



WORDS WITH FRIENDS
Part 2: Private Conversations
Sermon Small Group Questions
Speaker: Pastor Dave Patterson

USING THIS SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

- This Sermon Discussion Guide is only a tool to aid you in meeting the needs of your group. For most groups, there are too many questions to answer in one session together. After considering the needs of your group, you may choose one of the following options:
 1. one section of questions
 2. one or two questions from each section
- Feel free to adapt the format to meet the needs of your group. If your group is mature and wants to dig deeper, add Scripture and ask suitable questions. Remember that this is only a guide.
- Personal application is key to everyone's growth and should be included in every discussion. When asked how he or she intends to apply a certain principle a group member may say, "I need to spend more time in the Bible and in prayer." It is important for you to help group members make applications that are more specific and commit to a specific plan of action by asking, for example, "How are you going to begin?" An example is to get up 30 minutes earlier each morning, spending 15 minutes reading the Bible and 10 minutes in prayer. Encourage each group member to be accountable to the group for personal progress at the next meeting.
- As the leader your goal is to help bring the group into a stimulating discussion that helps the members recognize their need for personal life change. Ultimately you want them to be willing to commit to change with accountability to the group. Accountability helps us to persevere in our commitments and achieve the blessings of success.

INTRODUCTION

In this series, we will look at the power of words: how words with friends define our future and how we can learn to speak in alignment with the Word and will of God in order to change our lives for the best. We live in a culture, like never before in history, where we are being monitored: conversations are recorded, surveillance cameras are everywhere. We live with varying degrees of filtering out conversations, so as to not overspeak. Yet, the real issue is what we speak out of our hearts when nobody is watching or listening. The conversations that matter most are shared when we are comfortable and speaking from the heart, sharing words with friends. In this lesson, we will discuss the power of private conversations to take us into our inheritance or leave us in a wilderness.

MESSAGE

[Proverbs 18.21]

Life and death are in the power of the tongue.

[The Message]

²¹ *Words kill, words give life; they're either poison or fruit—you choose.*

Private conversations really matter to God; He weighs the secrets of the hearts (the thoughts, motives, & intentions).

[Luke 12.3]

Whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have whispered behind closed doors will be shouted from the housetops for all to hear!

[Luke 8.17]

For all that is secret will eventually be brought into the open, and everything that is concealed will be brought to light and made known to all.

No matter how secretive you think you are being, there is not a conversation spoken or a word uttered that goes unheard by God.

[Numbers 13.25-29]

²⁵ *After exploring the land for forty days, the men returned ²⁶ to Moses, Aaron, and the whole community of Israel at Kadesh in the wilderness of Paran. They reported to the whole community what they had seen and showed them the fruit they had taken from the land. ²⁷ This was their report to Moses: “We entered the land you sent us to explore, and it is indeed a bountiful country—a land flowing with milk and honey. Here is the kind of fruit it produces. ²⁸ But the people living there are powerful, and their towns are large and fortified. We even saw giants there, the descendants of Anak! ²⁹ The Amalekites live in the Negev, and the Hittites, Jebusites, and Amorites live in the hill country. The Canaanites live along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea and along the Jordan Valley.” ³⁰ But Caleb tried to quiet the people as they stood before Moses. “Let’s go at once to take the land,” he said. **“We can certainly conquer it!”** ³¹ But the other men who had explored the land with him disagreed. “We can’t go up against them! They are stronger than we are!” ³² So they spread this **evil report** about the land among the Israelites: “The land we traveled through and explored will devour anyone who goes to live there. All the people we saw were huge. ³³ We even saw giants there, the descendants of Anak. Next to them we felt like grasshoppers.*

What will be your response when the negative report comes? Will you side with the word and promise of God or will you take the easy road? *There are many of us who have stayed in the wilderness far too long.*

Responding to the Word of the Lord:

[Mark 4.24]

“Pay close attention to what you hear.”

[Luke 8.18]

“Pay close attention to how you hear.”

“If you listen, you may just believe...if you believe an evil report, it will get in your conversation. If it gets in your conversation, it will grow in your emotions and eventually direct your actions.”

evil report: anything that contradicts God's word and revealed purpose for your life

The words you receive you will respond to.

[Psalm 106.24-27]

24 But then they rejected the land that was so desirable. They didn't trust God's promise

25 They complained in their tents and wouldn't listen to the LORD's voice.

26 So God raised his hand against them, making them fall in the desert,

27 scattering their offspring among the nations, casting them across many lands.

[Malachi 3.16-18]

16 Then those who feared the LORD spoke with each other, and the LORD listened to what they said. In his presence, a scroll of remembrance was written to record the names of those who feared him and always thought about the honor of his name.

17 “They will be my people,” says the LORD of Heaven's Armies. “On the day when I act in judgment, they will be my own special treasure. I will spare them as a father spares an obedient child.”

How to Get Out of the Wilderness and into the Inheritance:

- 1. Fill your heart. [Joshua 1.8; Proverbs 4.23]**
- 2. Recognize and resist the evil report.**

3. **Agree with the Good Report = "We can do this!"**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **Why is the language of faith so important in private conversations?**
2. **How has an evil or discouraging report spoken in private affected your attitude and behavior in public?**
3. **What are filters that you can use to sort through words from the Holy Spirit versus words from someone's opinions or emotions?**
4. **What words are you choosing to "receive" from others lately?**
5. **Who are some close friends or family members ("in the tent") that you can be totally open and honest with about what you're going through and who will speak the Word of God over your life?**
6. **What words of faith would you like to be associated with by others and by God, at the end of your life?**