

• VOLUME I •

WORDS THAT WOUNDED

The Words We Heard
Recognizing Hurtful Messages
and Their Impact on the Heart

JOEL RABE

[READER PREVIEW](#) | [CONTENTS & ABOUT THE COVER](#)

Four-volume edition in preparation

VOLUME I | AN INVITATION TO READ

The Words We Heard

Recognizing Hurtful Messages and Their Impact on the Heart

Some words pass quickly. Others become the lens through which we see ourselves, relationships, and God. The opening volume examines hurtful messages, the meanings we attach to them, and the difference between an event that happened and a verdict we came to believe. Scripture guides the reader through labels, criticism, shame, fear, rejection, and religious condemnation without giving another person's words final authority over identity.

This volume is for you if...

You may find this volume helpful if a remembered criticism, label, rejection, or spiritual accusation still shapes how you see yourself. Begin here to examine the message and its meaning through Scripture.

What you will explore

- The weight of a message and the beliefs it leaves behind
- Childhood meanings and rules learned for survival
- Truthful memory, mercy, and the heart
- Labels, criticism, comparison, and conditional love
- Shame, humiliation, threat, and coercive control
- Abandonment, rejection, dismissed feelings, and imposed responsibility
- Religious language, condemnation, and the authority of Christ

Begin by recognizing the words we heard and distinguishing what happened from what we concluded about ourselves.

Explore this book online

VOLUME I | THE READING JOURNEY

Table of Contents

Chapter titles follow the current manuscript. This four-volume arrangement is proposed; final divisions and book pagination will be confirmed before release.

Introduction - When Words Keep Speaking

PART I - Words, Wounds, and the Heart

Chapter 1 - The Weight of a Message

Chapter 2 - The Event Is Not the Agreement

Chapter 3 - When a Child Builds a Rule for Survival

Chapter 4 - Truthful Memory Without Permanent Prosecution

Chapter 5 - Mercy Received and Mercy Resisted

Gathering the Threads I - From the Words We Heard to the Beliefs We Carry

PART II - The Language That Wounds

Chapter 6 - Labels That Become Verdicts

Chapter 7 - Criticism, Comparison, and Conditional Love

Chapter 8 - Shame, Humiliation, Mockery, and Ridicule

Gathering the Threads II - When Evaluation Becomes Identity

Chapter 9 - Threat, Fear, and Coercive Control

Chapter 10 - Abandonment, Rejection, and Emotional Absence

Chapter 11 - When Feelings Are Dismissed and Voices Are Silenced

Chapter 12 - Guilt, Blame, and the Child Who Became Responsible

Chapter 13 - When Religious Language Becomes Condemnation

Gathering the Threads III - When Relationship, Authority, and Fear Shape the Message

VOLUME I | FROM THE MANUSCRIPT

Read a Sample

Chapter 1 - The Weight of a Message

Why Begin Here?

John Calvin was writing about the knowledge of God, not about childhood wounds, self-talk, or modern psychology. I begin with his observation because it gives us a useful place to stand together. Calvin warned against a knowledge that remains only in the head, a knowledge that “flutters in the brain” without becoming substantial and fruitful in life. As I have studied the patterns explored in this book and walked with people through deliverance, inner healing, prayer, repentance, grief, and restoration, I have become increasingly interested in the opposite movement as well: ideas do not always remain ideas. What we receive, interpret, believe, rehearse, and obey can move from language into lived patterns. A sentence can remain merely a sentence, but it can also become a message; a message can become an interpretation; an interpretation can become a governing belief; and a governing belief can begin influencing what we fear, pursue, avoid, consume, control, expect, or resist. I do not want us to assume that movement has occurred simply because a painful sentence can be remembered. I want us to learn how to examine whether it has occurred, what the evidence actually supports, and what Scripture gives us sufficient reason to say.

Joel Rabe | Excerpt from the current manuscript. Chapter numbering follows the complete manuscript; the release edition is in preparation.

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VOLUME I | READING THE DESIGN

About the Cover

Perhaps you remember a sentence that stayed long after the conversation ended. The parchment heart holds those remembered words and the meanings we gave them. Its fractures and crimson strands recall criticism, rejection, and contempt that began shaping how we saw ourselves. Proverbs 4:23 directs our attention to the heart - the inner life from which our choices and responses flow.

The child near the window brings us back to the years when a message could become a rule for survival: keep quiet, never fail, never need anyone. Jesus takes demeaning speech seriously in Matthew 5:22. This volume invites you to name what was spoken, then gently examine what you came to believe because of it.

The few beginning stitches mark the first movement toward restoration. The golden thread represents truth and hope in Christ entering a remembered wound. Psalm 147:3 declares, “He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.” There is still a journey ahead. The history remains visible, and the light beyond the heart reminds us that we can bring it honestly before God.

Four covers. One golden thread.

The shared blue-and-gold palette, frame, typography, and golden thread connect the collection: the words we heard, the patterns we learned, our beliefs before the Word, and the truth we live.

VOLUME I | SCRIPTURE & KEY CONCEPTS

Biblical Connections

Proverbs 4:23 - KJV

“Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.”

Psalms 147:3 - KJV

“He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.”

Hebrew: leb - the inner person

In biblical usage, leb can include thought, will, desire, and feeling. This is why the cover’s heart reaches beyond emotion alone (Proverbs 4:23).

Lexical reference**Aramaic: Raca - a contemptuous insult**

Matthew 5:22 preserves this Aramaic expression in the Greek text. Its force is dismissive contempt, with the sense of empty-headed or worthless. Jesus' warning anchors the cover's concern with demeaning speech.

Lexical reference**Explore this volume online**

Original-language notes clarify the cited passages. The artwork is a devotional interpretation of these themes. This preview is not the full manuscript; final divisions and page counts are forthcoming.