



Week One

Opening Prayer

God, thank you for this opportunity to connect in community. Help us be aware of you as we look at the ways our words impact how we love you, ourselves, and others.

Talk It Over

This week we talked about the power of words — our own words and the words of others. Words can bring life (love) or death (harm). Words of love call things into existence; they bring life. Words of death cause hurt and shame that can last for years — they can literally shift the course of someone's life. Here is our bottom line: our words matter. They matter to us, to others, and to God.

- Can you remember the first time someone said something hurtful to you?
- Have you ever said something you wish your could take back? Sent an email or text you did not intend to? Share a story about that. (This answer does not have to be heavy in nature.)
- How aware are you of the many words (possibly up to 16,000) you speak each day?

Let's look at three ways we can help harness the power of our words. The first thing we need to do is deal with the words that still have a hold on us. We can hear some pretty rough stuff that has a tendency to define us even years later. Exploring this truth requires vulnerability and support.

Read 1 Peter 4:8, 11 (NIV)

Releasing the past through forgiveness simply means that we are not going to let the things someone said or did shape us.

- Can you think of a situation in the past or present where you might have been stuck or be stuck in the past repeating the behavior cycle of old hurt? Share about that journey with us.
- If you have ever been able to practice forgiveness in order for you to experience healing, share that story with us.

Read Isaiah 55:10 and Proverb 18:21 (NIV)

Reshaping our heart with the word of God and his love daily, allows us to grow in the health of the words we speak to others and the words we speak to ourselves.

(continued on next page)

- Do you have a practice of speaking God's word into your life and over your life? How does that look for you?
- Would you describe your self talk as mostly life giving or destructive?

Read Psalm 139:23 (MSG) and The Quote Below

"No matter how grand your plan, one should check every so often to see if it's working." -Winston Churchill

A regular practice of opening ourselves before God and inviting him to examine our inner world takes courage but grounds us in reality. While denial of what is actually going on prohibits growth and healing. Taking an honest look at how things are allows us to begin to heal and grow, and empowers us to transform into the person God created us to be.

- Take a look at the word inventory below and discuss how you can implement these into your life this week.

Closing Prayer

God, you know our heart. Help our words come from a place of your love. Help us to be aware of what we say and how that impacts those around us. Help us to be aware of you this week and throughout this series as we work on speaking words that bring life.

Word Inventory Challenge:

This week we presented the idea of a word inventory. Below are some simple directions that will take you step-by-step on how to do this. Challenge yourself to sit and complete this at the end of each day this week and notice how it impacts your words and self-talk.

- Use the note feature on your phone or grab a journal and a pen.
- Create two sections:
 - 1. Words that brought life / love**
 - 2. Words that brought death / harm**
- Reflect on the following questions in writing: How did I do with my words today? Did I bring life or did I bring death? Did I say something to someone that I need to repent of or make right? Journal a little about how this process and try writing a prayer as you reflect or after you reflect.

Investigate my life, O God, find out everything about me; cross-examine and test me, get a clear picture of what I'm about... Psalm 139:23 (MSG)