



Sermon Discussion Guide
08.21.22 Message | David Beuttel

Key Scriptures:

Do not speak evil against one another, brothers. The one who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks evil against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor?

- James 4:11–12 (ESV)

Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

- James 5:9–11 (ESV)

But no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so.

- James 3:8–10 (ESV)

Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits.

- Proverbs 18:21 (ESV)

Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

- James 3:13–18 (ESV)

Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

- James 5:16 (ESV)

**Message Highlights:**

- We live in a culture where words are so carelessly thrown around; we grumble and we tear each other down in the blink of an eye.
- Words matter! James reminds us in his New Testament letter about the power of words.
- Words can cause evil and harm, but they also have the power to bring mercy and peace.
- The tongue is powerful and should be used for encouragement, especially in our lives as followers of Jesus.
- If we commit to using our words to encourage and build one another up, we can make way for God to transform a culture and community from death to life.

Conversation Starter:

As a group, go around the circle and share some encouragement with the person sitting to your right. It can be as simple as, “I really like your shoes” or “I’m glad you’re here!”

If you are reading through this guide on your own, reflect on the most encouraging thing you were told this week. Then, reflect on a moment this past week when you encouraged someone.

Discuss the Message:

1. Who is someone in your life who has been a consistent “cheerleader?” What impact has that person made on your life?
2. Who is someone you have consistently tried your best to cheer for? In what ways have you used words to build them up? What impact do you think this has had on them?
3. How do you know when you are genuinely seeking to encourage someone for their spiritual growth versus trying to influence their behavior for your own benefit?
4. Why can it be so tempting at times to get caught up in talk that is divisive and discouraging? What can we do to guard our hearts against this?
5. In what specific ways will you be more intentional to build others up with encouraging words this week?

Pray:

Father in Heaven, we praise you for the encouraging words you have spoken to us through your Scriptures. Jesus, we thank you for your example of humility; for the way you used your words to build others up. Help us, by your Holy Spirit, to speak grace and mercy and peace into the hearts and minds of the culture around us. May the words of our mouths and the meditations of our heart be acceptable in your sight as we encourage and build others up. Amen.