



DAY 4

Think about one of your favorite songs right now. What do you like about it—the music or the words? Maybe a little of both?

Write down a few of the lyrics here.

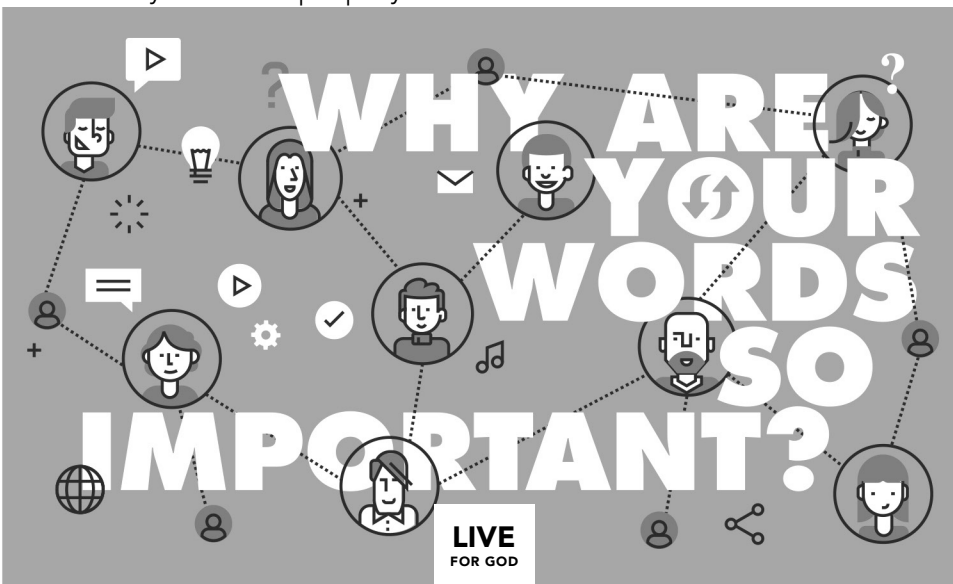
Really good lyrics always make a song so much better. Words can do that. They have a lot of power!

Think about all the famous, most powerful words throughout history—not just in music, but in speeches, movies, and more.

“FOUR SCORE AND SEVEN YEARS AGO . . .”
“I HAVE A DREAM.”
“JUST KEEP SWIMMING.”
“THIS IS THE GREATEST SHOW!”

Your words have power, too. Your words are important and you get to choose if you want them to hurt or heal. You get to decide if you’re going to be reckless or careful with the things you say.

God has put you with the people around you on purpose. It’s not an accident. He knows that you have the chance, each day, to speak life—to make things better for you and the people you know.



READ PROVERBS 12:18

DAY 1

King Solomon strikes again! Another self-control mic drop. And He’s 100% right, you know.

*The words of thoughtless people cut like . . . what? **RIGHT. SWORDS.***

We tend to think of swords like something plastic your little brother would carry with his pirate costume. But in Solomon’s day, a sword was a very real weapon. It could hurt people in a very real way. You know how careful you have to be when you’re trying to cut something with a kitchen knife? It was like that.

So what was Solomon saying? When do our words cut like swords? When we’re *thoughtless*. When we just open our mouths and start talking. You’ve probably done that enough times to know that it doesn’t end well. And the real bummer news? You can’t take your words back. Even if you apologize, you can’t make those words you said go away. Thank goodness for the second part of the verse!

But the tongue of wise people brings healing. (Proverbs 12:18, NIV)

When we’re wise—use self-control—our words can bring healing. They can make things better. We can use our words to encourage someone, to defend someone, or even to forgive someone.

Be someone who heals and restores. **Use your words carefully.** Use them for good!

PRETEEN

HEAR
FROM GOD

WEEK 3



DAY 2

It's funny—we tend to use our words pretty freely with the people we know best.

“DON'T TALK TO YOUR SISTER THAT WAY!” SOUND FAMILIAR?

Chances are, if you ever need a reminder to use healing words instead of thoughtless words, it's probably with your close friends or family.

If there's a time we tend to choose really careful words, it's probably when we're talking to God.

There's a good reason for that, of course. He's God. He deserves all our respect, honor, and praise. Period.

At the same time, God also invites us to call him 'Father.' He loves us. We are His children! He knows the struggles we face each day. We can turn all our worries over to Him, because we know He cares. (See 1 Peter 5:7.)

We need to choose our words carefully with God, just like we need to choose them carefully with people. But remember that you can be real with God, too. You can talk to Him anywhere, anytime, about anything.

You can ask Him to help you use words that heal instead of words that cause pain. God knows the times that you struggle with your words. He knows when you tend to lash out without thinking. He knows the great potential you have to show love and encourage people, too.

Take time to thank God for knowing you so well. Ask Him to help you have self-control with the words you say.



PRAY
TO GOD

DAY 3

Here's a challenge for you to take on this week. Let's see if you can use some healing words in a few different ways.

1. ENCOURAGE SOMEONE.

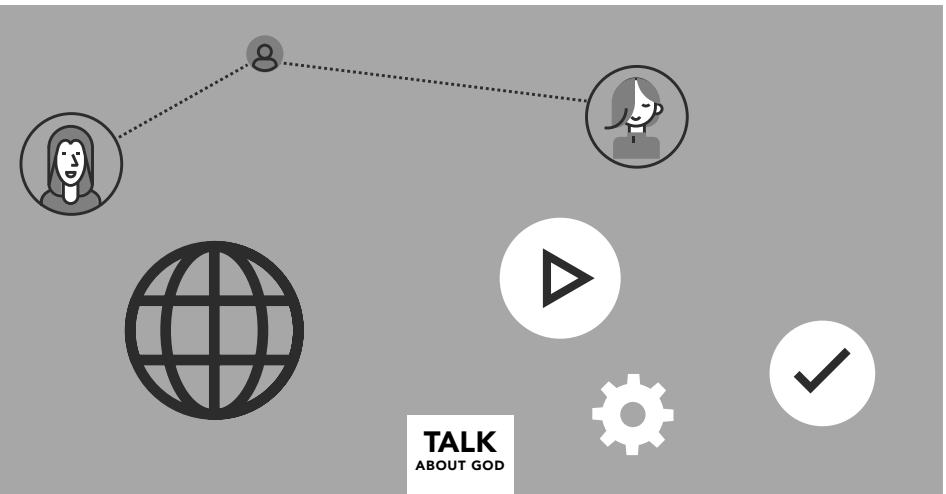
Tell your P.E. coach that he always makes class really fun. Tell your sister that she always makes you laugh. Tell your friend that you love her new haircut.

2. THANK SOMEONE.

Take time to appreciate someone for something specific. Like thanking your mom for always planning your family's meals. That's a lot harder than you might think!

3. DEFEND SOMEONE.

The reality is, people talk behind each other's backs. The next time you hear a conversation like that, defend the person. Say, "She probably didn't mean to." "I think he's really cool." "You should get to know him. You'd like him."



TALK
ABOUT GOD