

**The Encouragement App****May 13, 2012**

Talking through the message during the week helps you turn what God is saying to you into action steps. These talking points, questions and scriptures are designed to help you take the next step.

- What kinds of things lift you up and encourage you in life? Are there specific people in your life that you know will always lift you up?
- What do you do or say when you want to encourage someone?
- The average ratio in normal conversation is 6 to 1 (6 critical comments for every 1 uplifting, encouraging comment). Are you more encouraging or critical in the things you say? What do you think your ratio is?
- Why does it matter if we are negative and critical instead of encouraging? Does our conversation or the things we say make a difference in the lives of the people we talk to?

**With your Bible or YouVersion.com, read Proverbs 11:25b and Philippians 4:8**

- What impact would it make on our conversation if we focused our thoughts on the things that commends to the church at Phillippi?
- Proverbs 11:25b gives us a principle of reciprocity (what you do toward others will come back to you).

How have you experienced this principle in your life?

- What practical things can you do this week to improve your ratio of criticism to encouragement?

**My Next Step Today Is To . . .**

- Trust my life to God, experiencing His forgiveness of my sins and new life which is abundant.
- Recognize that I have a problem with criticism and negative conversation and therefore commit to increase my use of encouraging words.
- Intentionally say something encouraging every day this week.
- Meditate on and/or memorize Proverbs 11:25b

**Talk It Over with God:**

These prayer tips can guide your time alone with God each day. Praying with a friend or a small group might help you stick to it.

- Ask God to help you be open during the “Life Apps” series to areas where He wants to work in your life.
- Ask for God’s help to transform your conversation by changing the typical ratio of 1 encouraging comment to every 6 critical comments.
- Pray for that person(s) in your life who tends to wound you with their words. Ask God to help you to see their woundedness and to love them in spite of their words.
- Spend some time listening to God being open to ways that the Holy Spirit might show you that you can be an encourager to those in your inner circle; your sphere of influence and everyday life.