

Speak Life

*The words we use are more than tools to communicate - they have creative power. Proverbs 18:21 says, "The tongue has the power of life and death." Our words can fuel hope or snuff it out, build others up or tear them down, bring truth or lies, blessings or curses. It's time to discover the immense power of our words and live each day as those who speak life.*

### Week 3: Building Up and Blessing

1. **Read Proverbs 12:18 and 16:28.** God's Word consistently warns that **our words can hurt others**. In both intentional and unintentional ways, we can harm others through what we say. In some cases we might be better off heeding the words of Proverbs 10:19: *"Too much talk leads to sin. Be sensible and keep your mouth shut."* What do you think are the most common ways we hurt others with our words? What motivates us to hurt others with our words?
2. **Read James 1:26 and 3:9-10.** In addition to hurting others, **our words can hurt our witness**. How can our words dampen the light of Christ in our lives? Follow up: If our words can hurt our witness, they can surely help it, too. How can our words be a counter-cultural witness?
3. **Read Ephesians 4:29.** Verses like these are about more than policing language. It's about cultivating a Kingdom culture that recognizes **our words are meant to build up**. Notice the balance of offense and defense in this text. How can we build others up "according to their needs"? Share an example of when someone built you up with their words. Why did we're their words meaningful?
4. This week **speak life by blessing others**. When we bless others, we align with God's heart for that person. We're offering in words what God's Word says God wants to give. **Read Numbers 6:23-27.** In the New Testament, Christians are part of a royal priesthood (1 Peter 2:9), destined to be a "kingdom of priests" (Revelation 5:10). Part of our purpose is to bless others. Finish by speaking a blessing over one another. Take a moment to listen to the Lord before offering the blessing. Here are some ways to bless:
  - *Read the priestly blessing from **Numbers 6** over each other.*
  - *Read **Galatians 5:22-23**. Begin with, "In Jesus name, I bless you with... **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness...**" and then bless one another with each of the fruit of the Spirit.*
  - *Place a hand on the person you are blessing and say, "I bless you in Jesus name to know more of God's love and His purposes for your life."*

