

WorshipLife Study Series
“Mouthwash”
Session 3: Speak Life

If there is a single area of physical discipleship that seems to be most challenging, it would have to be our language. “Taming” our tongues can prove to be one of the most difficult things to do (James 3:8). Especially when we are called by Christ to practice a new way of talking after years of growing accustomed to how we have been trained to talk by our culture. Whether it is learning how to respond in a godly manner or simply being encouraging to other people, it is definitely a place where transition must be intentional. This session of the study is designed to help us re-examine the words that we use and discover the necessity and method to filter our language so that we are not allowing destructive language to proceed from our mouths.

We Have a Mandate to Build Others

Paul states in Ephesians 4:29 that what comes out of our mouths should be good for the purpose of “edifying” or “building” others. Our words should be suitable for edification with respect to the needs of our brothers or sisters. We should ask ourselves, “What do they need from God in this moment?” and not, “What do I say because of how they made me feel?” We must understand that our mouths are instrumental in our ministry to others. Therefore, our language should cause them to leave in a better condition than they were when we encountered them.

Use Language that Lifts

People will often come to us after dealing with significant seasons of brokenness and difficulty (Proverbs 15:13). God ushers them into our midst so that we can use our language to elevate them from the place of hurt to the place of hope in Christ (Proverbs 27:9). If our words are to be encouraging they must be Spirit-Led (John 6:63) and Bible-based (Jeremiah 15:16). Based on the Word of God, our language should be:

1. Pleasant—Proverbs 16:24—Our language should invigorate the soul and give people the ability to stand and withstand life’s varying moments.
2. Good—Proverbs 12:25 - We should speak words that remove the heaviness from a person’s heart.
3. Timely—Proverbs 15:23—Our conversation must take place at the right time (when we are led by God to share it). We must be sensitive to not only what we say, but when we say it.
4. Truthful—Proverbs 23:16—Our language is above-board and honest according to the Bible and the truths that come from life in Christ.

How do I know when my words are being spoken with Christian integrity? Proverbs 10:11 reminds us that they are a “well of life” for those that hear them instead of an “encounter of violence.” Your words are building when people feel more “alive” after talking with you.

Language of Grace

Paul proceeds to remind us that the language that we use should impart “grace” to the one(s) that hear them. This Greek word for “grace” is the same word that describes the unmerited favor that results in our salvation and gifting from the Lord. Our language should be seasoned with a grace that reminds them of the unmerited love of God through Jesus (Ephesians 4:29). Paul specifically states that our words should “minister” grace to the hearer. In other words, our language should “offer” or “serve” grace to the person listening. Our conduct of language should be an unmistakable indication of our commitment to being a disciple of Jesus (1 Peter 2:12). Because such an action is not going to happen naturally, we must be very intentional to ensure that our language presents “grace” to every person (Colossians 4:6).

How can you ensure that people will see the proactive love of God in your speaking?

Strategic Plan: Sweetener Containers on the Table. In many restaurants, coffee is served along with other drinks that can often have a bitter or unpleasant taste. Therefore, the restaurant usually places a container of sugar or sweeteners on the table so that the drink is easier and more pleasant to taste. Our lives are often intended by God to be sweeteners for the lives of others. God places us in their lives during bitter or unpleasant seasons so that we can speak words to them that allow them to “digest” the experience more easily. Who is in your life for which you might have been sent to provide “holy sweetener” in their situation? How can you use your language this week to ensure that you minister grace to them where they need it most?