



Living Well

Word Power



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Check out these websites for more information:

For more detailed information about the ministry - www.livingwelloc.org
Photos and writings about the ministry - www.livingwelloc.blogspot.com
Encouragement/culture on marriage - www.livingwellinmarriage.blogspot.com
Marriage events in the state, resources for marriage - www.marriagenetworkok.net
Making Marriage Memorable blog - www.marriagenetworkok.nblogger.com

Tongue of Fire

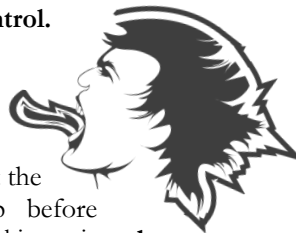
A word out of your mouth may seem of no account, but it can accomplish nearly anything—or destroy it! It only takes a spark, remember, to set off a forest fire. A careless or wrongly placed word out of your mouth can do that. (James 3:5-6, The Message)

Words are powerful! This verse uses the analogy of a spark starting a forest fire to the power of our words to hurt or destroy.

We should never underestimate the power of our words to hurt or heal! And yet, we speak without thinking, without contemplating the effect of what we have said. Many communication problems originate with careless words.

Mark Twain aptly said: *Action speaks louder than words but not nearly as often.*

Wisdom says to think before you speak. Often the words rush out before we think. **We wrongly think that we just need to have more self-control.**



But the step before thinking is the **condition of our heart** towards another person. If we have animosity in our heart, we will speak hurtful words. If we have love in our heart, we speak loving and kind words.

Even in times of disagreement, we must be careful of **our heart and our tone.**

Quarrels end, but words once spoken never die. African proverb

Amazingly enough, a **person can remember hurtful words years after they are spoken.** Often the incident that spurned the words are forgotten, but not the words. The words stick with us.

The words of some men are thrown forcibly against you and adhere like burrs. Henry David Thoreau

In the same way, wise and encouraging words can change the course of a person's life.

Kind words are short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless. Mother Teresa

If we could really **grab hold of the idea that our words can bring hope and healing,** we would invest more time and energy into **speaking and writing words of affirmation and love to the world around us.**

Try it, see what happens!

The Word on our words

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. Ephesians 4:29(NIV)

This verse may be the most important on our words. God's Word on our words is very clear. **DO NOT** speak words that are harmful! The word translated unwholesome in this verse means literally **"rotten,**

putrefied," such as rotten fruit. Other translations use the words **"foul, dirty, abusive, corrupt."**

In contrast, we are to **say words that will encourage and help others.** The verse is not saying to falsely flatter a person, but **to be kind and truthful in a way that will strengthen them.**

We want to **strengthen others according to what their real**

needs are, not just what they think they need. **Real needs would include knowing God's love for them, knowing His care and concern for them, knowing someone on this earth values them and believes in them.**

When we speak in those ways, **people WILL listen to our words and they will WANT to listen to what we say.**

On the reverse side:

Word to the Wise

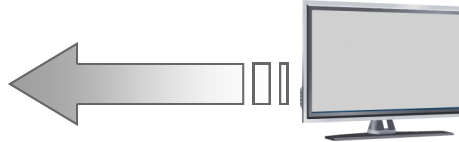
A Good Word

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Word to the Wise

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.
Ephesians 4:32 (NIV)

If we could **put into practice this verse along with Ephesians 4:29** (see other side), we could **take care of most marriage and relationship problems.**

Very simple, but not easy!

Three concepts:

1. Kindness
2. Compassion
3. Forgiveness

1. Kindness

We often challenge couples to **be as kind to each other as they are to the clerk at the store.** Most people use a civil tone, without anger or hurtful words to strangers.

How 'bout we start treating those we love that way too?

People who work in the retail world can tell you that not everyone treats them with kindness. Most of us will find that **we will get much better service and cooperation** when we are **intentional about speaking kindly**, even complimenting those workers.

Kind words produce their own image in men's souls; and a beautiful image it is. They soothe and quiet and comfort the bearer. They shame him out of his sour, morose, unkind feelings. We have not yet begun to use kind words in such abundance as they ought to be used.

Blaise Pascal

2. Compassion

What does compassion really mean? From the dictionary: **a feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow for another who is stricken by misfortune, accompanied**

by a strong desire to alleviate the suffering.

When we think about **our Lord, compassion is one of the first and foremost attributes.**

The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. Psalm 103:8

The word compassion or compassionate is used **over 100 times** in the Bible (NAS) and most instances are in reference to God's character. **The more we understand His compassion for us, the easier it is for us to be compassionate towards others.**

As we experience life's hardships, the easier it is to identify with others' hardship ... and to be compassionate.

3. Forgiveness

A key part of the verse in exhorting us to forgive is "just as in Christ God forgave you."

We are to forgive in the same way God forgives us. When we receive Christ, God forgave us **for everything** we have ever done in the past or will do in the future.

We don't forgive sins; **we forgive the hurt.** In the same way, that someone (Christ) had to pay for our sin, someone else pays for the hurt. The one who forgives pays the price. We no longer try to make the other person pay when we forgive. Paradoxically, **the one who forgives derives the benefit of the forgiveness.**

A Good Word

To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you.

Lewis B. Smedes

Any fool can criticize, condemn, and complain but it takes character and self control to be understanding and forgiving.

Dale Carnegie

Think twice before you speak, because your words and influence will plant the seed of either success or failure in the mind of another.

Napoleon Hill

A woman who can't forgive should never have more than a nodding acquaintance with a man.

Edgar Watson Howe

The whole idea of compassion is based on a keen awareness of the interdependence of all these living beings, which are all part of one another, and all involved in one another.

Thomas Merton

Kindness is the only service that will stand the storm of life and not wash out. Abraham Lincoln