

RUMOR ALLEGE  
SLANDER UNDERSTAND SAY  
CONVERSE DECIDE RECALL INTRIGUE PROCLAIM  
CHITCHAT WHISPER VOCALIZE CHAT SHOUT HEAR

# THE POWER OF WORDS: TALKING & LISTENING

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DISCOURSE UTTER DECLARE MURMUR EXPRESS  
GOSSIP LISTEN VERBALIZE CHATTERBOX MUTTER  
CONVEY SECRET DISCUSS ARTICULATE



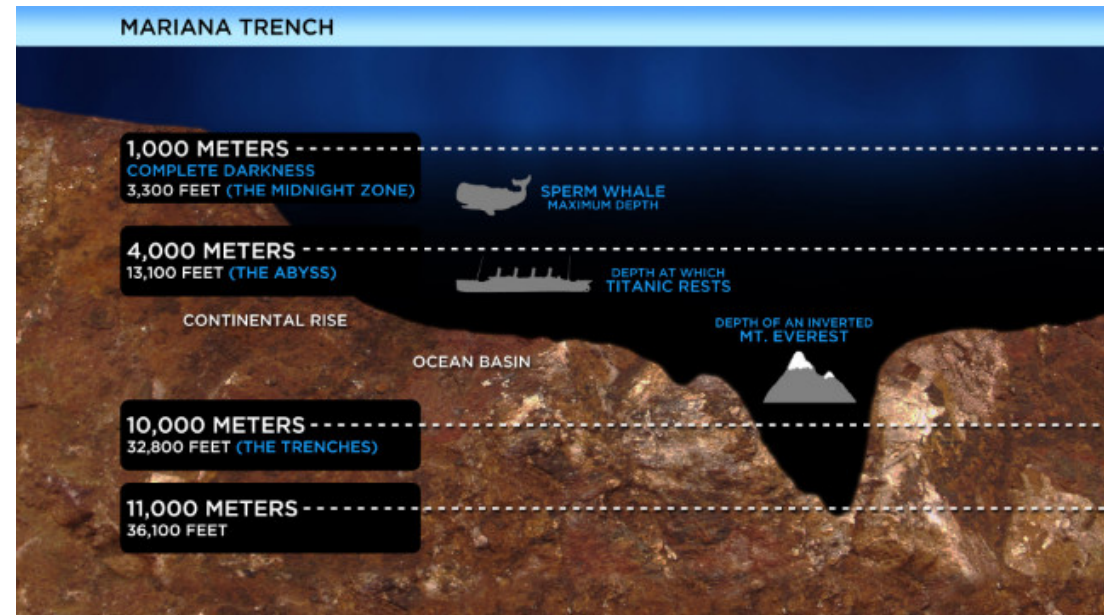
*Or dive into the bottom of the deep,  
Where fathom-line could never touch the ground.*

- William Shakespeare, *Henry IV*



# The Mariana Trench

The average depth of the ocean is about 12,100 feet (2.29 miles). The wreck of the RMS Titanic lies at a depth of 12,500 feet (2.37 miles). Challenger Deep, located beneath the western Pacific Ocean at the southern end of the Mariana Trench, is approximately 36,200 feet (6.86 miles) deep. If Mount Everest were dropped into the trench at this point, its peak would be over 1 mile underwater.



James Cameron reached the bottom of the Mariana Trench in March, 2012



**“He (God) knows the secrets of the heart” (Ps. 44:21).**

**“The heart knows its own bitterness,  
And no stranger shares its joy” (Prov. 14:10).**



# Introduction

When Carl F.H. Henry published his influential, six-volume tome, *God, Revelation and Authority*, in 1976, he was sixty-three years old and would live another twenty-seven years, dying at the age of ninety. It was not an “overnight venture,” as he makes clear in the *Preface*, but a project he wrote over the course of “the past twenty-five years of teaching, researching and lecturing.” In the first chapter, *The Crisis of Truth and Word*, he demonstrated that he not only understood the absolute truth of God’s Word but also the signs of the times. He noted, for instance, “the breakdown of confidence in verbal communication” and claimed it “is a feature of our times.” He also witnessed the “widespread manipulation of and disenchantment with words.”



# Introduction

Noting that Marshall McLuhan's (1911-1980) theory of communication assumed "the obsolescence of words," Henry observed the impact of McLuhan's teaching: "Such preference for the nonverbal is especially conspicuous among the younger generation who increasingly surmise that words are a cover-up rather than a revelation of truth; that is, words are used to conceal, distort and deceive." This terrible misconception of language is exactly what we would expect from those who ignore God's revelation about the use of edifying words and circulate in environments where various kinds of bad, evil, rotten, or decaying speech is exchanged, causing these powerful, invisible, exploding bombs to detonate in human hearts with devastating results.



# Introduction

The seat of these intrusive, damaging words, according to Jesus Christ, is the heart: “But the things that proceed out of the mouth **come from the heart**, and those defile the man. For **out of the heart** come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders” (Mt. 15:18-19). The connection between the heart and the tongue is conclusive. Remember Norman Grubb’s clever insight: “What rules the heart, wags the tongue.” If, therefore, we are truly serious about changing our speech, we must first take an honest look at our hearts. What we believe about our being made in God’s image, Adam and Eve’s disobedience and fall into sin, and our reconciliation to God through the vicarious death of Jesus Christ must be our starting point.



# Introduction

Jeremiah affirms that “the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it” (Jer. 17:9). Yet, for believers, Paul affirms that “the love of God has been **poured out within our hearts** through the Holy Spirit who was given to us” (Rom. 5:5). In other words, while we are totally depraved, we have also been redeemed by Christ’s sacrifice and are now “alive to God in Jesus Christ” (Rom. 6:11). Affirming both truths, John Calvin writes that “while there exists in man something like a world of misery,” it is possible to be “**unknown to ourselves**....Men are never duly touched and impressed with a conviction of their insignificance, until they have **contrasted themselves with the majesty of God.**”





# Introduction

By reflecting on the relationship between the knowledge of God and the knowledge of ourselves, Calvin became convinced that “the two are connected by many ties” but expressed that “it is not easy to determine which of the two precedes, and gives birth to the other.” Therefore, it would be true to say that **we know ourselves as we know God, and we know God as we know ourselves**. When we contemplate the face of God, we will attain to a true self-knowledge; when we contemplate our own hearts, without flattery or dishonesty, we discover the beauty of God and yield ourselves in submission to His will. One result of this self-knowledge is that we also learn the process of knowing others and using our words for their edification.

# Solomon's Simile in Proverbs 20:5

- “The purpose in a man’s heart is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out” (ESV).
- “A plan in the heart of a man is like deep water, but a man of understanding draws it out” (NASV).
- “A person's thoughts are like water in a deep well, but someone with insight can draw them out” (Good News Translation).



## Exploring Solomon's Simile





# The Meaning of the Simile

In this text, we see that Solomon had been given great wisdom by God to see the **relationship between the human heart and a deep well**. While neither are infinite, both are vast in depth and scope. Time nor personal associations are guarantees that the secrets of a person's heart will be revealed to others.

“Like such deep waters is that which a man has secretly planned in his heart. He keeps it secret, conceals it carefully, craftily misleads those who seek to draw it out” (Keil & Delitzsch).





# McKane's Explanation

“The point of the deep waters in verse 5 is usually taken to be **the natural secretiveness of men and their unwillingness to divulge what is in their minds to an outsider**. Even their speech does not disclose the cast of their mind and the tendency of their thinking with respect to the matter under discussion. There are **inner depths in every person** in which the formation of opinion and the shaping of intellectual judgments are **concealed**.

- William McKane, *Proverbs*

# The Astonishing Vastness of the Human Soul



“For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man, which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God.”

- I Cor. 2:11

# Peeling Away Concealment



- Am I willing to peel away the outer layers of self-protection?
- Am I interested being transformed by the gospel?
- “The inside look must be guided by the Bible’s teaching on what to expect when we peel off the layers and explore what lurks beneath the surface” (Crabb).

# The First Tool: Curiosity

- Curiosity, n. “The desire or inclination to know or learn about anything; a feeling of interest leading one to inquire about anything” (OED).
- What do I want to know?
- Who do I know myself to be?
- Is there a consistent testimony from others?
- What picture is emerging?





# Very Deep, But Finite

There is so much depth to every human being that it can seem that we are infinite rather than finite. If we were to tell our story - or just part of our story - to an interested person or group of people, there is almost an infinite range of thoughts and experiences that we could share. Life has been so full that it feels as if we could tell thousands of stories over a very long period of time without repeating them. Every experience and encounter we had became a building block in our lives. However, we are not infinite, but finite. We are created beings. Therefore, we have a beginning, but no end and are limited in so many ways. God, on the other hand, is infinite and has no beginning or end.