



FAMILY MONTH

★ DEVOTIONAL ★



SOUTH
HILLS
CHURCH



Family
Month



10 CONVENIENT
LOCATIONS
TO CHOOSE FROM



OCTOBER
2024

南山
教堂



OFFICIAL WEBSITE
SOUTHILLS.ORG



INTRO



Each year South Hills Church sets aside an entire month for what we call, Family Month. The purpose is to learn what God has to say about our relationships, and collectively put these things into practice. We recognize that all families are different. You may even describe your family as broken or nonexistent. The good news is that Jesus invites us all to be a part of His family.

This year for Family Month, we are talking about our words and the way we talk to one another. Words are powerful. Years later, you can recall something someone said (to or about you) because of the way it elevated or devastated you. We don't often think before we speak (and sometimes even less before we type, text or post). But our words have the potential to bless and curse, heal and hurt, bring life or even death. Words, to a large degree, determine destiny. And according to research, some have an even bigger impact than others. What if when your kindergarten teacher told you to, "Say the magic words!", she was onto something significant? And if so, what words, if understood fully and incorporated regularly, might have the ability to reform our relationships with ourselves, each other, and the world at large? Over the next month, this devotional will help us take a closer look at what scripture has to say on the psychology of please, the science of sorry, and the theology of thanks.

Each day throughout the month, you will read a few short scriptures, ask and reflect on a question related to the scriptures, and then do a small action. This devotional can be used on your own, together with your family or, a close group of friends. We encourage you to take your time reading, reflecting, journaling, and even sharing amongst others. Let's grow towards happier, healthier families - together!



DAY 1

WEEK 1
OCT 6

Read:

- Proverbs 16:24 (*Kind words are like honey – sweet to the soul and healthy for the body*)
- Genesis 27:34 (*When Esau heard his father's words, he let out a loud and bitter cry. "Oh my father, what about me? Bless me, too!" he begged.*)
- 2 Peter 2:18a (*They brag about themselves with empty, foolish boasting*)

Ask:

Give an example of a time you said something that hurt someone's feelings. Give an example of a time you said something that you could tell made someone's day. How did it make you feel to hurt someone compared to making someone's day? Why?

Do:

Pray together that your hearts will be open to God and to work together to better understand how your family needs to communicate.



DAY 2

OCT 7

Read:

Proverbs 12:18 *(Some people make cutting remarks, but the words of the wise bring healing)*

Ask:

What percentage of your words do you think build people up? Tear down? What words or phrases are you known for? Have you said anything that you regret? Why or why not?

Do:

Write a list of words or phrases that you would like to hear from your family and pray together that you will find those words in your heart.

DAY 3

OCT 8

Read:

Proverbs 10:19 (*Too much talk leads to sin. Be sensible and keep your mouth shut.*)

Ask:

Why do we say "If you have nothing nice to say, say nothing at all,"? Has there been a time where you said too much or something hurtful, and instead wished you would've chosen to be silent in order to not bring more harm to the situation? How can being quiet sometimes be the healthier option? Why is it hard to think of nice things to say? Why is it easier to say mean things?

Do:

Go around and name one thing that you appreciate about each other; remember to truly take the time to let them know why you appreciate it and how it makes you feel.

DAY 4

OCT 9

Read:

Ephesians 4:29 (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.)

Ask:

What words or phrases have you heard that have torn you down? Why were those words so powerful? Do you end up saying the same mean things to others?

Do:

Take time to journal to reflect on words names or phrases that have torn you down. After, take time to think of times when you were the one hurling the hurtful names, words, or phrases.

Read:

Luke 6:45 (A good person produces good things from the treasury of a good heart, and an evil person produces evil things from the treasury of an evil heart. What you say flows from what is in your heart.)

Ask:

What hurtful things have people done to you that you can't seem to let go of? Why do you think it has stuck with you so long? How do you think it has affected the way you speak to and about them?

Do:

Pray together that God will help remove any hate or ill-will from your hearts and allow you to work together on improving your speech towards one another.

DAY 6

OCT 11

Read:

2 Timothy 1:7 (*For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline*)

Ask:

How has God equipped our spirit? How can we help keep each other accountable for our speech? How can you make it easier to speak kind words? How can you make it harder to say hurtful words?

Do:

Write 2 Timothy 1:7 on an index card or post-it note to put on your bathroom mirror, in your car or on your fridge as a daily reminder. Create a plan to help each other improve your heart and your speech together.

DAY 7

OCT 12

Read:

Colossians 3:16 (*Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your life. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts.*)

Ask:

Why is it hard to be thankful? Why is it easy to tear each other down? What's something you can do together regularly as a family to practice being thankful and uplifting, as well as constructive with your words?

Do:

Talk openly about how each member of your family or friend group handles other people's critique or feedback. Then talk about how you can be thankful while ALSO listening to feedback.

DAY 1**WEEK 2**
OCT 13**Read:**

1 Peter 3:8 (*Finally, all of you should be of one mind. Sympathize with each other. Love each other as brothers and sisters. Be tenderhearted, and keep a humble attitude.*)

Ask:

What are your top three favorite things in life right now? What about it makes you like it?

Do:

Take time to look into what interests your family members and have a conversation with them about why it's special to them. Find ways to demonstrate 1 Peter 3:8 towards your family and friends throughout the week.



DAY 2

OCT 14

Read:

Romans 12:15-17 (*Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all! Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable.*)

Ask:

JOY – An overall belief in the goodness of God and His love for you that empowers you to feel confident and content in any circumstance. What's bringing you joy in life right now? Why does it bring you joy? How can your family celebrate this joy with you?

Do:

Take time to celebrate each other's joy and pray over the season together.

DAY 3

OCT 15

Read:

Romans 12:15-17 (*Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all! Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable.*)

Ask:

What has made you sad or angry in this season of life? Why? How can your family be there for you?

Do:

Take time to grieve and console one another in these struggles. Ask how you can be praying for each other in this season.

DAY 4

OCT 16

Read:

Romans 12:16 (*Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all!*)

Ask:

Who do you think would benefit from spending more time with your family? Why them? What do you think they would get out of it? What would be the best way to involve them?

Do:

Take the time to actually invite them to something specific in the next week! (A fun pizza night with the family, or inviting them to join you for lunch after church...people just need a place to feel welcomed and loved).

DAY 5

OCT 17

Read:

Romans 12:16 (*Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all!*)

Ask:

What sorts of things make you feel that you might be a bit better than someone else? What's something you think other people are so much better at than you, that it makes you feel insecure? How do these two things affect the way you live your life?

Do:

Pray together that God will show you each of you your value as well as the value of others; be humble before God and focus on loving one another.

DAY 6

OCT 18

Read:

Philippians 2:4 (*Don't look out only for your own interest, but take an interest in others, too.*)

Ask:

What is something you can do to demonstrate that you are interested in someone else's life? How is it hard to care about what is going on with the people around you? Would you do something you don't like to do because someone you love likes it?

Do:

Reach out to someone and learn about their interests; take some time with them and do an activity together!

DAY 7

OCT 19

Read:

1 Peter 3:8 (*Finally, all of you should be of one mind. Sympathize with each other. Love each other as brothers and sisters. Be tenderhearted, and keep a humble attitude.*)

Ask:

What are some things you should say 'please' to, but don't? How does it make you feel when someone tells you to do something instead of asking nicely? What things do you feel you demand of others instead of asking?

Do:

Pray together and thank God for your family and end your time by having a nice family activity (e.g. board games, movie, sports, etc.)

DAY 1**WEEK 3**
OCT 20**Read:**

1 John 1:9 (*But if we confess our sins to Him, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.*)

Ask:

What is something you think you need to ask forgiveness for in your family? Why do you think that would hurt their feelings? What do you think it would take to make it right?

Do:

Take the time to write out those hurt feelings and then throw them in the trash, releasing all of the pain that holding it caused.



DAY 2

OCT 21

Read:

Romans 3:23 (*For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard.*)

Ask:

When is a time that you messed up? How did it make you feel? What did it take to make it up to that person?

Do:

Take the time to console one another, say any apologies or forgiveness needed, and hug each other tightly.

DAY 3

OCT 22

Read:

2 Corinthians 7:10 (For the kind of sorrow God wants us to experience leads us away from sin and results in salvation. There's no regret for that kind of sorrow. But worldly sorrow, which lacks repentance, results in spiritual death.)

Ask:

What is something about your words that you would like to change? Anger? Impoliteness? Lying? How can your family help you while you make these changes?

Do:

Journal this week about how your words were each day. Share with each other and hold each other accountable with kind words and love. Be honest and help each other grow.

DAY 4

OCT 23

Read:

Romans 14:19 (*So then, let us aim for harmony in the church and try to build each other up.*)

Ask:

Tell about a time you did something bad or wrong and had to make it right. Has anyone disappointed you and offered to make it right? Did they follow through? How did that make you feel?

Do:

Ask your family if there is anything you can do to correct your bad behavior from the past. Do it for them. Be as quick to forgive as you would want to be forgiven.

DAY 5

OCT 24

Read:

James 5:16 (Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.)

Ask:

Who is the easiest person in your life to be honest about having done something bad or disappointing? Why is that? Is it easy to confess something to me? Why or why not?

Do:

Talk to each other about how you can be easier to confess to and pray with. End in a time of prayer, asking God for help in this process.

DAY 6

OCT 25

Read:

Acts 3:19 (*Now repent of your sins and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped away.*)

Ask:

How can we as a family make it easier to admit when we are wrong to each other? How can we help each other out when we make mistakes? How can we celebrate when we correct our mistakes together?

Do:

Talk about what you need help with this season. How can your family help support you? Be there to help with love, not with shame.

DAY 7

OCT 26

Read:

John 20:23 (*If you forgive anyone's sins, they are forgiven. If you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.*)

Ask:

How can you help each other to remember the truth that God forgave us first? How can you help your family forgive as much as God does while also helping each other grow? What can you do today to forgive your family and love more?

Do:

Write out a list of things that your family or others have done and pray together that God will help you forgive each other. Throw it in the trash and have a meal together.

DAY 1

WEEK 4
OCT 27

Read:

1 Thessalonians 5:18 (*Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.*)

Ask:

What are some things in your life you are grateful for? Why? What has God given you this year? How are you able to show gratitude for what God is doing in your life?

Do:

Go show that gratitude together! Have a meal, go for a walk, and enjoy.

DAY 2

OCT 28

Read:

Proverbs 27: 9 (*The heartfelt counsel of a friend is as sweet as perfume and incense.*)

Ask:

What are you grateful for in your family? Why? How can you show your family that you appreciate what they do?

Do:

Learn their love language (Words of Affirmation, Physical Touch, Gifts, Quality Time, Acts of Service) and find ways to show each other that you love one another.

DAY 3

OCT 29

Read:

2 Corinthians 4:15 (*All of this is for your benefit. And as God's grace reaches more and more people, there will be great thanksgiving, and God will receive more and more glory.*)

Ask:

On a scale of 1-10, how thankful do you think you are? Why? How can you as a family be more thankful? How can you show that thankfulness?

Do:

Take a notecard for each person in your family. Leave notes for each other around the house, giving reminders of how appreciated and loved they are.

DAY 4

OCT 30

Read:

Psalm 100:4 (*Enter His gates with thanksgiving; go into His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him and praise His name.*)

Ask:

How often do you thank God? What do you thank God for? How can your family thank God together?

Do:

Pray together and list off what you are grateful for in your family. Have a nice meal and enjoy the day!

DAY 5

OCT 31

Read:

Philippians 4:6 (*Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank Him for all He has done.*)

Ask:

What has made you nervous this season? Why does it make you nervous? How can your family help you? How can God help you? What would it feel like if you could lean on God and your family? How can you lean on them today?

Do:

Pray together that God will take away those nerves you. Take a deep breath and be thankful as you enjoy a nice Fall activity (e.g. Trick or Treat, hay rides, corn maze, apple picking, etc.)

DAY 6

nov 1

Read:

Psalm 107:1 (*Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! His faithful love endures forever.*)

Ask:

What moments in your family (or Family Month) do you wish could last forever? Why? How can your family help live out those moments more often?

Do:

Take time to thank each other for the memories and make plans to make new memories together.

DAY 7

nov 2

Read:

1 Corinthians 15: 57 (*But thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ.*)

Ask:

How have your words, thoughts, and hearts changed during Family Month? What do you still want to work on? Do you feel closer together? What has changed? What hasn't?

Do:

Pray together to love on one another and to keep using your words wisely. Thank each other for going through this devotional with you and have a celebration!