

THRIVE AT HOME – FAMILY ROOM – WEEK 3

Monday - The Speaking God — Made in His Image - Genesis 1:1-3, Genesis 1:26-27, Proverbs 18:21

You were created to speak with purpose and power. From the very first chapter of the Bible, God introduces Himself as a speaking God. Before creation, before mankind — there was The Word. He did not build the universe with His Hands; He spoke it into being. "And God said... and it was so." Eight times in Genesis 1, we read that phrase — and each time, reality shifted. Then comes the crowning moment: God created mankind in His own image (Genesis 1:26-27). If God is, above all else, a speaking God, then as image-bearers, we are — by design — speaking beings. Your voice is not an accident. Your words are not neutral. They carry the weight of your Creator's original design. Proverbs 18:21 is one of the most sobering verses in all of Scripture: "The tongue has the power of life and death." This is not poetry. It is a spiritual law. Just as God's words brought the world into existence, our words carry creative — and destructive — power over our circumstances, relationships, and identity. There is a popular response to the greetings that I dislike in my cultural context. Sometimes in Swahili language, when you ask some people "Habari yako?" meaning "How are you?" ... They would reply "Ninang'na" which translates to "I'm struggling". It is meant to connote a sense of trying to work hard and while being truthful and humble about the situation they are in. However, I often caution that since words have power, you could produce an atmosphere of continual struggle around yourself. So even if indeed things may not be easy and you have to be truthful you can instead choose to give responses like "I'm doing my best" or "God is helping me" and so on. **Reflection:** Pause and consider the words you speak most often. Are they words that create life? Are they words that reflect the image of the God who made you? Think about the most common words you speak about yourself.

Tuesday - Move the Mountain — The Power of Spoken Faith - Mark 11:12-14, Mark 11:20-24

Your words of faith can move what seems immovable. When Jesus cursed the fig tree, His disciples were stunned. By the next morning it had withered completely — from its roots! It was a living, leafy tree, apparently healthy in appearance, yet, it could not stand against the authority in Jesus' spoken word. What is remarkable is how Jesus responded to His disciples' amazement. He did not say, "Yes, I'm special, you know I'm the Son of God." Instead, He turned and said: "Have faith in God. Truly I tell you, if anyone says to this mountain..." He was saying to them: this authority is transferable. This is available to you. The key word in verse 23 is SAYS. Jesus did not say "if anyone prays silently." He said if anyone SAYS to this mountain. There is something about voiced, declared, spoken faith that releases heaven's power into earthly situations. I have often been amazed by times when I have seen difficult moments transform as I prayed out loud. What are the mountains in your life right now? A health crisis? A financial impossibility? A broken relationship? A habit that won't break? Jesus is not asking you to pretend the mountain isn't there. He is asking you to open your mouth and speak to it — in faith, in His name, without doubting in your heart. **Reflection:** What is the biggest "mountain" in your life right now that needs a spoken word of faith? Jesus said "does not doubt in their heart." What doubts do you need to surrender in order to speak faith-filled words?

Wednesday – Gossip, Lies, and the Words God Hates - Ps 15:1-3, Proverbs 6:16-19, Proverbs 12:22, Proverbs 18:8

What we say about others reveals what is in our heart. Psalm 15 opens with a man asking God a sincere question: "Who gets to dwell in Your presence? Who belongs on Your holy mountain?" The answer God gives is not about rituals, titles, or religious performance — it includes the condition of the tongue. A person who slanders, gossips, or lies simply cannot walk in the fullness of God's presence. This is not harsh judgment; it is a spiritual reality. Gossip is speaking about others in ways that are often unconfirmed, exaggerated, or spoken in their absence. Slander is even more deliberate — it is making false statements to damage someone's reputation. And then there are lies: Proverbs 6 tells us there are six things the Lord hates, and two of them are directly tongue-related — a lying tongue and a false witness who pours out lies. Proverbs 18:8 (MSG) gives us a vivid picture: "Listening to gossip is like eating cheap candy; do you really want junk like that in your belly?" The warning here is not just for the one speaking — it is equally for the one listening. When we welcome gossip and slander into our ears, we are feeding our souls with junk. I must confess this is an area I wrestled with when I was a young woman in college. When I gave my life to Christ and made a decision to submit myself to His Lordship, I realized that the habit was not honoring to God. I started studying what the Bible says about words and tongue. As I got more revelation of the power I asked God to heal my speech. Today I'm grateful He turned it around and instead of gossiping I use my tongue to witness to others about Jesus saving grace! Does it mean I always get it right? Not so, but if ever I slip, I'm conscious of it and quick to ask God to forgive me. The invitation today is to audit your conversations. Are you building people up or tearing them down when they are not present? Are your words trustworthy? God does not merely tolerate truthful lips — He delights in them. **Reflection:** What would it look like to speak life over the last person you gossiped or spoke unkindly to recently? What practical step can you take today to guard against gossip entering your ears?

Thursday - Careless, Hasty & Boastful Words - Matthew 12:34-37, Proverbs 18:13, Proverbs 10:19, 2 Timothy 2:23

Wisdom begins with knowing when not to speak. Jesus' words in Matthew 12 are sobering. Not just our big sins — but our empty, careless, throwaway words — will be accounted for on the day of judgment. We have a culture that glorifies constant talking, quick hot takes, and the loudest voice in the room. But Jesus says the mouth speaks what the heart is full of. Careless words are not accidents — they reveal the overflow of an unguarded heart. The Bible identifies several categories of harmful speech beyond lying and gossip. Hasty speech — answering before listening (Proverbs 18:13) — is called folly and shame. How many relationships have been damaged, how many conflicts escalated, because we spoke before we truly heard? We have two ears and one mouth for a reason. Excessive talk is another trap: Proverbs 10:19 says "Sin is not ended by multiplying words, but the prudent hold their tongues." And the Message version is blunt: "The more talk, the less truth." More words do not equal more wisdom — they often equal more exposure to error. Boasting and foolish arguments round out the picture, with Paul warning Timothy to avoid "foolish and stupid arguments because you know they produce quarrels" (2 Timothy 2:23). As an excuse to justify gossip, I remember as young girl once boastfully saying something like "If people are talking about me then I must be important - let them talk and I also talk!". Then I would laugh it off. When I look back I'm mortified by how flippant such talk was. Thank God for He had mercy on me! The tongue that needs healing is often not the dramatically sinful tongue — it is the casually reckless one. The one that fires off words like arrows and calls it humour. The one that speaks before thinking. Today's call is to slow down, listen more, and treasure the weight of every word. **Reflection:** Where do you tend to speak before thinking? What triggers hasty speech in you? Jesus said "the mouth speaks what the heart is full of." What would change in your relationships if you listened 2x as long before you spoke?

Friday - The Inner Voice — Breaking Negative Declarations - James 3:9-12, Rom 4:17, 2 Cor 10:5, Ps 139:14

The most powerful tongue you must heal speaks inside you. James makes a startling observation: we use the same mouth to worship God on Sunday and to curse people, including ourselves, on Monday. He says this is inconsistent, like a spring producing both salt water and fresh water at once. It should not be. But for many of us, the harshest words we speak are not directed outward... they are often directed at ourselves. "I'll never be good enough." "God doesn't really love me." "I'm a failure." "I hate myself." These are not just negative emotions — they are declarations. And declarations, over time, become identities. Some of you received these words from others — a parent, a teacher, a broken relationship — and you took them in, believed them, and you are now living the reality of someone else's careless curse over your life. But there is also a God who "calls into being things that were not" (Romans 4:17). The same God who spoke light into darkness can speak identity into confusion. He does not agree with what the enemy, or your own shame, says about you. He has already declared who you are: fearfully and wonderfully made, the apple of His eye, more than a conqueror. For me, this particular issue took a long time to undo. I went through a season hardship that threw my self-esteem to the floor. It also meant that in my despair I allowed the accusations the enemy of my soul threw at me, to take root. I had to undo this by confessing God's Word and promises about Who He says I am. Declarations based on scripture like "I am loved", "I am valuable", "I am beautiful" were not easy to say to myself. Initially it felt fake and hollow. It took some time, but my spirit soon believed and my mind followed. With time, I came to accept and rejoice in the truth of who I am in God. Loved, treasured, forgiven and healed! Healing the tongue begins with recognizing the inner vows we have made — "I will never forgive myself," "no one loves me" — and renouncing them. Then comes the counter-declaration: replacing the curse with the blessing of God's Word. Today, you are invited to begin speaking what God says about you — out loud, daily, until it becomes your new truth. **Reflection:** What negative declarations have you made over yourself — either from your own words or from words others spoke over you? Write down one declaration you have believed that contradicts what God says. Now write God's counter-declaration.

THRIVING FAMILIES

Hey families! Here's a look at what we're covering with your kids this month so you can help them continue to grow!

THIS WEEK

This week, kids hear how God gave Abraham and Sarah a son named Isaac, and it was their turn to show their love and faith in God.

- BIG IDEA: We can trust God to provide.
- BIBLE: Genesis 21:1–6, 22:1–14

ASK THIS:

Because sometimes you and your kid need a conversation-starter that isn't, "So . . . how was church?"

- How does God provide through other people?
- What's a way God has provided for you?