

SAY YOU LOVE ME

Ephesians 4:13-15, 29 (NCV)

- **Question – “Who is the most ‘perfect’ person I know, and why are they almost ‘perfect’?”**
- *“We all make many mistakes. If people never said anything wrong, they would be perfect . . .”* (James 3:2 NCV)
- **Oftentimes the “wrongs” in our lives are a result of the words from our lips.**
- **James 3:3-12 tells us that: 1) our mouth directs where we go, 2) our mouth can destroy what we have, and 3) our mouth displays who we are.**
- **Jesus taught about how our mouth can negatively affect our life and relationships.**
 - JESUS – *“Words flow out of what fills the heart.”* (Mt 12:34)
 - JESUS – *“Evil words come from an evil heart and defile the person who says them.”* (Matthew 15:19-20 NLT)
 - JESUS – *“Your souls aren’t harmed by what you eat, but by what you think and say!”* (Mark 7:15 TLB)
- **Harmful words include “angry, arrogant, bitter, critical, deceptive, demeaning, faithless, immoral, jealous, malicious, mean, negative, profane, rebellious and selfish” words.**
- **Question – “What types of ‘harmful’ words have I been guilty of using?”**
- **We all need to learn how to better express love to others through our words.**
 - *“All of us do many wrong things. But if you can control your tongue, you are mature . . .”* (James 3:2 CEV)

MATURING CHRISTIANS EXPRESS LOVE THROUGH:

TRUTHFUL WORDS

- *“Speaking the truth in love . . .”* (Ephesians 4:15 NIV)
- **Although lying has become an accepted part of our culture, it is always denounced by God.**
 - *“The Lord detests lying lips, but delights in men who are truthful.”* (Proverbs 12:22 NIV)
 - *“A false witness will not go unpunished and a liar will be destroyed.”* (Proverbs 19:9 NLT)
- **Jesus always spoke the truth to people because He loved them.**

- **Most of us are more comfortable with speaking nice words rather than honest words.**
- **If we want to impact and change other's lives we have to be lovingly honest with them.**
 - *"An open rebuke is better than hidden love!"* (Prov 27:5)
 - *"Wounds from a friend are better than many kisses from an enemy."* (Proverbs 27:6 NLT)
 - *"People appreciate honest criticism"* (Proverbs 28:23 NLT)
- **Tips For Giving Constructive Criticism include: 1) Check your motive before you speak (because the goal of confrontation is to help not humiliate others), 2) Make sure the issue is worthy of critique, 3) Be specific with the critique, 4) Don't undermine the person's self-confidence, 5) Don't compare one person with another, 6) Be creative or don't confront, 7) Attack the problem, not the person, 8) Confront when the time is right, 9) Judge yourself before judging others, and 10) End the confrontation with encouragement**
- **If we want to be impacted and changed by others words, we have to be willing to listen and adhere to constructive criticism.**
 - *"If you listen to constructive criticism, you will be at home among the wise."* (Proverbs 15:31 NLT)
 - *"Valid criticism is as treasured by the one who heeds it as jewelry made from finest gold."* (Proverbs 25:12 NLT)
 - *"Whoever stubbornly refuses to accept criticism will suddenly be broken beyond repair."* (Proverbs 29:1 NLT)
 - **While we all want compliments, we all need correction from time to time.**
- *"Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth."*
(1 Corinthians 13:6 NIV)

MATURING CHRISTIANS EXPRESS LOVE THROUGH:

CAREFUL WORDS

- "Be careful of the words you say. Keep them soft and sweet. You never know from day to day, which ones you'll have to eat." (Will Rogers)
- **Question – "What types of words do we need to be careful not to speak to others?"**

We Have To Be Careful Not To Use:

- **ANGRY WORDS**

- *"A hot-tempered person starts fights and gets into all kinds of sin." (Proverbs 29:22 NLT)*
- **Many marriages and families have been irreparably harmed by angry words.**
- **The opposite of "angry words" are "gentle words."**
- *"A gentle answer turns away wrath, but harsh words stir up anger." (Proverbs 15:1 NLT)*
- **CRITICAL WORDS**
 - **Unkind and unconstructive criticism crushes people's spirits and sense of self-worth.**
 - JESUS - *"Whatever measure you use in judging others, it will be used to measure how you are judged." (Mt 7:2)*
 - **The opposite of "critical words" are "encouraging and affirming words."**
- **FLIRTY WORDS**
 - *The words of an immoral woman may be as sweet as honey and as smooth as olive oil. But all that you really get from being with her is bitter poison and pain. If you follow her, she will lead you down to the world of the dead." (Proverbs 5:3-5)*
 - **The opposite of "flirtatious" words are "moral and godly words."**
 - *"May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in Your sight, O LORD . . ." (Proverbs 19:14 NIV)*
- **GOSSIPY WORDS**
 - *"A gossip separates close friends." (Proverbs 16:28 NIV)*
 - *"Quarrels disappear when gossip stops." (Proverbs 26:20)*
 - **The opposite of "gossipy words" are "affirming words."**
 - *"Watch your words and hold your tongue; you'll save yourself a lot of grief." (Proverbs 21:23 Msg)*
- **MANY WORDS**
 - *"Even fools are thought to be wise when they keep silent. When they keep their mouths shut they seem intelligent." (Prov 17:28)*
 - *"To keep your marriage brimming with love in a loving cup, whenever you are wrong, admit it; whenever you're right, shut up." (Ogden Nash)*
- **NASTY (DEMEANING) WORDS**
 - *"Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up . . ." (Eph 4:29 NIV)*

- “Unwholesome talk” includes disrespectful words, mockery, profanity, threats, etc.
- The opposite of “demeaning words” are “encouraging words.”
- *“Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.”* (Eph 4:29)
- *“I have resolved that my mouth will not sin.”* (Proverbs 17:3)
- **Question – “What are some words that I need to refrain from using in the days ahead?”**

MATURING CHRISTIANS EXPRESS LOVE THROUGH:

HELPFUL WORDS

- *“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs.”* (Ephesians 4:29 NIV)
- **Words can tear down or build-up a person’s self-esteem, confidence, relationships, etc.**
- **We need to learn how to “T.H.I.N.K.” before we speak.**
 - **Before we say something of impact to someone we need to ask ourselves, “Is it Truthful, Helpful, Inspirational (encouraging), Necessary and Kind?”**
 - *“Let your conversation be gracious and effective.”* (Col 4:6)

Gracious And Effective Words Include:

- **WORDS OF AFFECTION**
 - **People need to hear from us words like “I love you” or “I like being your friend.”**
- **WORDS OF AFFIRMATION**
 - **People need to hear from us words affirming their importance to us.**
- **WORDS OF APPRECIATION**
 - **People need to hear from us words expressing our gratitude to them.**
- **WORDS OF ALLEGIANCE**
 - **People need to hear from us words of fidelity and commitment.**
- *“Worry can rob you of happiness, but kind words will cheer you up.”* (Proverbs 12:25 TEV)
- *“Thoughtless words can wound as deeply as any sword, but wisely spoken words can heal.”* (Proverbs 12:18 TEV)

- **Since I want to be a “healer” rather than a “hurter” to others, this week I will speak:**
 - **Affectionate words to** _____
 - **Affirming words to** _____
 - **Appreciative words to** _____
 - **Allegiance words to** _____

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