better than them.

I work in a school for autistic young people and many, by the very nature of their behaviour (which they can't help) often exclude themselves from society. Perhaps due to habits/behaviour we would struggle to accept.

Their life chances and opportunities are severely limited. They are very unlikely to be able to do the things that ordinary children or young people take for granted.

They have just as much right to a 'normal life' as the rest of us!

It is very easy to marginalise and exclude and limit others by our attitudes and behaviours.

God loves everyone equally: 1 Cor 12 : 12 – 26

3. Misleading others with false teaching.

2 Peter 2v1-3 : false teaching – damage to the church. Introducing thoughts that are not of God or contradict what the bible actually says. The church must guard against such things. This is a very serious matter, with serious consequences.

Churches can be destroyed by false teaching. This goes on today!

1 John 4:1-3 We need to test that what someone says stands up to the bible. God never contradicts himself!

So to sum up, we have talked about the destructive forces that can come from:-

1. Our tongue
2. Our attitude>behaviour
3. Misleading others with false teaching

Talk 2 Build

We are now going to look at the positive aspect of building.

Qn: Do you want to build? [show of hands] Who likes building/making things?

General observation : Building takes effort. A deliberate choice or act of the will.

I don't know about you, but I want to be a builder. I hope I am.

When we build others, we build up the church.

I'm going to talk about 3 ways to build people:

1. Forgive them – results in release
2. Encourage them – spurs people on
3. Love them – builds and nurtures people

1. Forgiveness

First observation : just say the word: forgiveness. Isn't this the most beautiful word! I think 80% of the world problems would come to an abrupt end if people simply did this!

1 Peter 4v7-11 : using gifts to serve others : Is this not a way of building!!!

Verse 8 love covers: love forgives again and again and again – covering lots of sins.

Matthew 18:21-22 : 70-7 times : times without end. He who has been forgiven much (we all have! In case you think this isn't you) must forgive others – it is a commandment not an option.

1 Corinthians 13:4-5 famous speech, often at weddings : love keeps no records of wrongs, i.e. it forgives!

Eph 4:32 forgiving one-another.

Forgiveness – have you ever experienced a lack of forgiveness from someone else. What does it feel like? [wait for response] It makes me feel trapped in a jail.

Forgiveness allows people to move on. It allows them to be free.

2. Encouragement

I think this is one of the most special words!

A good mother (and father!) encourages us when we are growing up. Or should do!

When young child learning to swim:

What would you think if someone said this to a child:

“You are doing OK, but not good enough yet!”

Vs.

“You are doing wonderful! Keep going! I wish I was as good as you!”

Which would you prefer? The first or the second? Pretty obvious isn't it!?

Romans 12 v 1-8 V3 a superior attitude is out. You can't encourage others when you have a superior attitude! It's just not possible – you won't do it! V8 gift of encouragement.

Hebrews 10 v25 Let us encourage 1 another! We all need it don't we ??

Guy called Barnabas in bible – friend of Paul's. “Barnabas” = Son of encouragement!

What a beautiful name! He quite literally built up Paul + Church.

Acts 4:36,37 positive action / generosity

Acts 13:1-4, 9:26-27, 11:22-26

Here was a person making a difference! Here was an encourager. An encourager can make a difference!

We are here to build one-another up. We must build our children up by encouraging and nurturing them.

Someone once said, and I'll paraphrase it, "It's easier to build a child than to fix an adult."

Not to say we shouldn't fix adults, but if we build children then we may not have to fix them when they are older.

Mothers (+ fathers) are in a perfect place to build our children. They also need support and encouragement from other family members.

Mothers – never underestimate your influence on your children!

3. Love them – builds and nurtures people

1 John 3: 11-24 Love one-another v18 : action and truth. We need to demonstrate our love to others with action: actually taking the time to listen to people when they want to talk, rather than pretending to be interested. Willing to go round and help people when we don't feel like it. The list goes on . . . and it is very tough!

So we have talked about:

1. Forgive them – results in release
2. Encourage them – spurs people on
3. Love them – builds and nurtures people

Let us exercise these actions more and more as we move forward.