

5 Ways to Filter What You Say

I've often shared about the power of the tongue—how it can be used for good or evil. I recently thought about some filters our words should have to pass through before they come out of our mouths. If they don't make it through all of these five filters, then they probably should never be spoken.

1. Do I have good motives? Is my reason for saying it beneficial to the listener or only made for selfish purposes? I have to be careful on this one. There have been many times in my life that I've said something that is very true, but I only said it so someone will be impressed with me or because I was trying to manipulate them to do something for me.

2. Does it build up? Words are not neutral. They either tear down or build up. They are either hurtful or helpful. It makes me sad that I've let my hurtful words toward my wife and children pass through this filter all too often.

3. Is it confidential? Growing up, my dad stressed to me the importance of confidentiality. If someone tells me something in confidence, my job is to make sure I don't ever mention it to another person.

4. If the person I am speaking about was present, would they be pleased with my words? You've heard this one before, but it's always worth remembering. We should always honor other people whether they are with us or not.

5. Is it true? Truth trumps all. If it's not true, don't say it.

Many of us have struggled with one or more of these filters. And, of course, none of us regularly pass our words through all of them. But these filters will hopefully guard our tongues from speaking evil and, instead, give us the freedom to speak good into people's lives.

Which of these filters is toughest for you? I'd love to hear your thoughts. Please share them below.

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