

girl talk

the power of your words

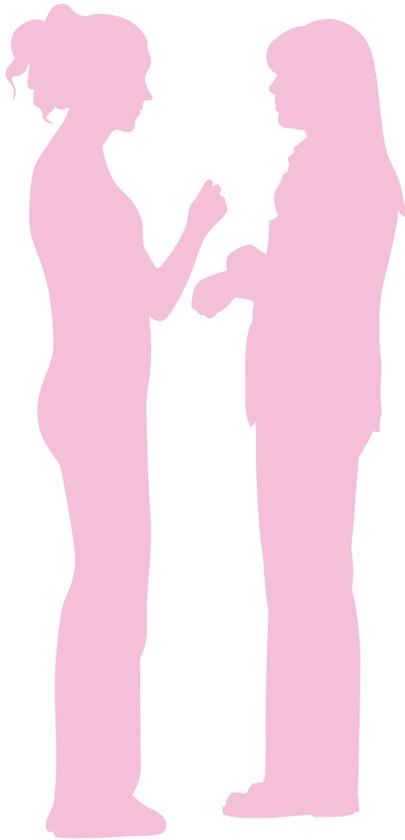


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We believe that the Bible has God for its author; salvation for its end;
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about the author

Pam Gibbs serves as the Girls Ministry Specialist at LifeWay Christian Resources, although her coworkers know she's actually the resident practical joker. Since 1999, when she first started working at LifeWay, Pam has worked with Sunday School curriculum, discipleship resources, and has written several Bible studies, including *Esther: The Role of a Lifetime* and *Complete: A Life of Purity*.

Pam is a native Texan who became a Christian at youth camp at age 13. She began working in youth ministry at age 19. She graduated from Wayland Baptist University before getting her Master's of Divinity degree at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Pam and her husband Jim have one daughter, Kaitlyn. Pam loves dark chocolate, traveling, good books and movies, and girls' nights out with her friends.



session 1



choice
words

Now, what if you heard these phrases instead?

I love you.

You're so smart!

You're my best friend.

Wanna come with us?

Cute outfit!

He likes you.

Good job!

The point? _____ are _____.

Scripture tells us that our words carry great influence. Read Proverbs 18:20-21. In the space provided below, rewrite these verses in your own words. If you could narrow them down to a simple phrase, what would it be?

Words satisfy the mind as much as fruit does the stomach; good talk is as gratifying as a good harvest. Words kill, words give life; they're either poison or fruit—you choose.
—Proverbs 18:20-21
(The Message)

small things, big impact

What do all of these have in common?

A MATCH

A COMPUTER CHIP

A HABANERO PEPPER

A MOUSE

AN EYELASH

A BLISTER

The answer? They are small things, but they can create big problems: a match in the middle of a dry forest. A computer chip gone haywire. An eyelash stuck in your eye. A mouse loose at a ladies' luncheon. A habanero pepper lodged in your mouth. A blister on your foot during a

Now when we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we also guide the whole animal. And consider ships: though very large and driven by fierce winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. So too, though the tongue is a small part of the body, it boasts great things. Consider how large a forest a small fire ignites. And the tongue is a fire. The tongue, a world of unrighteousness, is placed among the parts of our bodies; it pollutes the whole body, sets the course of life on fire, and is set on fire by hell.
—James 3:3-6

marathon. What other small things have a big impact?

Read James 3:3-6. What did the writer say was small but had a big impact?

life or death

Not only does Scripture tell us that our words have a great impact, but it also tells us that our words can bring life or death. In Matthew 12:33-37, Jesus gave us a principle for our speech. He also gave a warning. **Write down both.**

THE PRINCIPLE

THE WARNING

Jesus set forth a pretty tough principle. He said that the words that come out of our mouth—good or bad—come from what is already in our hearts. Bad speech reflects a sinful heart. Positive speech reflects a heart of love. Jesus' statement echoes Proverbs 18:20-21.

Words bring _____ or _____.

Around the bubbles below, list some things that people have said to you, both positive and negative.

Parent

Friend

Teacher

Coach

Boss

Boyfriend

Brother/
Sister

Classmate

Now that you've evaluated how others' words have made an impact on you, it's time to take a look at your own speech.

List the last five people to whom you've spoken, e-mailed, or sent a text. Next to each name, list the main focus of your conversation. Then, determine whether or not that speech was life-giving or life-taking. Was it positive or negative? Hurtful or healing?

PERSON	CONVERSATION	HURTFUL OR HEALING

choices, choices

Think about your typical day. From the time you wake up to the time you go to bed, you make hundreds of choices. However, there are some things you do because you just don't have a choice in the matter. Using the time line below, write down the things that you don't have a choice about in a typical day.

WAKE UP

LUNCH

BEDTIME

“Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit. Brood of vipers! How can you speak good things when you are evil? For the mouth speaks from the overflow of the heart. A good man produces good things from his storeroom of good, and an evil man produces evil things from his storeroom of evil. I tell you that on the day of judgment people will have to account for every careless word they speak. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.”

—Matthew 12:33-37

You have a choice about whether your words bring life or death to people.

While you may not have a choice in lots of things that take place during the day, there is one important area in which you have all the freedom in the world.

You have a choice in what _____.

Reread Proverbs 18:21 from the margin of page 7. Summarize it below.

You have a choice about whether your words bring life or death to people. You can choose to hurt people with what comes out of your mouth, or you can choose to help them. You can be known for your kind words or your painful words.

Let's look back at some of the painful conversations you've had lately. Times when you've lied or gossiped or said something mean. A conversation with your mom or a teacher or your friends. **What could you say differently? What are some better choices you could make with your speech?**

PERSON

WHAT YOU'D SAY DIFFERENTLY

Over the next few chapters, you'll discover the power of your words. Take some time right now and ask God to soften your heart to see the ways you've hurt people and the ways you can be a life-giver.

girl talk

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Gossip. Lying. Language. Sensual dialogue. Trash talk. You expect this on a high school campus, but not in church on Wednesday night. But the truth is that girls—even girls in church—struggle with their speech.

This Bible study will help you tackle these tough topics in a practical way. Each session contains interactive quizzes, discussion questions, small-group interaction, prayer, and Bible study. In the end, you'll learn that your words have the power to hurt . . . or to heal.

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