



A Matter of Life and Death

Proverbs 18:21 (ESV)

Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits.

Death and life are in the power of the tongue.

Two characteristics of life-giving words:

I. Life-giving words encourage.

- The gift of encouragement is one of the most overlooked, but most valuable, spiritual gifts.

Hebrews 10:24-25 (ESV)

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

I Thessalonians 5:11 (ESV)

Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

- Encouragement is not flattery, nor is it the same as praise.
- Encouragement helps people have God's vision for their life.

- Encouragement is speaking a greater truth, God's truth, over someone.

- The fuel for encouragement comes from the Word.

(Numbers 13:30-33; Romans 8:37; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:10)

2. Life-giving words are truthful.

- Encouragement is the conscious decision to come close to someone in order to spur them on in their faith. (Hebrews 3:12-13; Galatians 6:1)

- Encouragers realize that the first face of encouragement gives courage while the second face of encouragement takes courage.

- As human beings, we all have blind spots.

I John 1:8 (ESV)

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

Lies that keep us from encouragement::

1. It's none of my business. (Romans 12:5)
2. Who am I to judge?
3. I don't want to upset them. (Proverbs 27:5-6)

Rules for dealing with people honestly:

1. Compliment in public, correct in private.

2. Correct them when they're up, not when they're down.

3. You must be open to correction yourself.

Romans 1:16 (ESV)

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.