

ALLEY SG – January 27- 28, 2024

Today's Bible Story: Say What You Need to Say (Use Words Wisely) • *Ephesians 4:29*

Today's Key Question: Why do your words matter?

Today's Bottom Line: Use your words wisely.

Monthly Memory Verse: *Suppose you can be trusted with something very little. Then you can also be trusted with something very large. Luke 16:10a (NIV)*

1. Bible Story Extension

What You Need: Lightweight blocks, tape, "Story Tower" Cards (1-2 sets per group), "Story Tower Order" Page (1 per group), cardstock (1 per group per service)

What You Do:

- Spread the pieces of the "Story Tower" cards out where everyone can see them.
- Place the blocks and roll of tape next to the cards.
- Ask kids to try to remember which part of the story on the pieces came first in the story they heard during Large Group. (Allow the kids to work together.)
- Choose a kid to pick up the story piece that is first.
- Use the "Story Tower Order" Activity Page to check their response.
- Use the tape to attach the story piece to the front side of a block.
- Instruct the kid to place the block down to start a tower.
- Ask the kids to find the piece of the story that came next.
- Use the "Story Tower Order" Activity Page to check their response. Guide kids to try again if they've selected a different card.
- Choose a kid to attach the next piece of the story to another block.
- Direct the kid to place that block on top of the first one.
- Continue until all the pieces of the story have been mentioned and every block is placed in order to make a tall and sturdy tower.
- Give one kid the piece of cardstock.
- Ask the kid to crumple up the piece of paper into a tight ball, throw the paper ball at the tower, and try to knock it down.
 - If the kid doesn't knock down the tower on the first try, invite them to do it again until they're successful.
- Say: "Our words can be like these blocks. We can use them to build others up and make them feel seen, loved, and valued. But our words can also be like the paper ball. They can tear others down and make them feel small and unloved. Our words have such power, and we should do everything we can to use them for the good of others."
- Give the paper ball to another kid in your group.
- Ask the kid to open the paper again and try to flatten it and smooth out the wrinkles.
- Say: "There's no way to completely remove the wrinkles from the piece of paper once it has already been crumpled up. In the same way, we can never truly take back hurtful words that we say. When we follow Jesus, God sends the Holy Spirit to guide us. We can ask for help any time we're tempted to use harmful words."

2. Discussion Questions

- Why do your words matter?
- Why is it so hard to undo the damage caused by harmful words?
- Who can help us with our words?
- When have you used words that helped someone?

3. Memory Verse Roll

What You Need: a soft ball (one per group)

What You Do:

- Guide kids to sit in a large circle.
- Invite a volunteer to recite the monthly memory verse, then say it a few times together. *“Suppose you can be trusted with something very little. Then you can also be trusted with something very large.”* Luke 16:10a (NirV)
- Give one kid the ball.
- Lead kids to say the verse word by word (with help as needed) as they pass the ball to the person next to them. Play a few times, getting faster each time.
- Try it again, but instead of passing the ball, roll the ball to someone across the circle saying one word of the verse at a time.
- Play as time allows, encouraging kids to say the verse faster each round.
- Give a kid a Bible.
- Ask them to look up Ephesians 4:29 and read it out loud.
- Ask:
 - What are some ways you can keep from saying things that tear others down?
 - What are some ways you can practice using words that build others up?
- Say: “We will become people who others trust when they can depend on us to use words that build others up, rather than tear others down.”

4. Pet Project Prayers

What You Need:

Pet Project Prayers: 4” Activity Page, pens

What You Do:

- Give each kid a copy of the “Pet Project Prayers: 4” Activity Page and a pen.
- Encourage kids to use the spaces provided to list prayers they may have of specific ways they need to work on using their words.
- Examples of prayers might include:
 - Use kinder words with my brother.
 - Stop gossiping about people.
 - Text a compliment to a friend.
- Instruct the kids to write prayers that are focused on asking God to help them with their words. (These should be brief reminders that will help guide them when they pray at home.)
- of specific ways they need to work on using their words.
- Encourage kids to take their page home and place it somewhere they will see it.
- Challenge them to set aside time in the week ahead to pray each day.
- Say: “Praying doesn’t have to be complicated or take a long time. Just taking a little time talking to God each day is a great way to spend time with God and to stay focused on using our words for good.”

5. Pray

- “Dear God, please help us see people the way You see them. Give us opportunities to be wise with our words. Through a compliment, encouragement, even a simple hello, we know that You will help us be responsible with how we show care to the people around us. It can be as simple as looking to the person to our left and saying something nice. Give us an excitement and passion as You remind us to **use your words wisely** this week. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.”

PARENT PICK UP POINT: As adults arrive to pick up, ask the kids to tell their parents why their words matter.