



Part 1 Discussion Guide

Face the Issue:

In part 1 of our new series, Jeremy shared about the power that the things we hear can have over our lives. Few things can keep us up at night like words that should—or should not—have been said. Words between friends can provide correction and bring about healing. They can also cause wounds. Clearly, the world of words is very complicated. God gave us the power of speech for good reasons, and He also gave us detailed guidance in how to use it.

Why is it so important for Christians to watch their words?

How can we discern when to speak and what to say?

Where is the balance between loyalty to the truth and concern for the feelings of others?

Into the Word:

In today's world we get exposed to so much communication that we have lost sight of the power of words. We must be reminded that the Bible makes no secret of the power of words.

Read Genesis 1:3–5

In this account, God created the whole universe by speaking words.

In what ways do our words create reality (on a much smaller scale)? For example, how do things such as wedding vows and presidential addresses change the lives of the people who speak and hear them?

Read Proverbs 12:18.

This passage compares words to weapons. Many figures of speech use this idea—a person with a sharp tongue might offer biting criticisms, fling barbs at opponents, make cutting remarks, or even perform a tongue lashing.

How does it feel, physically, to deliver such remarks to someone else?

How does it feel to be on the receiving end?

In contrast, how does it feel to deliver and receive words of comfort?

Read Matthew 9:1–8.

How many different ways are words used in this passage?

As Jesus asks in Matthew 9:5: "Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?" In what ways was Jesus uniquely qualified to make those statements, and in what ways are all Christians empowered to forgive and heal with their words?

Apply The Word

Read the following scenarios and discuss or think about how you would advise the people involved.

Amber's husband has a weakness for grand business schemes and has failed as an entrepreneur twice. One day he came home from the stable but boring job she had begged him to take and excitedly shared his idea for starting an Internet café in a vacant storefront down the street. With one son in braces and another headed to college soon, Amber doesn't think this is an acceptable risk for the family to take. She wants to be realistic with her husband without rehashing his failures.

Dan's daughter Libby, a college senior, comes home for fall break with a guy who does not strike Dan as husband material. Though Dan and Libby often clashed when Libby was in high school, especially on the subject of boys, they get along okay now. Saturday morning, before anyone else is up, Libby asks Dan over coffee what he thinks of her new, serious boyfriend. What's a dad to say?