

Be Real Put on Purity

God-like purity is seen through the way we use words (Ephesians 4:29). The Bible is clear: God is holy and is like no other. In particular, God is like no other in *purity*. Putting off the old self and putting on the new self (Ephesians 4:22-24) means becoming like God in purity. Such purity is intimately connected with our words because what we speak reveals what is truly in our hearts (Matthew 12:33-34). Words are undeniably powerful, not just in what we say but in how we say it. When it comes to our words and becoming like God, we must ask ourselves some critical questions: am I being truthful, am I being helpful, am I angry, and am I building others up?

GET THINGS STARTED

The tongue has the power of life and death (Proverbs 18:21). How have you personally seen words – written or verbally spoken – build someone up or tear them down? How have you given or received a truthful word spoken in the wrong manner with a harsh or deflating tone, and what was the outcome of that word?

GO DEEPER

1. From Ephesians 4:29, what is *corrupting or unwholesome talk* that we are to avoid? How do we determine if our words are corrupting or producing good fruit? What place, if any, does sarcasm or critique have when pursuing life-giving words?
2. According to Matthew 12:34, out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. If our words are corrupting and producing bad fruit, what are the possible heart issues that need to be addressed?
3. From Proverbs 18:8, what makes gossip so appealing, and what affects does gossip have on the heart? How do we properly determine if our words are gossip?

MAKE IT PERSONAL

1. What do your words – spoken, shared, liked, reposted, etc. – reveal about you and what is in your heart?
2. Which of the four questions about your words hit home most (i.e., am I being truthful, am I being helpful, am I angry, and am I building others up), and why? Do you need to correct or seek forgiveness for something you said that was hurtful or tore someone down, and what might that look like?

PRACTICE IT NOW

In an attitude of prayer as a group, ask God to purify your words. Ask Him to shape your heart to be like His so that your words may be like His. Ask God to give you an increased capacity to filter your words appropriately, to speak, write, and post only words that are beneficial to those who hear. And ask Him for the courage to make right things spoken (even if truthful) in a manner that was hurtful or discouraging.