

Transformed

From Words That Destroy to Language That Builds Up

Reflect

- 1) Do you think we live in a culture of language that destroys or builds up? Why or why not?
- 2) "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me." True or False? Why?
- 3) Give some examples in our culture of how words hurt people.
- 4) The 8th commandment states, "Do not bear false witness against your neighbor." Why do you think this commandment made it into the top ten of God's commandments?
- 5) What does God expect of us in terms of the language we use?

Read Your Bible

- Colossians 3:8-10
- James 3:1-10
- Ephesians 4:11-16
- Matthew 12:33-37

Apply God's Word to Your Life

- 1) Ephesians 4 and Colossians 3 focus on working toward the goal of Christian maturity. How is a person's maturity in Christ evident in his or her language?
- 2) What does it mean to you to "speak the truth in love?"
- 3) Some of the deadliest sins come from what comes out of our mouth. Name those deadly sins. What is the anecdote to those sins?
- 4) As you read James 3, what is your "take home" lesson for you?
- 5) In Matthew, Jesus names the source for what comes from our mouth. What is that source?
- 6) Based on these scripture verses, how do we as Christ followers move from using words that destroy to language that builds up?

The second commandment is a language commandment regarding our relationship with God. "You shall not take the name of your Lord God in vain." The 8th commandment is a language commandment regarding our relationship with our neighbor. "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor." Jesus Himself taught that what comes out of our mouth is critical to our wellbeing as sons and daughters of God for one reason: "What comes out of the mouth comes from the heart." To bridle our tongue as James taught is a challenge that all followers of Jesus must take seriously so that we guard our hearts and so that we do not speak words that condemn us in the eyes of God or in the fellowship we have with other believers. Jesus' command regarding what we say was fairly straight forward, "Let your yes be yes and your no be no, everything else can be used as a tool by the evil one." (Matthew 5:37). To say it another way, guard what comes out of your mouth. To move from using words that destroy to language that builds up is a divine calling all followers of Jesus. We must seek to put this into practice in our own lives.

Pray

Lord, by Your Spirit's power, guard my heart, for out of my heart flows praises and prayers to You that I form on my lips. Forgive me when I speak ill of another. Let me not take Your name in vain. Let all my words reflect who I am as one of Your chosen and called people and transform me towards being a person who only uses language to build others up and to speak the truth in love. Thank You, Lord. Amen.