



SERIES BIG IDEA:

Our words have power, and we are responsible to harness them for the benefit of others.

²³Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror ²⁴and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. ²⁵But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.

James 1:23-25 (NIV)

There is a blessing in obeying the perfect law of Christ.

³⁴“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

John 13:34-35 (NIV)

The law of Christ is to love all others as Jesus has loved me.

²⁶Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless. ²⁷Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

James 1:26-27 (NIV)

Those who live according to Christ’s word:

- **Control their tongue.**
- **Care for the last and the least.**
- **Commit to a life of holiness.**

²²You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; ²³to be made new in the attitude of your minds; ²⁴and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

²⁵Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. ²⁶“In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, ²⁷and do not give the devil a foothold. ²⁸Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.

²⁹Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

Ephesians 4:22-29 (NIV)

TEACHING BIG IDEA:

Jesus has loved me, so I will use my words to build others up and not tear them down.

“How do you identify someone who needs encouragement? That person is breathing.”

S. Truett Cathy

- **Speak the truth. Don't lie. (v25)**
- **Rein in my unwholesome talk. (v29)**
- **Say what is helpful and hopeful. (v29)**



- **Build others up according to their needs. (v29)**
- **Use my words to benefit those who are listening. (v29)**

Am I building myself up by tearing them down?

Or, am I building them up because Jesus, the Word made flesh, has loved me?

MY NOTES:



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TEACHING SUMMARY:

There is an old saying that goes “everything I ever needed to know I learned in kindergarten.” When it comes to how we speak to others this rings true.

Be kind with your words. Don’t hurt others with what you say. Say things that help others. Tell the truth.

We all learned a lot from kindergarten about how we should talk with each other and many of those principles were taught first by the writers of Scripture like James and Paul. Over and over again these leaders wrote of guarding our lips, speaking things that are wholesome and uplifting, and speaking the truth.

If we follow these words and put them into action our words will be the encouragement that people need and will honor Christ as well.

TALK IT OVER:

To whom is it easy for you to be encouraging? Who is it difficult for you to encourage?

Who has been a big encourager in your life? What makes them stand out?

Do you believe that with the help of the Holy Spirit you can use your words to build others up? Why or why not?

Do you trust that Jesus can use your words to be the encouragement that others need? Why or why not?

What is one next step you can take today?

DAILY BIBLE READINGS:

Mon: James 3:1-12; Titus 3:1-8

Tue: Matthew 12:33-37; Matthew 15:17-20

Wed: Proverbs 10:11-21; Romans 6:13-23

Thu: Colossians 3:1-10; Colossians 2:9-13

Fri: Psalm 12:1-4; Psalm 34:12-14; Galatians 5:22-25

Sat: Proverbs 6:12-19