

January 1, 2023
A Way With Words
Spiritual Formation Guide

We hope you'll use this guide to take the teaching from Sunday's service and reflect on it with a few friends or with a group. If you have questions or want to talk more about how to take a next spiritual step, contact us at info@wschurch.org.

Scripture:

“With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be.”

James 3:9

“The entire law is summed up in a single command: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.”

Galatians 5:14-15

“The one who knows much says little; an understanding person remains calm. Even dunces who keep quiet are thought to be wise; as long as they keep their mouths shut, they're smart.”

Proverbs 17:27 (Message paraphrase)

Reflection Questions:

- Can you think of some encouraging words that you received recently? What was meaningful about hearing them?
- What stood out to you from Sunday's service? How did you sense God at work in you through the songs, the story video, the message, and being together with others as part of the church? (The message main points and scripture are listed below if it helps you think back.)
- Read James 3:9. Then, read James 3:1-12. What stands out to you?
- Read Galatians 5:14-15. Words are very powerful. How have you seen your words make an impact on someone else?
- Eddie offered several words of advice and challenge to us in his message:
 - Become known for your encouraging words.
 - Become known for grateful words.
 - Become known for fewer words.

Which of those challenges do you sense you especially need to take today?

- Read Proverbs 17:27 from the Message paraphrase. Eddie said, “More word-restraint brings less word-regret.” Have you seen this to be true? How so?
- Do you think about how God receives your grateful words? Take a moment to express some gratitude to Him – out loud, silently, in a written prayer. Then, take a moment to be quiet and be aware of God receiving your gratitude.

Want some resources and ideas for how to grow spiritually as we start a new year?

Visit www.wschurch.org/resources to see some of the tools that our team is recommending.

Message Main Points and Scripture:

- **Over a lifetime, the typical person speaks 850 million words.**
- James 3:9 – “With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God’s likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be.”
- **If I can’t say anything good, I won’t say anything, at all.**
- Matthew 12 – “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.”
- **Become known for your encouraging words.**
- Galatians 5:14-15 – “The entire law is summed up in a single command: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.”
- Ephesians 4:29 – “Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.”
- Proverbs 18:21 – “The tongue can bring death or life.”
- **Become known for grateful words.**
- Exodus 16:8 – “Your complaints are against the LORD, not against us.”
- **Become known for fewer words.**
- James 1: 19 – “Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: you must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry.”
- Proverbs 17:27 (Message paraphrase) – “The one who knows much says little; an understanding person remains calm. Even dunces who keep quiet are thought to be wise; as long as they keep their mouths shut, they’re smart.”
- **More word-restraint brings less word-regret.**