

# ***Wise Up, Week 3***

## **Small Group Discussion Guide, week of Feb 15th**

### **FEB 15<sup>TH</sup> SERMON SUMMARY**

#### **The Power Of Words**

Words give life or bring death. They can encourage, comfort, inspire - or they can discourage, devalue, humiliate, devastate. (Prov. 12:18, 15:4, Mark 8:36, Prov. 13:3, 18:20-21). Words impact people, so choose your words wisely. How can we apply wisdom to our words?

- 1. Examine your heart** (Lk. 6:43-45, James 3:13-15, Psalm 139:23-24, Mt. 23:25-26). We mean what we say (at least, in the moment); our words come from our hearts. Allow God to speak to you and reveal what's in your heart.
- 2. Entrust your heart to God** (Prov. 9:10, Ja. 4:7-10). Confess, repent, ask God for help when you say hurtful words. Only God can change our hearts.
- 3. Entrust your heart to others** (Prov. 27:17, 16:24). God uses the words of others to heal. We can speak words that build up, and give healing and life.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

**I. INTRODUCTION:** Share something someone said to you as a kid (or more recently) that stuck with you for a long time.

#### **II. THINK AND REFLECT.**

The words of the reckless pierce like swords, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.  
(Prov. 12:18)

The soothing tongue is a tree of life, but a perverse tongue crushes the spirit. (Prov. 15:4)  
Gracious words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones. (Prov. 16:24)

1. We can better grasp the metaphors of poetical verses like these when we visualize them. Draw a quick picture on the back of this page or elsewhere to illustrate one of these verses.
  - a. Talk about your drawing, and how it illustrates for you the power of words.
  - b. If you can, give an example of how you have experienced or observed this power.

No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thornbushes, or grapes from briars. A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of. (Luke 6:43-45)

2. Jesus uses an analogy from nature in Luke 6:43-45. Read it carefully and explain:
  - a. How are we like trees and fruit? What is the connection with our words and hearts?
  - b. What are the characteristics of figs, thornbushes, grapes and briars? What point is Jesus making in the statement about them?
  - c. How do you think good or evil is “stored up in his heart” (v.45)?
  - d. Erik said, “There’s no such thing as ‘*I didn’t really mean what I said*’”. Agree or disagree? Do you think our words always reveal what’s in our hearts?
3. What do you think might be going on in the heart of a person who:
  - a. Complains and criticizes a lot?
  - b. Gossips and blames others?
  - c. Encourages and affirms others?
  - d. Prays for others?
4. Think about a person close to you who fits one or more of the descriptions in #3 (a-d).
  - a. How does he/she impact you, or make you feel?
  - b. What do you think Jesus would like to say to him/her?

**III. PERSONAL APPLICATION** (Choose 1 of the following if time is limited)

5. Which of those descriptions in #3 (a-d) describes you? OR think about something you said recently that might have been hurtful to someone close to you.

- a. Where does it come from? What does it reveal about your heart?
- b. How do you feel challenged or convicted about the power of your words?

6. How would it change you to entrust your heart to God, and entrust your heart to others?

7. Here's an opportunity to affirm and build up others! This is not an easy or natural thing for many of us to do, and it helps to practice and develop this skill with safe people.

- Go around the room (or break into smaller groups if time is limited), and tell each person one thing you appreciate or admire about them.
- Notice how it makes you feel to affirm others, and to be affirmed.