

40 DAYS of PRAYER



**WEEK
FIVE**

Theme: Words

Song for Reflection: “Words” (Hawk Nelson)

Suggested Video: www.bit.ly/RCC40DAYSWK5

Day 29 – Wednesday, August 14

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. [Colossians 3:15-17 NIV]

God gives us a picture here that, just as our words in our communal worship are meant to exalt God, so too should our deeds *and our words* do so in every aspect of our life.

Do the words of our lips express gratitude and thankfulness to God, and encourage peace with one another? How can we be an agent of peace in the church and in the world today? Ask God to show you, and listen to the promptings He gives you.

Day 30 – Thursday, August 15

Kind words are like honey – sweet to the soul and healthy for the body. [Proverbs 16:24 NLT]

Think about the word *kind* – it means “deliberately being good to another,” but the root of the word means “born of, from a particular nature.” Like when God made all the creatures of this earth, he made them to reproduce “according to their *kind*” (Gen 1:11, 21, 24). That means they would produce others that would be reflections of themselves inside-and-out. So *kind* words are meant to be words that we speak that are born of a particular nature – to be a reflection inside-and-out – of...whom? Well, God made us in His image and likeness (Genesis 1:26) – to be like him in *kind*. Think about it - He wants our *kind* words to be words “born of Him, of His nature,” providing health and sweetness to others, as He does.

Are your words a reflection of Christ’s sweetness, the health and vibrancy he brings to a soul? Talk to God about this, and let His words in response to you shape your heart, character, and the fruit of your lips.

Day 31 – Friday, August 16

Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. [Colossians 4:6 NIV]

There's a food show where a chef saves a failing restaurant, and when he evaluates their food quality, he says almost every time, "You need to discover SALT!" Too much salt can be bad! But in proper balance, Salt is meant to season food, bringing out the savory quality and taste, and even to cause a slight thirst that only water can quench in a satisfying way. That is what God wants in our conversation with others – His grace on display in a way that brings a savory-ness to the conversation, and through our example, make another thirsty for the living water that only Jesus Christ can provide.

Did that just describe your conversations with others...or not? Something to talk with God about today.

Day 32 – Saturday, August 17

Like apples of gold in settings of silver is a word spoken at the right time. [Proverbs 25:11 AMP]

Do you ever consider a *timeliness* to your words? Think about it – a friend comes to you who is caught in a life-debilitating personal compromise or sin, you see that they're struggling with their failure, and in that moment, rather than help them gently and humbly with the hope of their restoration (Galatians 1:1-2), you instead choose to blurt out every time they've ever failed in their life. You may be correct about those other sins and failures – but is this a timely word? Perhaps it could've waited until they were restored and ready to deal with those other issues? There are many situations we could imagine and ask similar questions about the timeliness of what we choose (or choose not) to say.

How is the timeliness of your words toward others? Do you find they are thanking you for your gracious, timely words, or showing hurt and frustration over being clubbed by your statements? Discuss it with God and open your heart to be challenged and changed where necessary.

Day 33 – Sunday, August 18

A gentle answer deflects anger, but harsh words make tempers flare. [Proverbs 15:1 NLT]

Read the story of David, Nabal and Abigail in 1 Samuel 25, and see how Nabal's harsh, thoughtless words almost brought wrath and destruction, while Abigail's careful, gentle words deflected disaster. Galatians 5:22-23 tells us what the attributes of God's Spirit are – His very character – that he wants to produce in us like fruit is produced from a healthy tree. They are: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. All of these are worth praying to God about, asking Him to increasingly produce them in our character and lives. But particularly notice *gentleness* today, and think about what that means in your words and conversations.

How would things be different with you and your spouse, your kids, your co-workers, Christians, non-Christians, people of all different ethnic, political, and religious stripes, etc...if you approached every conversation – even when they're disagreements – dripping with the fruit of gentleness? Is that fruit being produced in your conversations...or is the fruit of your lips rotten with harshness, anger and hatred? Something worth talking with God about today.

Day 34 – Monday, August 19

Telling lies about others is as harmful as hitting them with an ax, wounding them with a sword, or shooting them with a sharp arrow. [Proverbs 25:18 NLT]

There isn't a lot of expounding we need to do on this scripture; the intense imagery speaks for itself. Lying words – and other forms of harmful talk, like gossip – are serious issues, as other scriptures stress: “You shall not bear false witness against another” (Exodus 20:16...one of the 10 commandments). “A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy person keeps a secret.” (Proverbs 11:13) “There are six things the LORD hates – no, seven things he detests: haughty eyes, *a lying tongue*, hands that kill the innocent, a heart that plots evil, feet that race to do wrong, *a false witness who pours out lies*, a person who sows discord in a family.” (Proverbs 6:16-19; which sin is repeated twice in this list?)
Bottom line: If gossip and lying is a part of your life, you need to talk with God with a heart of repentance today.

Day 35 – Tuesday, August 20

Words kill, words give life; they're either poison or fruit—you choose. [Proverbs 18:21 MSG]

Every day, every conversation, every moment, is a *choice* as to what our words will do. Words are *powerful weapons*. Proverbs 12:18 says “The words of the reckless pierce like swords, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.” Ever been pierced by a sword? I haven't either, but I can imagine the pain and damage it does. That's what our words can do to another human soul. Or read James chapter 3 – you'll get an even greater understanding of the power of words.

If that isn't conviction enough, then hear the words of Jesus regarding the words we choose:

“And I tell you this, you must give an account on judgment day for every idle word you speak. The words you say will either acquit you or condemn you.” (Matthew 12:36-37, NLT)

God has entrusted us with this powerful tool called the tongue, and then trusted us to use it to protect, not damage, others. How are you doing with what He has entrusted to you?

What words will you choose to say to those in your life today? How about tomorrow? This whole week? This whole life? Your words can give life or take it away. That's something to talk to God about today, tomorrow, and for the rest of your days...

