

## **Proverbs: Great Advice for Everyday Living**

### **Lesson 28 - The Power of Words**

#### **Warm up -**

1. Describe your favorite commercial. What phrases or words stick with you?
2. Tell the group the best compliment you've ever received. Don't be shy!
3. Why did God make our tongues so versatile?

#### **Lesson -**

God definitely created the passage of time with us in mind. When we do something great, like winning the state championship in volleyball, we can celebrate, but life goes on. We need to keep working and playing. Next year, it's more than likely someone else is going to take home the trophy. And when we feel like life couldn't possibly get any worse - we've lost our best friend or messed up a run during symphony tryouts - the passage of time can help us heal.

Every new second we live offers another opportunity to do right or do wrong. And for no part of us is this truer than for our tongues. It only takes a second to build someone up ("What a great poem you wrote for English class!") or tear someone down ("You want a friend? Buy a hamster.")

Proverbs has lots to say about the words that come out of our mouths. Your words have power over other people. But maybe you don't realize that they also have power over you. When you build others up, you get built up as well. When you tear others down, it hurts you too. Like all sin, words can damage us. You are not like a computer that remains uncharged by its data.

Here's the good news: you can use the power of words to become more like the person God wants you to be. Because the more you lift up and encourage the people God puts in your life, the more you reflect God's image.

#### **Read Proverbs 26:20 - 26; Proverbs 24:26**

1. As you read this, look for the things words are compared to.
2. What are the best ways for stopping arguments?
3. Describe the malicious person.

4. How can we avoid the temptation to gossip about others? What could be your response when you are with people who are spreading gossip?
5. Proverbs 24:26 says, "An honest answer is like a kiss on the lips." Is honesty always the best policy? Can you think of a situation where honest words may be used to hurt people or tear them down rather than build them up?
6. How will this lesson affect the way you use words this week?
7. If affirming people is so easy, why don't we do it more often? Share ideas for building people up this week.
8. Sometimes words slide out of mouths before we've had time to think about them. When we're with our friends, we go for the quick laugh without stopping to consider if it's at someone else's expense. Share strategies to stop hurting people thoughtlessly.
9. How does technology intensify the power of our words?