

# “HOW TO GO DEEPER WITH YOUR WORDS”

## Beneath the Surface—Part 1

January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017

### INTRODUCTION

In our new sermon series “Beneath the Surface” we will try to go beyond a superficial level and bring more depth into various aspects of our lives. In this study we consider how to bring depth to our communication. We should be mindful of the attitude of our heart, for out of the abundance of our heart the mouth speaks (Luke 6:45). And we will temper our words with grace and truth because in speaking gracious words (Luke 4:22) and speaking the truth in love (Eph 4:15) we grow to be more like Christ. This study focuses on five specific responses we can use to make a positive difference in our communication based on biblical principals.

### **Ice Breaker (Optional):**

How many languages are you able to converse in?

### Study Questions (45 MIN)

#### WORDS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

##### “I am sorry.”(CONFESSION)

##### **Q1. Read 1 John 1:9, James 5:16, Matthew 5:23-24**

In many of our relationships, a time will come that requires an apology. But apologies require humility; a confession that “I was wrong and I am sorry.” When we confess our sins to God, and one another, it does more than heal the wounds in the relationship. According to 1 John 1:9 and James 5:16, how does confession specifically benefit us? How does an unresolved grievance affect your relationship to God? (see Matthew 5:23-24)

##### “You are great!”(AFFIRMATION)

##### **Q2. Read Luke 6:45; Hebrews 3:12-13a; 1 Thessalonians 5:11-12**

Another way to make a difference with your words is through affirmation; letting someone know they are doing a good job. We know that the source of our words is the attitude of our heart (Luke 6:45). What attitudes of the heart might prevent someone from affirming a brother (Hebrews 3:12-13a)? 1 Thessalonians 5:11-12 lists three categories of people you should acknowledge. Who would you include on that list? Make a commitment to reach out to them this week with affirming words.

##### “Are you okay?”(COMPASSION)

##### **Q3. Read Proverbs 12:25; Romans 12:15; Job 2:11**

With the right words, we can show compassion and lift the burden of those who are suffering (Pro 12:25). Sometimes we can communicate our compassion without even using words. (Job 2:11) Can you recall a specific time when someone saw your need and ministered healing words of compassion?

##### “You are forgiven”(RESTORATION)

##### **Q4. Read Matthew 18:21-22; Colossians 3:13; Matthew 6:11-12, 14-15**

For some of us, forgiveness does not come easily. But the consequences of unforgiveness stretch beyond restoring the individual who has offended us. Peter’s perspective of adequate forgiveness (Mat 18:21) was significantly less than Jesus’s. Why do we have no right to withhold forgiveness according to Col 3:13? How many times do you suppose God has extended you forgiveness today? God desires us to extend to others what we ourselves have received (Mat 6:14). What are the consequences an unforgiving heart? (Mat 6:15)

##### “We have a problem”(CONFRONTATION)

##### **Q5. Read Proverbs 27:6; Matthew 18:15-17**

When we see others straying from God’s truth, it is often easier to look the other way than to confront them. What makes your words more likely to be effective (Pro 27:6?) Jesus addressed the proper way to confront someone in Mat 18:15-17. What is gained by taking these steps? What attitudes or actions might undermine a successful confrontation?

### Wrap-Up

We can choose to allow God to direct our words to be effective and powerful, but it all begins with our hearts. The more our attitudes and actions reflect Jesus, the deeper we can go in our communication. We can use confession, affirmation, compassion, forgiveness and confrontation in such a way that we minister to the needs of those around us. It may take humility, investment or risk on our part, but we will reap a spiritual reward in addition to an improved relationship when we do.

### Memory Verse

... For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of. Luke 6:45b NIV

### Prayer (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life: \_\_\_\_\_

Pray for your group members’ needs: (see back for more notes) \_\_\_\_\_

### Challenge:

Pick FOUR of the FIVE “words” and say them to someone this week.

1 John 1:9 ESV - 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

James 5:16 ESV - 16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

Matthew 5:23-24 ESV - 23 So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

Luke 6:45 NIV - 45 A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.

Hebrews 3:12-13a NIV - 12 See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. 13 But encourage one another daily...

1 Thessalonians 5:11-12 NIV - 11 Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. 12 Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you.

Proverbs 12:25 ESV - 25 Anxiety in a man's heart weighs him down, but a good word makes him glad.

Romans 12:15 ESV - 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

Job 2:11 ESV - 11 Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that had come upon him, they came each from his own place, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. They made an appointment together to come to show him sympathy and comfort him.

Matthew 18:21-22 ESV - 21 Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" 22 Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times.

Colossians 3:13 ESV - 13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

Matthew 6:11-12, 14-15 ESV - 11 Give us this day our daily bread, 12 and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ... 14 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, 15 but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Proverbs 27:6 ESV - 6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy.

Matthew 18:15-17 NIV - 15 "If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. 16 But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' 17 If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

### Prayer Notes cont.

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