

SERMON SERIES: Words Matter

SPEAKER: Ryan Lingbloom

DATE: February 2, 2025

Sermon Title

“Building Up”

Introduction

This week, we started a brand new series called **Words Matter**. We spend so much of our lives communicating. We talk, text, email, post, comment, etc. And it is easy to focus on the quantity of our words and miss out on the importance of the quality of our words. The words that we choose to use communicate more than just their definition, but are a reflection of our heart and our faith. This week, we focused on the power that our words have in our lives and the lives of others— the power to build up or tear down. To get started this week, answer this icebreaker question with your group:

- What is a quote that you have heard that has stuck with you for a while? What made it so memorable?

Seek the Word

Read Proverbs 18:21 aloud, then answer the questions below:

- What does Solomon mean when he says that our words have the power of life and death?
- Do you struggle with speaking life into the people around you? If you do, why is that? If you don't, what helps you to do that?

Read Ephesians 4:29 aloud, then answer the questions below:

- How do you know what words are helpful to people and will build them up?
- Is building people up a conscious thought and effort when you use your words? Explain what you think about when you are trying to build people up with the words that you say.

Read Proverbs 4:23 aloud, then answer the questions below:

- What does it mean to guard your heart? How does that affect the words that we use?
- If someone were to take a look at your heart (spiritually, not physically), would they say that it is guarded? Explain why or why not.

Go Deeper

Think back on the conversations that you had this week. It could be with a spouse, a child, another family member, a friend or coworker or boss. Identify one or two of those conversations in which your words did not bring life, did not build up, and did not help that person. Share with your group the circumstances of that conversation, the things that you said, and the consequences of what you said. Then make a plan to remedy that situation at some point this week.

Talk About It

- What words have been the most impactful in your life? Whether good or bad, what did someone say to you that has stuck with you for a long time, and has affected your life in a major way? Share with the group the impact that had/has on who you are now.
- There was a line in Ryan's sermon this week: "Too many life-giving words die on the altar of good intentions." What do you think this means, and where do you see this being a reality in your life?
- What is going into your heart that is affecting the words that you say? Social media, news, peers, negative thoughts, etc. Diagnose the reason why you say some of the things you say and share it with the group.

Wrap Up

Reminder: The words that we say have power. Each time that we speak, we have the opportunity to change someone's whole life. They can encounter Jesus in new and powerful ways, or feel pushed out and alienated. We have the command in Scripture to speak life into the people around us, to build them up and show them the love that we feel from God each and every day. This week, make an effort to consciously use words of life and peace, not words to destroy and tear down. **Words Matter**, and because of that, we have to work to use them wisely.

Challenge: Participate in our Daily *Watch Your Mouth Challenge*. Each day, find 3 people to encourage and speak life into, 2 moments where you can express gratitude to/for someone, and each day read, reflect, and pray Psalm 19:14 "May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer."

Prayer: As you close, pray as a group for your week ahead. Ask God to be present in your conversations with people, to empower and embolden you to speak life into those conversations. Pray for guarded hearts and life-giving words, focused on building up the people around us. End your prayer with this verse from Psalm 141, "Set a guard over my mouth, Lord; keep watch over the door of my lips."