

# Family Devotional

From October 23, 2016

**Create:** Gather 1 pieces of paper and something to write with for each person. Write your name at the top, then pass it to the person on your right. On the paper you've been handed, write something encouraging or uplifting about the person whose name is at the top. Be as specific as possible. Example: "You are so smart and sweet. I see this when you read to your little brother." Keep passing until your paper gets back to you. For those still learning to write, you can either do it verbally or have someone else write what they want to say. Words are very powerful! Let's read a story about God spoke through Ezekiel to bring about something miraculous.

**Read:** Ezekiel 37:1-14

**Reflect:** Who's was Ezekiel speaking for?

Were these his own words or words given to him by God?

How did Ezekiel respond when the Lord told him what to say? (verse 7)

What happened as a result of what was spoken?

Which was an example of death or brokenness; the bones before Ezekiel spoke or the bodies after he spoke?

Which was an example of life?

There may be a time when God gives you something specific to say, like He did for Ezekiel, but the words you use every day are also very powerful.

**Read:** Proverbs 18:21

We've all experienced a time when someone's words filled us with joy and made us feel full of life, but we have probably also had times when someone's words hurt our feelings.

Go around the group and share one of those experiences. Focus more on how you felt when those words were said, than the person that said them. You don't even need to say who it was. For example: One time someone said "\_\_\_\_" to me and it made me feel \_\_\_\_\_.

Now go around and share about a time someone said something encouraging to you and how that made you feel.

How do you want others to feel after you talk to them?

**Challenge:** This week be extra mindful of your words. Try to stop yourself before you speak and evaluate if it will build the person you are speaking to up or tear them down. Is it necessary to say? Is there a better way to say it? Let that guide what you let comes out of your mouth. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you with this. He won't shut your mouth for you, you are still responsible for what you say, but he will give you wisdom on what to say.

Sometimes words slip out before we've really thought about how the other person might take it. Come up with a code word as a family that you can use to politely point out there might be a better way to express yourself.

**Remember:** Work together as a family to memorize/meditate on Ephesians 4:29 this week.

“Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.”

Ideas: Write this passage down and hang it on the refrigerator. Say it together as a family during meal time each day. Write it on a chalk or white board and erase a couple of words each day until you can say it by memory.

**Respond:** “Dear Jesus, thank you for speaking your words of life to me through the Bible and in prayer. Help me speak words that fill others with life too!.....Amen.