



SERMON DISCUSSION SHEET

WELCOME

- **Continuing Groups:** Take time to check in and offer updates from the week.
- Encourage everyone to share a highlight or lowlight from their week as well as any prayer requests.
- **Icebreaker:** What are the most powerful words you've ever heard?

CONNECT & GROW

- **Each week, questions will be provided to help individuals and groups connect with the sermon and grow deeper in faith. The following questions, prompts and discussion points are meant to help guide both personal devotion and small group conversation. Be open and flexible to additional questions.**
- What stood out to you from the message this week?
- Consider these statements: "Congratulations on your A+ paper." vs "Wow, was it easy?" vs "I'm proud of how hard you worked on that." Is there a difference between the words we say and how people hear those words? Have you experienced something similar to this? Expand.
- Think about what we say to the kids in our lives, around the kids in our lives or when the kids aren't around. Are there things we don't want them to repeat? Do we care about our words once we have children? Do we clean up our vocabulary for them? Why (or why not)? What is our vocabulary like with older teens or grown children? With our friends?
- Read Pslam 139:1-4 and James 3:8-10. Does God hear the words we think?
- How do we speak to ourselves? Spoken and unspoken words have power. What we say to ourselves can be just as destructive or uplifting as ones we speak out loud. Will the words we think eventually be spoken?
- Read Colossians 3:23-24. How does what you say impact the people in your workplace and your witness by actions to them? If you are in customer service or interact regularly with the public, how could you use your words to fulfill those words?
- Do our words over time affect our tribes over time that affect our love over time that affect our time over time? Are all the habits we've learned about connect? Do they balance each other?
- Name the differences between private or public environments? Do our words change between these environments? Why or why not?
- Read and compare Matthew 5:22 and Proverbs 28:23. Do words of correction or rebuke have a place? Does Christ show examples of this? Do we have a responsibility to do this?

Refer to the back of this sheet for prompts to use throughout the week during chair time.

CHAIR TIME & PERSONAL PROMPTS

GO

The following questions and prompts are meant to be answered individually, throughout the week during "chair time" or times of personal reflection.

- Words are how we speak to God. Think about prayer. Are you comfortable praying or do you feel inadequate. How do we pray? Are our words important in our relationship with God. Try one (or more) of these prayers this week:

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Gratitude: Smile! Laugh! Rejoice! Seek out any and all opportunities to thank God for life and for the blessings around you. If this is a struggle for you, let God know that as well. Pray for a grateful heart abundant with thanksgiving.

Prayer in Repentance: When you notice yourself inclined toward some act that you know is not from God, pray for help to resist it. If you have already acted, pray for forgiveness and strength to resist the next time. Make your prayers specific, name the specific struggle and invite God into your journey.

Praying for Others (Intercession): Put your focus on others, consider their path, their struggles, their hopes. Put your heart in prayer for them, with them, that the God might alleviate their suffering, draw them close and give them hope. Ask God how He can use you to help them.

Listening in Prayer: Be still. When you have poured your heart out to the Creator, be still, wait, listen for a response. Whether a response comes in a clear idea, or a sense of calm, wait for it. Breathe. Be patient. Be still and quiet and to listen for God's response. Wait for a few minutes (not seconds). If you do not "hear" anything, that's okay. Repeat later in the day or the next day.

- Read Psalm 139:1-4. Write this verse down and read it multiple times this week. Does God hear the words we think? What are some of the words you speak to yourself throughout the day? Do you need to change the words you think?
- Consider this Paul David Tripp quote from *Tongue Pierced* by Nelson Searcy. "You have never spoken a neutral word in your life. Your words have direction to them. If your words are moving in the life direction, they will be words of encouragement, hope, love, peace, unity, instruction, wisdom, and correction. But if your words are moving in the death direction, they will be words of anger, malice, slander, jealousy, gossip, division, contempt, racism, violence, judgement, and condemnation." What is the direction of your words?

Parents! Think about the following questions taken from the Phases book series:

- What word (or words) describe your hopes for your child in the phase they are in now?
- Where can you place those words in your home so they will remind you what you want for your child this year?
- The words we use determine the way we think. Are there words you have chosen to not say (or not to say often)? What do you want your kid to know about these words, and how do you want them to respond if you hear them?
- What are some specific and personal ways you can encourage your student and their friends?
- Some kids are inspired by words from a song, quote or Scripture. How can you discover the words that mean something to your child?