

Day One
Start by Praying!

“I pray that your love will overflow more and more, and that you will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding. For I want you to understand what really matters, so that you may live pure and blameless lives until the day of Christ’s return.”

Philippians 1:9-10

To believe the best in people means that we must pray the best for people. This is Paul’s prayer for someone else, for another group of people, look what is listed in this little section ...

- There love would overflow
- Grow in knowledge and understanding
- For an understanding of what really matters
- Live purely and blameless

It’s a prayer to have a victorious life!

Many times, when we struggle with encouraging people, we tend to want those people to fail; to not have victory. But for us to cultivate a new culture within our hearts, to grow a spirit of encouragement, we must begin praying these kinds of prayers for people in our lives; especially those that are hard to get along with or honour.

Take time right now to list 5 people that you are going to pray this kind of prayer for during this week, make sure they aren’t just close friends and family but people who you may really struggle to encourage.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Commit to praying for victory over these lives throughout this week.

Day Two
Life or Death

***“The tongue can bring death or life;
those who love to talk will reap the consequences.”***
Proverbs 18:21

“Flatter me, and I may not believe you. Criticize me, and I may not like you. Ignore me, and I may not forgive you. Encourage me, and I will not forget you.”
William Arthur Ward

The writer of this Proverb that we are looking at today makes it real simple for us, he says that our mouths, or words, have the ability to bring life or death. To empower and uplift or destroy and deflate! How do you want to be remembered? As someone who speaks words of **life** or who speaks words of **death** into a persons life?

Think about the interactions you have had this past week with those that you care about and love. Did they leave each of your conversations feeling empowered and encouraged? Or did they leave that conversation feeling negative, down and defeated? We have the opportunity every time we speak with someone to send them off with words that encourage, words that let them know we are truly their **#1 Fan**.

How many times do we crush personal ambitions or goals because we simply don't believe in that particular person to fulfill them? Maybe if they had the right support with people speaking words of **life** into their lives, their goal would be achieved!

We aren't talking about false flattery, people can see right through that, but we are talking about being the most positive support base for another person's life. To seek out ways of speaking words that bring life and encouragement; so that with every interaction people would walk away feeling uplifted and not deflated.

Be a life-bringer to someone today, practice speaking encouraging, empowering and enlivening words that allow people to achieve their goals. Be someone's #1 Fan today with your words!

Day Three
The Deeper Issue

“People can tame all kinds of animals, birds, reptiles, and fish, but no one can tame the tongue. It is restless and evil, full of deadly poison. Sometimes it praises our Lord and Father, and sometimes it curses those who have been made in the image of God. And so blessing and cursing come pouring out of the same mouth. Surely, my brothers and sisters, this is not right! Does a spring of water bubble out with both fresh water and bitter water? Does a fig tree produce olives, or a grapevine produce figs? No, and you can’t draw fresh water from a salty spring.”

James 3:7-12

Yesterday we reflected on the power that our words have, the power to give death or life to a person. Today we build upon that idea with James 3:7-12 and we ask ourselves *what is the deeper issue?*

James reflects on how we speak and says ...

“So blessing and cursing come pouring out of the same mouth. Surely, my brothers and sisters, this is not right!”

How can we claim to know the love of Jesus Christ and yet still speak negatively of the people around us, whether at the workplace, school or even within our families? This just doesn’t seem right, it doesn’t make sense, if our hearts are truly owned by God then we should have a natural spring pouring out from our mouths.

The issue is deeper than our words, where do our hearts belong?

Does God truly own our hearts? Does He have authority over the words that come out of our mouths? And if God does own our hearts doesn’t that have implications on how we relate to others? Should we be the most positive, hopeful and helpful people on this earth?

Day Four
T.H.I.N.K

“Don’t use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.”

Ephesians 4:29

None of us like being put down; a lot of us would struggle if foul language was used to in such a way to offend or criticise us. But it is amazing how negative we can be towards people without even knowing it, especially to those that we love the most.

Some of us have a water purifier in our homes, the idea is to get the cleanest, most pure water possible, into your body. This is obviously a great and healthy plan for your life; maybe we need to establish a purifier between our mind and our words! How good would it be if you could filter all your words, statements and conversations so that anything that came out of your mouth would be words that were both good, helpful and ultimately an encouragement as our Scripture talks about today.

Who wouldn’t want to be an encourager to those that they love, those that you are meant to be a **#1 Fan** to. There is a great filter that we can try to actively put all of our words and conversations through, we just need to remind ourselves each day of it ...

T--Is it true?
H--Is it helpful?
I--Is it inspiring?
N--Is it necessary?
K--Is it kind?

We all remember our parents saying *“You need to think before you speak!”* and I am literally asking you to do the same; this is a great filter for us to put all our words through before we verbalize them and make it impossible to put them back into our minds.

Day Five
Spur One Another

“Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

Hebrews 10:23-25

All of us are in different seasons and very rarely do we all experience the same season of life at the exact same time as others, but most probably what you are experiencing now someone has already experienced. Coming together as God’s Church, or body, is essential to us encouraging one another and challenging one another to be better, more creative and more Christ-like.

The world famous Polish piano maestro, Ignace Paderewski, had been invited to appear at one of the great music centers of New York. It was a very formal evening with everyone wearing tuxedos and evening gowns. In the audience was a lady who brought her little boy along for the concert. She thought that if he could hear Paderewski play the piano, the experience might spur him on to practice piano a little more each day after school.

As they were waiting for the performance to begin, the mother turned to talk to some friends, and the little boy managed to wiggle out of his seat and headed down the aisle. He quietly made his way up the steps and across the stage to the piano stool. He climbed up on the bench and began to play "chopsticks."

The well-starched audience was horrified. As they heard the simple tune, the crowd responded first with stone-cold silence, then murmuring, and finally a few shouts.

"Whose kid is that?" "What’s the meaning of this?" "I didn’t buy a ticket to hear this noise!" "Doesn’t that child have parents?"

The tinkling notes and the commotion reached the ears of Paderewski backstage. When he figured out what was happening, he made his way onto the stage. Paying no mind to the crowd, he moved behind the boy, reached around him and placed his own two hands onto the keys together with the child’s.

While the boy continued to play, the master built a rich, accompanying melody to embellish the simple tune. All the while, he stooped down to whisper, "Don’t stop now son. Keep it up. That’s it. Keep playing. You can do it."

Who could you encourage on their journey, to spur them on? Who haven’t you seen at New Heart lately? Who needs some encouragement from a more experienced follower of Jesus?

Let’s consider how we can keep spurring one another on!

Day Six
Every Word

“And I tell you this, you must give an account on judgment day for every idle word you speak. The words you say will either acquit you or condemn you.”

Matthew 12:36-37

Our Scripture today is actually a warning; it says that we need to think about our words every single day because someone is going to hold us accountable for them at some point within our lives. Let's remove this even from a Spiritual point of view, your children hold you accountable all the time to those words you use, *“But you promised ...”* is a overused statement in families or *“But you said ...”*, we must embrace the fact that we are constantly held accountable for the words that we use, there is no such thing as *the slip of the tongue* or *I wasn't thinking* or the classic excuse *I didn't mean it*.

Not only are we held accountable everyday, by everyday people, BUT God holds us accountable, Jesus states that every empty word will be asked about when Jesus comes again; scary thought isn't it?

When I reflect on this passage it creates in me a desire to make every work count, to make every word positive and encouraging and also to make me fulfill all things that I have said and all the things I have said I am going to do.

Take a moment to confess those words that you may have used this week that were empty, negative or unhelpful. And also take time to pray for God to help you make every word count eternally.