

life|GROUPS  
**40's & 50's**  
Building Strong Families

### **The Power of Words**

1-11-17

Communication links us together and allows us to have relationships.

If our communication is

- clear = understanding
- un-clear = misunderstanding

Why? (2 reasons)

1. We're different
2. Communication is very complex

In fact, when you and your spouse or significant other communicate, the "one" message you want to communicate actually contains no less than "six" messages.

1. What you want to say
2. What you actually say
3. What they actually hear
4. What they actually heard
5. What they say about what you said

6. What you think they said about what you said

Complicated to say the least and no one escapes this.

To understand the significance of communication, we need to start with:

The power of words

Read James 3: 3-10

Our words can become:

V3 - A BIT. A bit speaks about the influence our words have on others. A bit manipulates ...it's how a human can control a horse ten times their size. The bit hurts, the horse obeys because of the pain, caused by not immediately responding.

And that can be the effect of our words; they can manipulate, cause someone to do our will for fear of pain.

V4 - A RUDDER ... directs, our words can turn our relationships one way or another.

V6 - A FIRE ... a fire can warm or it can wound, and cause scars and death. So can our words.

I read that the human mind needs like 40 positive comments to overcome one negative comment.

Q What does the Bible say regarding our words?

- Proverbs 29:20 - It's foolish to speak too quickly
- 1 Peter 3:10 - Wisdom tells us to watch what we say; it will cost us
- Proverbs 15:1 - A soft answer turn away wrath= promotes peace and understanding
- Proverbs 16:24 - Pleasant words are healing = you can use words to heal a wounded relationship
- Proverbs 15:23 - The right words produce something good
- Proverbs 10:19 - There is wisdom in watching what we say ... (Psalm 141:3 tells us we can ask God to put a guard on our mouths)
- Proverbs 10:11 - Righteous words can build up
- Proverbs 12:18 - Reckless words (words of emotion) pierce like a sword
- Proverbs 16:21 - How you speak increases your persuasiveness
- Proverbs 17:27 - Watching words is actually a sign of intelligence and wisdom
- James 1:19 - Quick to listen, slow to speak = slow to become angry

The Bible actually tells us our words can be a blessing to others  
- Read Proverbs 25:11

Not just to others...What we say to ourselves

Most of our emotions such as

- anger
- depression
- guilt
- worry

...are often initiated and escalated by our own thinking ...what we say to ourselves

Which means the way we behave towards others is often determined by what I think or say to myself.

Read Matt. 15:18-19

The key to victory here is...getting my thoughts and ultimately words under God's control

via the Holy Spirit

Read

- 1 Peter 1:13 we can get our thoughts under control
- Phil. 4:8 tells us how

Another important use or misuse of our words has to do with criticism

- We need to Avoid criticizing
- Criticism is typically cutting.

Its purpose is not to resolve conflict or draw someone close, it is a way to justify yourself, act superior or simply release anger. Each time we criticize we find fault.

The affects (of us being critical) are typically one of four responses:

1. You can be spirit controlled
2. You can give up (tune out) as a form of protection
3. Counter attack
4. Quietly become resentful

Read

- Romans 14:13
- Matt. 7:3-4

Our words:

- either validate someone
- or they invalidate them.

Which one are you going to be?

### **QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS WITH SMALL GROUP:**

- Can you remember back to someone saying harsh words to you? How did it make you feel about that person? How did you interact with them after that?
- When you get upset do you ever use words you later regret? If so why?
- What affects have harsh words and criticism had on you personally?
- Why do you think we become verbally critical of others?
- Why do our thoughts about ourselves often affect what we say to others?
- How do we change our thinking and ultimately our words?
- Why do you think it takes more validating of someone to overcome the invalidating?
- Are there words you need to do away with? How will you do it?