

How to Love Life and See Good Days
Discussion Notes- September 14th, 2025

1. Describe a time when words brought you life and encouragement.

This week's message reminded us that if we want to truly love life and see good days, we need to be intentional with our words and responses. Scripture calls us not to repay evil with evil but to bless others—even those who hurt or curse us. Gossip and careless speech can destroy relationships, but gracious words bring healing and life. The biggest test we face is often how we handle people who mishandle us, and our words reveal whether we're pursuing peace or fueling conflict. In the end, God doesn't bless who we pretend to be; He blesses us when we live authentically, seeking peace, and using our words for good.

Read 1 Peter 3:8-12

"Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing. For "Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit; let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.""

Peter was writing to believers who were scattered, suffering, and facing hostility for their faith, encouraging them to live differently than the culture around them. He reminds them that unity, compassion, humility, and blessing those who mistreat us are marks of a life that honors God. In this passage, Peter highlights how our words reveal our hearts, carrying the power to either bring peace and blessing or cause harm and division.

2. Why is keeping our tongue from evil so essential to "seeing good days"?

Read Proverbs 18:20-21

"From the fruit of a man's mouth his stomach is satisfied; he is satisfied by the yield of his lips. Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits."

Words hold incredible power; they can create, heal, inspire, or destroy. Just as God spoke creation into being, our words shape the lives of those around us. Positive words bring encouragement and healing, while negative words, gossip, and slander carry destructive force, breaking relationships and even dividing churches. Often, people gossip to feel better about themselves or to draw others into their pain, but even truthful words can become harmful when shared carelessly. Because of this, we must be intentional to use our words to uplift rather than tear down.

3. How do you typically handle gossip - do you ignore, join in, or stop it? What are some ways you can stop gossip happening in your circles?

Read Romans 12:14-21

“Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

In Romans 12, Paul is writing to believers in Rome who were living in the heart of a hostile empire, often facing tension and even persecution for their faith. Instead of encouraging them to fight back or demand their rights, Paul calls them to something radically different: blessing their enemies, refusing revenge, and pursuing peace as far as it depends on them. This teaching aligns closely with Peter’s reminder that those who want to “love life and see good days” must turn away from evil and do good. Paul’s words challenge us because they run counter to cultural norms (both in his time and in ours) that say we should retaliate, protect our pride, and put ourselves first. With that in mind, we have to wrestle with how our world’s way of responding to conflict clashes with God’s call to seek peace and pursue it.

4. How do cultural norms today clash with the biblical call to seek peace and pursue it?

Read Proverbs 16:23-24

“The heart of the wise makes his speech judicious and adds persuasiveness to his lips. Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body.”

When we speak with wisdom, humility, and love, our words become a source of life leading to healing relationships, encouraging others, and reflecting the heart of God. Our words have the power to build up or tear down, not only influencing the emotional and spiritual health of those around us but also affecting our own well-being. Studies show that harsh, angry, or stressful speech can increase tension, raise blood pressure, and even weaken the immune system, while kind, encouraging, and gracious words can reduce stress and promote overall well-being. When we choose to speak life, we’re not only blessing others, we’re creating an environment of peace and health for ourselves too. Showing that the way we use our words impacts our whole being: mind, body, and spirit.

5. What is one practical way you can use your words this week to bring life, peace, or encouragement to someone around you?

Closing/Prayer:

- Pray for your words to bring life and encouragement.
- Pray for humility and wisdom in how you speak.
- Pray for peace and health in your relationships and yourself.

Deeper Dive- Responding When Others Mistreat You

Scripture calls us to bless those who curse us and to pray for those who mistreat us (1 Peter 3:9; Luke 6:28). This is countercultural—our natural response is often revenge, anger, or defensiveness. Yet God’s way is different. One powerful example is Joseph.

Read Genesis 50:15-21

“When Joseph’s brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, ‘It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him.’ So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, ‘Your father gave this command before he died: ‘Say to Joseph, ‘Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.’” And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father.’” Joseph wept when they spoke to him. His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, ‘Behold, we are your servants.’” But Joseph said to them, “Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people[b] should be kept alive, as they are today. So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones.” Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.”

After being sold into slavery by his brothers (**Genesis 37:18-28**) and later rising to power in Egypt (**Genesis 41:41-43**), Joseph responded to his brothers’ fear after their father’s death with forgiveness (**Genesis 50:19**), reassurance (**Genesis 50:21**), and generosity (**Genesis 45:7-8, 50:21**). He reminded them that what they intended for harm, God intended for good, and he provided for them during famine, speaking kindly instead of harshly. His response brought restoration to his family and furthered God’s plan of blessing.

When we bless instead of retaliate, we break cycles of hurt and open the door for God to work through us. Holding onto anger or seeking revenge often prolongs pain, while choosing forgiveness and grace frees our hearts and reflects God’s character. This is one of the greatest tests of maturity and faith. How we respond when people mishandle us reveals the condition of our hearts and the power of God at work in us.

1. Why is blessing those who mistreat us harder than seeking justice or retaliation?
2. How did Joseph’s forgiveness, reassurance, and generosity (Genesis 50:19-21; 45:7-8) demonstrate God’s principles for handling mistreatment?