

REFLECTION GUIDE

4.7.24

INTRO

We've all heard the adage that actions speak louder than words. However, the words we've heard have shaped us and the words we speak have the power to shape others. Some words weigh more than others.

THOUGHTS

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, I am sorry for the times I have discouraged the people in my life with my critical words. Help me recognize when my words are not helpful and adjust my actions in the moment. I want to be a person who brings light and life wherever I go. Teach me how to grow into that person. Amen.

DIGGING DEEPER

- Whose words have shaped you most? Why?
- Which comes easier to you: criticism or encouragement? Does it depend on the relationship? Why?
- Ephesians 4:29 says, "Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them." [NLT]
 - What are your observations about this passage? What key words stand out?
 - Describe the last time you offered helpful words that you feel made an impact.
 - How can we evaluate our words in light of the recipient's needs?
- In your relationships, how would you describe the ratio of affirmation to criticism? Have you seen evidence of more affirmations influencing how even constructive criticism is received?
- What relationship could use some work when it comes to the words you share?
- What is one step you can take to ensure that your words are helpful and beneficial?

