



GENEROUS WORDS

“Only speak words that make souls stronger.”

– Ann Voskamp

*“Kind words are like honey—
sweet to the soul and healthy for the body.”*

Proverbs 16:24

There are few things that we could have more abundantly and readily at hand than words.

Words are a resource that cost us little to be generous with and yet can make profound impact on the lives of those we depart them to.

There are many ways that words can bring life.

How might you intentionally use your words differently to speak love, gratitude, identity, and encouragement to those around you?

1. Words of Love

There is significant power in someone knowing that they are seen and known and loved. When we use our words to express that someone is loved, we use our words to help them feel the presence of God's love in their life. Though directly saying "I love you" may feel intimate for some relationships, we can express love towards parts of others' personalities, the way which they approach a situations, or the skills and abilities they possess. Expressing this type of value, honour, and appreciation for the way God has created others helps them see and know and love these things about themselves as well.

What obstacles stop you from speaking out words of love? How can you embrace more genuine patterns of this speech in your life?

2. Words of Gratitude

There is a mutual impact that happens when we speak out how we are thankful for another person. When we take the time to identify a specific way that someone has impacted us and say "Thank You", not only do we acknowledge their efforts and help them see the impact they have had, but we also acknowledge that we need others' impact on our lives. When we stop to reflect on how we are grateful for someone else and speak it out to them, it can impact us by reducing competitive comparison, performative judgment, and false narratives that exist in our own minds. By speaking out words of gratitude with humility, we see others and ourselves more rightly.

When are you quick to give encouragement?

When does it feel more difficult? How could being more encouraging impact others and yourself?

3. Words of Identity

As followers of Jesus, we believe that God creates each person with significant purpose. We are intentionally created with different skills, abilities, and gifts to bring different parts of God's goodness into the world. When we take time to notice someone's unique contribution to the spaces they inhabit and speak out to them the impact we see it making, we join God in helping those He has created know their purpose in the world. We may be giving strength to what others already know or helping them see for the first time that the unique way they are created meets the needs of the world around them.

Who is someone in your life that would be impacted by words of identity? What practical ways could you share those observations with them?

4. Words of Encouragement

The definition of encouragement is "the action of giving someone support, confidence, or hope".

When we speak words of encouragement, we may give people the courage to step forward in a way that they wouldn't have on their own. If someone is facing a hard situation, needing to take a step of faith, or feeling drained from circumstances that don't seem to be changing, a word of encouragement from a faithful presence in their life may be exactly what they need to have the strength to know they are not alone, take action in a way that feels daunting, or move forward in a new way.

How could your words of encouragement bring support, confidence, and hope into the situations those in your life are facing?