

Building Others Up

Message 01 of the series: "Speak Life"

I. We can choose to speak life or death.

"The tongue can bring death or life; those who love to talk will reap the consequences." Prov. 18:21 (NLT)

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

"With our tongues we bless God our Father; with the same tongues we curse the very men and women he made in his image. Curses and blessings out of the same mouth! My friends, this can't go on."

James 3:9-10 (MSG)

II. We speak life when we build others up.

a. We build others up by speaking words of encouragement.

"So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing."

1 Thessalonians 5:11 (NLT)

"Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near." Hebrews 10:24-25 (NLT)

"Just as day was dawning, Paul urged everyone to eat. 'You have been so worried that you haven't touched food for two weeks,' he said. 'Please eat something now for your own good. For not a hair of your heads will perish.' Then he took some bread, gave thanks to God before them all, and broke off a piece and ate it. Then everyone was encouraged and began to eat." Acts 27:33-36 (NLT)

Life Application: This week I will speak life by writing a note of encouragement to _____.

b. We build others up by speaking words of wisdom / instruction.

"Wise words are more valuable than much gold and many rubies." Proverbs 20:15 (NLT)

"Those who listen to instruction will prosper; those who trust the LORD will be joyful. The wise are known for their understanding, and pleasant words are persuasive. Discretion is a life-giving fountain to those who possess it, but discipline is wasted on fools. From a wise mind comes wise speech; the words of the wise are persuasive." Proverbs 16:20-23 (NLT)

"This is not good!" Moses' father-in-law exclaimed. 'You're going to wear yourself out—and the people, too. This job is too heavy a burden for you to handle all by yourself. Now listen to me, and let me give you a word of advice, and may God be with you. You should continue to be the people's representative before God, bringing their disputes to him. Teach them God's decrees, and give them his instructions. Show them how to conduct their lives. But select from all the people some capable, honest men who fear God and hate bribes. Appoint them as leaders over groups of one thousand, one hundred, fifty, and ten. They should always be available to solve the people's common disputes, but have them bring the major cases to you. Let the leaders decide the smaller matters themselves. They will help you carry the load, making the task easier for you. If you follow this advice, and if God commands you to do so, then you will be able to endure the pressures, and all these people will go home in peace.'" Exodus 18:17-23 (NLT)

Life Application: This week I will speak life by offering good advice to _____.

Life Application: This week I will accept advice.

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, *But* fools despise wisdom and instruction."

Proverbs 1:7 (NKJV)

c. We build others up by speaking words of comfort.

"All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us." 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 (NLT)

"Your love has given me much joy and comfort, my brother, for your kindness has often refreshed the hearts of God's people." Philemon 1:7 (NLT)

"When three of Job's friends heard of the tragedy he had suffered, they got together and traveled from their homes to comfort and console him. ... When they saw Job from a distance, they scarcely

recognized him. Wailing loudly, they tore their robes and threw dust into the air over their heads to show their grief. Then they sat on the ground with him for seven days and nights. No one said a word to Job, for they saw that his suffering was too great for words." Job 2:11-13 (NLT)

Life Application: This week I will speak life by spending time comforting _____.

III. We're able to 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)

a. 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)

Some possible reasons we tear others down rather than build them up:

- They have something we don't.
- We tear others down to feel better about ourselves.
- We want to be the center of attention.
- We're bitter about something.
- We've stopped counting our blessings.

b. We need to surrender control of our hearts to the Holy Spirit.

"Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives." Galatians 5:24-25 (NLT)

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Quotations to consider:

"In every encounter we either give life or we drain it; there is no neutral exchange."
~Brennan Manning~

"A bend in the road is not the end of the road unless you fail to make the turn."
~Unknown~

"Wrong is wrong even if everyone is doing it. Right is right even if no one is doing it."
~Saint Augustine~

Connect Group Questions

1. Words possess great power. What are some ways you have seen words used to build up or destroy someone?
2. Has someone ever wrecked your day by a simple statement? How did you deal with it?
3. Read James 3:2, 7-8 and Galatians 5:24-25. Based on your experience, how is someone able to control the tongue when the Bible says it cannot be tamed?
4. Read Philippians 3:8. How would only allowing positive things to enter your mind affect how you speak to others? What are some negative things that you are allowing to impact your life?
5. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:11. Building others up and encouraging them is an intentional act. In your opinion, how would someone make this practice part of his/her daily life?
6. Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-4. Have you ever considered that when we comfort someone with the comfort the Holy Spirit has given to us that it is actually glorifying to God? What challenges may exist in sharing with someone the comfort you received?
7. Read Colossians 4:5-6. Name some people you cross paths with everyday that you can start building up. Spend some time as a group praying for each other. Pray that the Holy Spirit will help you use your words to speak encouragement, wisdom, and comfort to those with whom you interact.