

me & My BIG MOUTH

ME & MY BIG MOUTH, PART 3: FISH MOUTH

Our big mouths can be destructive, but they also have the power to build others up. What we say can impact the quality, and even the direction, of the lives of the people around us. How can we use this power for good?

BIG IDEA: Words add value or take away value.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Talk about something you've been a part of building (e.g., a school project, a business, a home, a family).
2. We've all had people tear us down. But who in your life has been there to build you up? How have they done that?
3. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read [Ephesians 4:17-24, 29-32](#).*

So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, and they are full of greed. That, however, is not the way of life you learned when you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

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. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

[Ephesians 4:17-24, 29-32](#)

4. Chris commented that “the apostle Paul’s point is not *be nice*. It’s *be helpful*. When has someone said something to you that was helpful, even if it didn’t feel good to hear it? Was there something about the way they said it that made it easy (or hard) to hear?
5. In order to be helpful, why is it as important to know who you’re talking to as much as what you’re talking about?
6. In the message, Chris said, “You can’t be a builder if you’re bitter.” There are things that get in the way of us building others up. Which of these do you struggle with? Any idea why?
 - Pride
 - Jealousy
 - Self-righteousness
 - Past hurt
 - Sarcasm
 - Weariness
 - Anger or bitterness
 - Apathy
 - Fear
 - Not wanting to share/lose the attention
 - Carelessness
 - Yelling
7. Do for others what God in Christ has done for you. Speak to others as God in Christ has spoken over you. What words spoken to you, about you, or over you have left you with a dose of bitterness?

8. If you were to make a list of the people you want to build up, who is at the top? What do they need to hear? How can be more intentional about building them up?
9. Even though it's not pleasant to look at the past and what causes bitterness in us, why is it important to "get rid" of it? What's at stake if you don't do the internal work of forgiveness?
10. Write specific names on the blank lines in this definition of forgiveness.

Definition of Forgiveness: Forgiveness is giving someone from the past, *for example: My Dad*, what they don't deserve so I can give those around me, *for example: My children*, what they do deserve.

If you feel comfortable, share some of your notes with the group. What can we do to support you in this step of forgiveness?

MOVING FORWARD

In order for our words to be helpful, we all have work to do and people who hope we get to work soon. To be helpful, we have to focus on the content of our conversations as well as the intent—and typically the intent takes more work. To get rid of bitterness, anger, and any unforgiveness holding you back, write down things that have been taken from you. Decide that they no longer owe you, then wad up the paper, throw it in a trash bag, and walk it out to the trash can. Let God know that you are getting rid of the bitterness on this paper, and ask him to help you be a builder with your words.

WEEKLY READING

Take time to memorize Ephesians 4:29 by making it your phone or computer wallpaper.

me & my **BIG MOUTH**

