



The following document is a rough copy of Pastor Drost's sermon  
notes from March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020

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**We are so thankful that we can worship together, even when we can't gather together.**

- Did you know that for the first two or three hundred years the Church did not have any buildings?
- They mainly gathered in homes, in upper rooms, in fields or (because of persecution) they had to meet in small groups hiding underground in catacombs.
- The CHURCH IS A PEOPLE, NOT A PLACE.
- **We thank God for this building** where we can meet in person and worship together... **BUT THIS IS NOT THE CHURCH! YOU ARE THE CHURCH! WE ARE THE CHURCH!** And we are still gathering together this morning, in our homes, in our cars, worshipping God together. **THE CHURCH!**

✚ The CHURCH is way stronger than this COVID-19 virus.

They are planning on having a vaccine within a year that will stop this virus. But the Kingdom of Darkness has been trying to kill the CHURCH for 2000 years and we just keep spreading!

✚ As a pastor, I am soooo proud of our church.

✚ We have been doing a sermon series here at Smythe Street Church called **the Power of Confession.**

The Bible says that...

**“Death and life are in the power of the tongue.” Proverbs 18:21a (NKJV)**

Very often I hear this verse quoted wrong! Very often people quote this verse as “Life and death are in the power of the tongue” but that’s not what it says. It says, **“Death and life are in the power of the tongue.”**

Why do I think the order is important?

1) Because **unguarded**, our first nature (our default) is to speak words that bring death to a situation.

- negative words rather than **positive** words
- critical words rather than **encouraging** words
- reactive words (hasty responses) rather than **patient** words

Our words then destroy relationships!

Our words then break up an important friendship.

Words that bring LIFE require more **intentional EFFORT!**

2) The second reason that I **believe the order is important is...**

Even when we fail with our words or we hurt with our tongue, we are called by this verse to heal (to mend) those situations with WORDS THAT BRING LIFE.

Kind words, patient words, loving words, complimentary words, “I’m sorry” words. **WORDS THAT BRING LIFE!**

Those are the words that can heal relationships!

Those are the words that can mend a broken friendship!



Those are the words that can restore our relationship with God.

**“Death and life are in the power of the tongue”**

If you CONFESS with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, **you will be saved**. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. Romans 10:9-10 (NIV)

- When our words CONFESS what is in line with our heart, it brings **healing, salvation** and **LIFE!**
- **It is with your mouth that you CONFESS and are saved!**
- **What is your mouth CONFESSING to God?**  
**Are you CONFESSING Him as your Lord?**

**“Death and life are in the power of the tongue”**

Forgiveness is in the power of the tongue!

**“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we CONFESS our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”** 1 John 1:8–9 (NKIV)

Confession is liberating! Confession brings freedom!

**Confession sets us free from the POWER and grip of SIN!** Confession is POWERFUL!

✚ In 2014, **HBO** premiered a TV crime drama called **True Detective**. In season one, detective Rust Cohle is the key interrogator for the department, capable of obtaining confessions from most criminals. When asked how he does it, he explains that his method is rooted in a philosophy about human nature. And I quote: **“Everybody knows there’s something wrong with them. They just don’t know what it is. Everybody wants confession; everybody wants some cathartic narrative for it. The guilty especially. And everybody’s guilty.”**

In real life, police know that that statement isn’t completely true! “Everyone” doesn’t know or recognise they are wrong. Not “everyone” wants to confess or feels guilt. Sociopaths don’t! Narcissists don’t!

There are **evil people**; people who are very twisted and very sick!

But **IF** you are wanting to be an emotionally healthy person, being willing to face your wrongs, CONFESS your sins, is a **MUST!** **IF** you want God’s forgiveness, CONFESSION is a **MUST!**

It’s right in **the Lord’s Prayer**: “And forgive us our trespasses”

**It’s the Prayer of CONFESSION!** It’s cathartic. It’s liberating! **It frees us!**

✚ One of my favourite books in the Old Testament is Nehemiah.

- Jerusalem had been conquered and the Jewish people had been taken as slaves.
- Nehemiah was a Jewish descendant of these slaves and he was the cup bearer of the Persian King Artaxerxes.
- Some of his brothers arrived with men with news that Jerusalem was in ruins and the people there were suffering great distress.
- When he heard the terrible news, this is what he did...

“When I heard these words, I sat down and wept and mourned for days; and I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven.” Nehemiah 1:4

We are in a very stressful situation. This CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC has affected close to 200 countries, infected over 650,000 people and caused over 30,000 deaths in the world.

Over 50 deaths in Canada in the past month. That’s a dad, a mom, a grandma, a grandpa, a baby, a husband, a wife... put a face on that!

**If there ever was a time for us to humble ourselves and pray, fast and call on God, this is it!**

Here is how Nehemiah prayed...

“I said, “I beseech You, O LORD God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who preserves the covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments, let Your ear now be attentive and Your eyes open to hear the prayer of Your servant which I am praying before You now, day and night...”

Today, Christians all over the world, including Christians from different church backgrounds and denominations, Catholics, Anglicans, Protestants, Evangelicals, are PRAYING & FASTING regarding this COVID-19 pandemic... Just like Nehemiah!

Let Your ear now be attentive and Your eyes open to hear the prayer of Your servant which I am praying before You now, on behalf of the sons of Israel Your servants, confessing the sins of the sons of Israel which we have sinned against You; I and my father’s house have sinned. “We have acted very corruptly against You and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the ordinances which You commanded Your servant Moses.” Nehemiah 1:5–7 (NASB95)

**Nehemiah prayed a prayer of CONFESSION!**

CONFESSION is powerful! Again, Jesus taught us to pray... “And forgive US OUR trespasses”

Now before you start concluding that I’m suggesting that this COVID-19 virus is caused by our sins let me explain... A couple of Sundays ago I shared with our leaders a passage from John 9. It says...

“As Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him.” John 9:1–3

- When a tragedy happens, people start drawing conclusions, laying blame (“God’s punishing us, someone sinned” ...”)
- But often we miss the real point: “This is a God opportunity! Am opportunity for God to reveal HIMSELF in us and to the world”.

**Illustration:** A few years ago, I had a hip operation. For almost two years before, that I walked with a limp and experienced constant chronic pain.

I don’t think for a moment that God was punishing me, but I do know this... that limp sure taught me some very important spiritual lessons:



- I started to realise that I was way less invincible. I had to say something I never had to say before: *I had to admit I could not do certain things! I had to ask for help!*
- It humbled me! I needed help from others!

**It seems amazing to me that in a few short weeks, a little bug, a little virus, has been able to cripple our entire world!**

Proud powerful countries, filled with money, wealth, advanced technology. Proud countries like Italy, Spain, Germany, England, Canada and the BIG strong EMPIRE called USA (“Making America great again”)... crippled by one little virus!

- Wall street and the stock market at an all-time low.
- Huge sports events shut down.
- Huge music concerts cancelled.
- Schools closed.
- Thousands of world-famous restaurants closed.
- Casinos closed.
- Disney Parks closed.
- Our borders closed.
- Hollywood and its movie entertainment paralysed.
- The Summer Olympics postponed.

**And with all our amazing intelligence, technical genius and human advancement no clear solution in sight! The giants that shape our society are limping!**

This worldwide pandemic, this global crisis is an opportunity for us (starting with you and me), the CHURCH, for our nation of CANADA, for the nations of the world, to humble ourselves and evaluate where we are spiritually.  
Where we are heading to as a nation, and humble ourselves and CONFESS our need of God!

**Jesus talked about those who build their house on the sand and those who build their house on the ROCK. Where is your hope? What is your life built on?**

- Nehemiah prayed to God the prayer of CONFESSIOIN and God answered his prayer and God opened a way and Jerusalem was restored and their walls rebuilt.

**I’m asking you to join your brothers and sisters all over the world in prayer for this pandemic crisis...**

- I’m asking you to pray right now with me (with your families, with your spouse).
- I’m inviting you as a symbol of our prayer, to light a candle together with me... Once we light our candle **we are going to observe a moment of silence** In memory of those who have died so far from this virus... families that cannot have funerals... Dads, moms, grandmas, grandpas, babies, husbands, wives... put a face on it!

**Please join me in praying a prayer of CONFESSIOIN for this pandemic (Invite you to kneel)**

