**Psalms 33:1-22** Shout for joy in the Lord, O you righteous! Praise befits the upright. **2** Give thanks to the Lord with the lyre; make melody to him with the harp of ten strings! **3** Sing to him a new song; play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts. **4** For the word of the Lord is upright, and all his work is done in faithfulness. **5** He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the steadfast love of the Lord. **6** By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host. **7** He gathers the waters of the sea as a heap; he puts the deeps in storehouses. **8** Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him! **9** For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm. **10** The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; he frustrates the plans of the peoples. **11**  The counsel of the Lord stands forever, the plans of his heart to all generations. **12**  Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people whom he has chosen as his heritage! **13** The Lord looks down from heaven; he sees all the children of man; **14** from where he sits enthroned he looks out on all the inhabitants of the earth, **15** he who fashions the hearts of them all and observes all their deeds. **16**  The king is not saved by his great army; a warrior is not delivered by his great strength. **17**  The war horse is a false hope for salvation, and by its great might it cannot rescue. **18** Behold, the eye of the Lord is on those who fear him, on those who hope in his steadfast love, **19** that he may deliver their soul from death and keep them alive in famine. **20** Our soul waits for the Lord; he is our help and our shield. **21** For our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his holy name. **22** Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us, even as we hope in you.

**Isaiah 49:1-6** Listen to me, O coastlands, and give attention, you peoples from afar. The Lord called me from the womb, from the body of my mother he named my name. **2**  He made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me a polished arrow; in his quiver he hid me away. **3** And he said to me, “You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified.” **4**  But I said, “I have labored in vain; I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity; yet surely my right is with the Lord, and my recompense with my God.” **5**  And now the Lord says, he who formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him; and that Israel might be gathered to him— for I am honored in the eyes of the Lord, and my God has become my strength— **6** he says: “It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”

**Hebrews 4:1-12** Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. **2** For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened. **3** For we who have believed enter that rest, as he has said, “As I swore in my wrath, ‘They shall not enter my rest,’ ” although his works were finished from the foundation of the world. **4** For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: “And God rested on the seventh day from all his works.” **5** And again in this passage he said, “They shall not enter my rest.” **6** Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience, **7** again he appoints a certain day, “Today,” saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted, “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.” **8** For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. **9** So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, **10** for whoever has entered God’s rest has also rested from his works as God did from his. **11** Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. **12** For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

**Matthew 8:23-27** And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. **24** And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. **25** And they went and woke him, saying, “Save us, Lord; we are perishing.” **26** And he said to them, “Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?” Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. **27** And the men marveled, saying, “What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?”

In the name of Jesus. Amen. In an age of rapid communication, how easy is it to overlook the power of words. For all the ways we can say things by posting it on Facebook, with a text message, a phone call, or even a live video chat. What may seem small and trivial might very well have a lasting impact. People tend to fall into the trap today of saying whatever they want just because the technology allows us to do it. Yet, marriages, jobs, friendships, citizenship, learning, parenting and other ways we relate to each other constantly “sink or swim” on what we say.

If words matter, then how much more is the Lord’s Servant. This Servant says, “He made my mouth like a sharp sword.” To be like “a sharp sword” meant His Word would deliver. Of course, the exiles of Israel saw another kind of deliverance by King Cyrus of Persia. He waged war with his weapons against Babylon. Earthly salvation by the most advanced army or the largest bank account made God’s prophetic Word seem minor. Yet, the Psalmist reminds us, “The king is not saved by his great army; a warrior is not delivered by his great strength… Behold, the eye of the Lord is on those who fear him, on those who hope in his steadfast love…” (Psalms 33:16, 18).

The power of God’s Word is no small glory. What God does happens by what He says. As Creator He says, “Let there be light” and there was light. King Solomon knew how Israel built up the kingdom in His time saying, “Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him” (Proverbs 30:5). Isaiah proclaimed what would last, “The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever” (Isaiah 40:8). The Servant God sends with a “sharp sword” would have Words that create and save life. If people cling to what great leaders say and we stop at signs of men that say, “Stop.” What God says surpasses all this for His Word is unhindered by sin, death, and the powers of the Devil.

Isaiah spoke about God’s Servant, but none paid attention until Israel went into exile a couple of hundred years later. By then, they were in need of saving since their own hand caused the destruction. The Lord declared, “For I knew that you would surely deal treacherously, and that from before birth you were called a rebel” (Isaiah 48:8). Having faced defeat by Babylon, there were no signs of hope left. Every option was off the table. Every door closed in their face. Every glory faded in exile. The Servant Isaiah spoke of seemed farfetched.

If you have ever felt the pain of divorce tearing apart what is good, you know this chaos. If you have ever been sinned against with hurt that seem like it will never end, you lived this nightmare. If you have ever had guilt from the past pounding down on your life, you have sensed this panic. If you have ever seen the chains of favorite sins pull you back, you recognize this helplessness. The disciples had this kind of desperation questioning if Jesus cared while in that boat.

Despair turned the exiles of Israel to glory over the false god of Babylon. They went after quick fixes rather than sticking to the truth. Their desire was for the moment and not God’s promise to save. Despair seeks to rob us of God and His Word. Agony and loss, strife and sadness turn us often to the cheap and trivial. The writer from Hebrews warns, “For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened.” We are no better off than the exiles many times figuring God is far from our lives.

The Lord built His Servant to speak salvation. Better than rebellious people of Israel God said of Him, “You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified.” The Father in heaven spoke such words at Jesus’ baptism proclaiming, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:17). Jesus is the true servant of the Word for He is the Word become flesh. He says, “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life” (John 5:24).

Beyond speaking against Satan, calming storms, healing the sick, and feeding thousands, Jesus took His Word to the cross. Nothing is cheap or trivial to Him. He is the Servant that gave up His life in every way. This plan of God has disrupted our sinful world in order to save it. Isaiah declares “Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities” (Isaiah 53:11). All despair fell on Jesus, but even after belittlement, abuse, nakedness, whipping, nails and desertion. This Servant turns to say one last word, “It is finished.”

Out of the cross sharp words come from Jesus. It must be a love that lasts, forgiveness that is absolute, and justification that has power. God has done this for all in Christ proclaiming, “I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.” By water, bread and wine a mighty Servant works by the power of His Word. To the defeated, He speaks good news to eat and drink of His sacrifice. To the barren, He speaks the promise of life in His Name. To the lonely, He speaks comfort with Him by baptism. To those battling sin, facing the reality of death, or feeling helpless in life, He speaks. Oh, this Servant Jesus has sharp words. May we not despair or rage in doubt, but turn to Him and say, “Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us, even as we hope in you.” Amen. In the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.