

## Sticks and Stones

### Description

Ephesians 2:14-22

The old saying goes, “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.” I’m not so sure anymore. I’ve become convinced of the power of words to shape our lives. Words are the basic building blocks of how we describe, interact with, and make sense of the world around us. Jesus, who is the living Word of God, is how God redeems the world. Words can build up, encourage, and enliven. They can also do great damage.

Paul warns his protégé Timothy against the kind of “godless chatter” that can lead people away from the Lord. Such misuse of words can “spread like gangrene” says Paul (v. 17). Paul knew full well that words can, in fact, hurt.

How do we use words? What if the truth were known about the words that come out of our mouths in back hallways, text messages, and social media? If a light were shone on our words, would we find words that build up, encourage, and love, turning away from wicked talk? Or would we find evidence of a systemic infection that threatens to destroy the faith of others?

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