

Speaking Truth

Message 02 of the series: "Speak Life"

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

"The words of the godly are a life-giving fountain; the words of the wicked conceal violent intentions."
Proverbs 10:11 (NLT)

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

II. We speak life when our hearts are right.

"The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks." Luke 6:45 (NIV)

Life Application: We need to ask God to examine our hearts.

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life." Psalm 139:23-24 (NLT)

III. We speak life when we speak truth.

a. Speaking truth means giving honest feedback rather than flattery.

"In the end, people appreciate honest criticism far more than flattery." Proverbs 28:23 (NLT)

"Wounds from a sincere friend are better than many kisses from an enemy." Proverbs 27:6 (NLT)

"To flatter friends is to lay a trap for their feet." Proverbs 29:5 (NLT)

Life Application: This week I will speak life to _____ by kindly speaking truth to him/her.

"Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience." Colossians 3:12 (NLT)

b. Speaking truth means keeping promises.

"Who may worship in your sanctuary, LORD? Who may enter your presence on your holy hill? Those who lead blameless lives and do what is right, speaking the truth from sincere hearts. Those who refuse to gossip or harm their neighbors or speak evil of their friends. Those who despise flagrant sinners, and honor the faithful followers of the LORD, and keep their promises even when it hurts."
Psalm 15:1-4 (NLT)

"When you make a promise to God, don't delay in following through, for God takes no pleasure in fools. Keep all the promises you make to him. It is better to say nothing than to make a promise and not keep it." Ecclesiastes 5:4-5 (NLT)

Life Application: This week I will speak life to _____ by following through on a promise I made to him/her.

"A person who promises a gift but doesn't give it is like clouds and wind that bring no rain."
Proverbs 25:14 (NLT)

c. Speaking truth means telling others what the Bible says.

"I have given them your word. And the world hates them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. I'm not asking you to take them out of the world, but to keep them safe from the evil one. They do not belong to this world any more than I do. Make them holy by your truth; teach them your word, which is truth." John 17:14-17 (NLT)

"When Moses had finished reciting all these words to the people of Israel, he added: 'Take to heart all the words of warning I have given you today. Pass them on as a command to your children so they will obey every word of these instructions. These instructions are not empty words—they are your life!'"
Deuteronomy 32:45-47 (NLT)

Life Application: This week I will speak life to _____ by inviting him/her to join me for a worship service and/or my connect group.

"Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ. Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church." Ephesians 4:11-15 (NLT)

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Benjamin Franklin quotations on truth, flattery and God's commands.

"Half the truth is often a great lie."

"The sting of a reproach is the truth of it."

"Promises may get thee friends, but non-performance will turn them into enemies."

"The same man cannot be both friend and flatterer."

"Sin is not hurtful because it is forbidden; it is forbidden because it is hurtful. Nor is a duty beneficial because it is commanded, but it is commanded because it is beneficial."

Connect Group Questions:

1. Proverbs 18:20 states that "The tongue can bring life or death." Do we really get to choose what our words do to others?
2. Read James 1:26. How would those around you in life critique your faith based on the things you say?
3. Read Proverbs 16:21+ 23-24. How does wisdom impact our ability to speak truth into someone's life? What are some ways to gain wisdom (James 1:5)?
4. Read Proverbs 28:23. What is the motive behind flattering words? Why would you say that flattery is the opposite of speaking truth and how does it differ from complimenting/building someone up?
5. Read Luke 17:3. Would you say that rebuking someone is being mean, none of your business, or an act of love?
6. What are some reasons why believers do not talk about their faith with others? How can we help those believers become the disciple-making disciples Christ has called us all to (Matt 28:19-20)?
7. Pray for people by name who are in your life that you need to speak truth into.
8. Read Ephesians 4:11-15. What, in your opinion, are pastors supposed to do? What is their job description?