

The Tongue: Reap the Power of Blessing

Many years ago when my daughter, Karen, was a little girl, we had a yearly problem. Every summer Karen would get a bee sting just before we went on vacation so she could not wear her shoes due to the swelling. Every summer we would say, "Next week is vacation, and she will get a bee sting and not be able to wear her shoes."

Sure enough, that was exactly what happened.

After three years of having our negative words fulfilled, my husband, George, and I heard a sermon on angels. The minister who preached it said that each one of us has a guardian angel. About the same time George's aunt told us, "You are putting a curse on Karen with your mouth. You need to speak positively about your child."

We repented and asked God to forgive us for putting "word curses" on her. From that point on, George and I changed what we were saying. We blessed Karen with our words and spoke encouragement to her. As we prayed for her and spoke positive things over her, our words dispersed ministering angels to look out for her, and she never had another bee sting.

In addition to receiving bee stings, Karen had had her arm broken two or three times prior to our speaking blessings over her. But after we began to bless her, she never again had a broken bone.

We still use the same principle of blessing we did when Karen was little, although she is grown now and has four children of her own. And there is power in it!

Some time back, Karen's husband, Kevin, was barely making enough money to feed their family. They were having a

difficult time financially.

Before she had children, Karen had been a manager in a large corporation and had made good money. But afterward, she determined not to go outside the home and work. She felt in her heart that she should stay home and raise the children God had given her.

But there was not enough money to make her heart decision work. So God gave her the idea to start keeping children while other mothers worked. However, the home they were in was much too small.

Being human—and typical parents—George and I often made negative comments about the way Karen and Kevin were managing their money—until God reminded us of the power of blessing. Then whenever we had a meal we would bow our head, pray over the food and ask God to bless our daughter and her family. Less than two months after we began doing that daily, Kevin got a job paying him three times what he had been making, and they were able to buy a larger home.

Most of us have never had a father's blessing, yet, as the Scriptures show; there is power in receiving one. When George and I ministered together, I would often ask him to come up and pronounce a father's blessing over anyone there that had never been blessed by his or her earthly father. It is amazing to hear the testimonies later of how God reversed the curse when the blessing was released on them.

George began with the "Father's Blessing" from Gen. 49:25: *"because of the God of your father who will help you, and by the Almighty who will bless you with blessings from heaven above, blessings from the deep that lies beneath, the blessings of the breasts and the womb."*

Then we added our own words of blessing taken from Deut. 28:1-14: "Blessings of health in your physical body. Blessings of long life as you continue to serve the Lord your God.

Blessings of peace and happiness for you and your entire family. You will be blessed as you go in and as you go out. And all that your hand touches will prosper. I proclaim this father's blessing on you this day in the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Ghost."

Before the start of a New Year, I asked God to give us a key to blessing others. Then a friend of mine gave me a book called *The Prayer of Jabez*. I then began praying this prayer daily for my household and me.

It comes from 1 Chronicles 4:9-10, which contains a powerful message: "Now Jabez was more honorable than his brothers, and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, 'Because I bore *him* in hardship.' Then Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, 'Oh, that You would indeed bless me and enlarge my territory, that Your hand might be with me, and that You would keep *me* from evil, that *it* may not bring me hardship!' So God granted what he asked."

Jabez chose not to accept the fact that his name meant pain. He asked God His Father to reverse the curse that his mother had put on him when she named him, and God answered his prayer.

God is no respecter of persons. What He did for Jabez He will do for anyone who asks. Why not resolve to pray this prayer every day in 2016?

Start this New Year declaring what God says over your life and family in this season. Think about what your home would be like if you caused no pain to anyone in your family the entire year! While you are asking God to bless you, make a habit of speaking blessings over others too, as George and I have learned to do. You may be surprised by the power of your words to bring life (Prov. 18:21).

Prayer Power for the Week of Jan. 3, 2016

This week heed the admonition to declare blessings over yourself, family and loved ones on a daily basis. Thank the Lord for His faithfulness through the years and let Him know you trust Him in all things going forward this year. Remember those who have suffered great loss in this season through inclement weather, crime, poverty and war. Ask the Lord to connect you with those of like mind to pray and pool your resources to be a blessing to those desperately in need.

Pray for Israel, the persecuted church and those who rule over us. (Prov. 18:21; Deut. 28:1-14).