

## WORD POWER

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One of the lessons of the book of Genesis is that people organize themselves into groups based on affinity. The greatest apparent point affinity among men is language. Nations are born out of the fact of a common language. Later in the Biblical text nations come to be known by the language they speak. The language we speak is a fundamental building block in the formation of society. The body politic is derivative of the people's use of language.

Americans have a way of understanding ideas that is held (or at least has been held until recently) by most people in the society. For example, we speak of freedom and independence. We know what we mean by these words. Other people use them differently. Dictators use the same words that are used by people in free societies. This contention is proved by the reading of Lenin and Hitler, to mention only two.

So, we see that language is strong enough a power to form nations. But the student of the Bible knows that it can do more than this. The proper use of language can save souls. We quote Romans 10:17 all the time: *"So then faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God."* The danger in being so familiar with a passage is that we overlook its power and profundity. Faith is essential if one is to ever to come to God (Hebrews 11:6). This text tells us that this required faith comes from the Word of God. Now, this truth is embodied in words, the very things that are the components of language. Language can make nations and some of them free. More importantly, language can make souls free from sin.

We remember Paul from Romans 1:16: *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth..."* Language may be used for various ends. Its best use is as the gospel of Christ. The next best use of language is the presentation of the gospel to all who need to hear it. Preaching the gospel is the most significant use of language. If you do not think so, listen to Paul here: *"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" and here "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God"* (1 Corinthians 1:18, 23-24).

Words have many powers. The greatest power of words is to save the souls of the lost. We must both know and share these words.

*Bill Irby*