

## Interceding

Message 04 of the series: "Speak Life"

### I. We can choose to speak life or speak death.

"Words kill, words give life; they're either poison or fruit—you choose." Proverbs 18:21 (MSG)

### II. We can speak death by cursing others and calling them names.

"You have heard that our ancestors were told, 'You must not murder. If you commit murder, you are subject to judgment.' But I say, if you are even angry with someone, you are subject to judgment! If you call someone an idiot, you are in danger of being brought before the court. And if you curse someone, you are in danger of the fires of hell." Matthew 5:21-22 (NLT)

### III. We can speak life by interceding for others in prayer.

Interceding = pleading or making petition to God on behalf of someone else.

*Jesus intercedes for us.* "Who then will condemn us? No one—for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us, and he is sitting in the place of honor at God's right hand, pleading (interceding) for us." Romans 8:34 (NLT)

*The Holy Spirit intercedes for us.* "In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will." Romans 8:26 (NIV)

#### a. Interceding means praying for people in leadership.

"I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth." 1 Timothy 2:1-4 (NIV)

*We need to especially pray for leaders who oppose our point of view.* "But to you who are willing to listen, I say, love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you. If someone slaps you on one cheek, offer the other cheek also... Do to others as you would like them to do to you. If you love only those who love you, why should you get credit for that? Even sinners love those who love them!" Luke 6:27-32 (NLT)

*Life Application:* This week I will speak life by interceding for insert name here, whom I support, and for insert name here, whom I do not.

#### b. Interceding means praying for the health / urgent needs of others.

"Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord. Such a prayer offered in faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will make you well. And if you have committed any sins, you will be forgiven. Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results." James 5:14-16 (NLT)

"Dear brothers and sisters, I urge you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to join in my struggle by praying to God for me. Do this because of your love for me, given to you by the Holy Spirit. Pray that I will be rescued from those in Judea who refuse to obey God. Pray also that the believers there will be willing to accept the donation I am taking to Jerusalem." Romans 15:30-31 (NLT)

*Life Application:* This week I will speak life by interceding for insert name here, who has a health concern / urgent need.

We need to pray expecting God to answer. "Peter finally came to his senses. 'It's really true!' he said. 'The Lord has sent his angel and saved me from Herod and from what the Jewish leaders had planned to do to me!' When he realized this, he went to the home of Mary, the mother of John Mark, where many were gathered for prayer. He knocked at the door in the gate, and a servant girl named Rhoda came to open it. When she recognized Peter's voice, she was so overjoyed that, instead of opening the door, she ran back inside and told everyone, 'Peter is standing at the door!' 'You're out of your mind!' they said.

When she insisted, they decided, 'It must be his angel.' Meanwhile, Peter continued knocking. When they finally opened the door and saw him, they were amazed." Acts 12:11-16 (NLT)

- c. Interceding means praying for other believers.

*We need to pray for unbelievers to become believers in Christ.* "Now there was a believer in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord spoke to him in a vision, calling, 'Ananias!' 'Yes, Lord!' he replied. The Lord said, 'Go over to Straight Street, to the house of Judas. When you get there, ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul. He is praying to me right now. I have shown him a vision of a man named Ananias coming in and laying hands on him so he can see again.' 'But Lord,' exclaimed Ananias, 'I've heard many people talk about the terrible things this man has done to the believers in Jerusalem! And he is authorized by the leading priests to arrest everyone who calls upon your name.' But the Lord said, 'Go, for Saul is my chosen instrument to take my message to the Gentiles and to kings, as well as to the people of Israel. And I will show him how much he must suffer for my name's sake.' So Ananias went and found Saul. He laid his hands on him and said, 'Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road, has sent me so that you might regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.' Instantly something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he got up and was baptized." Acts 9:10-18 (NLT)

*Life Application:* This week I will speak life by interceding for insert name here, who needs Jesus.

*We need to pray for other believers to grow in Christ.* "Ever since I first heard of your strong faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for God's people everywhere, I have not stopped thanking God for you. I pray for you constantly, asking God, the glorious Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to give you spiritual wisdom and insight so that you might grow in your knowledge of God. I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the confident hope he has given to those he called—his holy people who are his rich and glorious inheritance. I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms." Ephesians 1:15-20 (NLT)

*Life Application:* This week I will speak life by interceding for insert name here, who needs to grow in his/her faith.

*We need to pray for others to boldly tell others how to have a personal relationship with Christ.* "Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere. And pray for me, too. Ask God to give me the right words so I can boldly explain God's mysterious plan that the Good News is for Jews and Gentiles alike." Ephesians 6:18-19 (NLT)

*Life Application:* This week I will speak life by interceding for insert name here, who needs to boldly tell others about Jesus.

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### **Quotations to consider**

"To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing." Martin Luther

"Prayer is simply a two-way conversation between you and God." Billy Graham

"We always thank God for all of you and pray for you constantly. As we pray to our God and Father about you, we think of your faithful work, your loving deeds, and the enduring hope you have because of our Lord Jesus Christ... So we keep on praying for you, asking our God to enable you to live a life worthy of his call. May he give you the power to accomplish all the good things your faith prompts you to do... Finally, dear brothers and sisters, we ask you to pray for us. Pray that the Lord's message will spread rapidly and be honored wherever it goes, just as when it came to you." Paul in 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3,11, 3:1 (NLT)

## CONNECT GROUP QUESTIONS:

1. Most of us agree that calling someone an “ugly” name is wrong, but why do many believe that certain situations make it okay to do so? (Example: when someone makes us mad or treats us badly.) Have you ever cursed, yelled at, or called a sports official a name?
2. In your opinion, why is prayer so important in the life of a believer?
3. Read Luke 11:1. In your opinion, did the disciples of Jesus not know how to pray? What were the disciples trying to learn? Are there some things you would like to learn about prayer?
4. Has anyone ever shared with you a need or situation in his/her life, and you said, “I’ll pray for you”? Did you actually take the time to pray for that person’s need/situation? Do you think, “I’ll pray for you,” is just something we say to be polite at times?
5. Read James 5:16. We know that praying over people unleashes God’s power in their life. What hinders us from actually praying out loud for someone?
6. How would those around you be impacted if you actually prayed out loud over them when they mentioned a situation that needed God’s redeeming power?
7. Read 2 Peter 1:2-8. Why is it needful for us to pray for the spiritual growth of those in our connect group?
8. Challenge: This week when you eat out, ask the waiter/waitress how you can pray for them. Then pray for that person by name and intercede to God on their behalf.