



## Are You Guilty of Assault?

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*"Reckless words pierce like a sword." [Proverbs 12:18](#)*

*"With his mouth the godless destroys his neighbor." [Proverbs 11:9](#)*

*"The tongue has the power of life and death." [Proverbs 18:21](#)*

Growing up we all heard the nursery rhyme sticks and stones will break our bones but words will never hurt us. It is a lie. The wounds may be invisible, but our words are powerful. They can cause deep injury and often leave permanent scars to those we hurt.

When we're angry, the Bible warns us to be very careful ([Proverbs 4:4](#)). It's at this time we feel most tempted to use our words as weapons. Don't do it. You can't delete your words once they've left your mouth and injured someone.

But let's look at what our words show us about our own heart. Jesus tells us "for out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks" ([Luke 6:45](#)). What comes up and out of our mouth reveals what's in our heart. When I yell at my child or my husband, for example, my words often expose my demanding, selfish and prideful heart. I want my way. Now! And I use my words and voice tone to get it. Or, when I think I'm right and the other person is wrong, I can swiftly demean and demoralize someone with a few choice phrases.

The Bible commands us not to murder, but Jesus warns us that an angry heart with a reckless tongue can do much damage ([Matthew 5:21-22](#)). We've all experienced the wounds of an undisciplined tongue.

Decide today that you will no longer use your words as a weapon to hurt others. Instead, use the enormous power of what you say to someone to encourage, uplift, instruct and love him or her. Paul tells us that "love does no harm to its neighbor" ([Romans 13:10](#)).

Is there anyone you need to ask forgiveness for your hurtful words? Do it today.