

Our words are powerful – they can bring “life” or “death, “ “blessings” or “curses.”

It is so very important for us to learn to speak in the language of the Kingdom of God. For so many years we learned how to speak the language of the kingdom of darkness, or secularism, or fatalism. But in order for us to represent the Kingdom of Light, Life, and Freedom – and to speak to others on behalf of the Great King of Heaven, we have to learn how to speak in the language of His Kingdom.

So when we have the opportunity to enter into a home, hospital room, or hotel room where there is a friend or loved one who is in pain, or grief, or anguish because they have just lost a parent, a spouse, or a child – we need to speak words of comfort in the language of the Kingdom of Heaven.

And if we cannot do that – we should just be quiet.

Below are my radio show notes for “What to Say or Do” and “What NOT to Say or Do” when you are in that room – with that person – deep in that anguish.

Believe me when I say that I have heard people say absolutely awful things to hurting people. The list that I have compiled is from a variety of sources, including real life words spoken to grieving widows at hospital rooms and funeral homes.

Certainly as Ambassadors for the King of Heaven we can do better.

## What To Say or Do:

- I'm sorry about your loss
- I am so sorry
- I wish I had the right words. Please know that I care...
- You can call me any time, however late, if you would like to talk
- Tell a little story about how the one who has died touched your life
- Use the deceased person's name in conversation
- Say something complimentary about the one who has died
- If you are not able to speak personally to the grieving person, take the time to write them a brief note
- Let the grieving person know that you are available to help them if they would like to talk
- Hugs are good
  
- Ask if there is anything that they need around their house.
- Ask if you can get them something from the grocery store.
- Make them a meal and take it over after a few days, or a few weeks
- Don't forget about the family after the funeral. The grief continues on...
  
- It is ok to just sit there, and be quiet. Be present. Pay attention.
- Listen 80% of the time, talk 20% of the time. It's not about you.
  
- Allow the person to grieve – for as long as it takes.
- Deep grieving can last for a year, or two years, or more.
  - No one gets over the death of a child. People learn how to live on in spite of the grief
  - The death of a spouse
  - Sudden and unexpected death is the worst. The family's entire world is shattered. Everything they knew about life is broken – shattered. It will take months or years to reorganize.
- Remember holidays. Birthdays. Anniversaries.

## What NOT To Say or Do:

- Never tell the grieving person that you “know how they feel.” You don’t.
- I know what you’re going through – you don’t
- Never say anything that will make them feel guilty about the death of their loved one
- Don’t even ask, “What happened?” They’ll tell you when they want to.
  
- Never tell the grieving person that “this is God’s will”
- “God works in mysterious ways”
- “They’re in a better place now”
- “There is a reason for everything”
- “She was such a good person :
  - God wanted her to be with Him
  - God wanted another angel
  - God wanted another flower
  - She did what she came here to do and it was her time to go
  
- “It’s a good thing that they didn’t suffer”
- “This will make your family closer. It’s an opportunity to grow.”
- “Be brave” “Be strong”
  
- Never say “You’re young, you’ll remarry”
- “You can always have another child”
- “You’ll forget...” “You’ll move on...” “You’ll get over it...”
- “Cheer up (your deceased spouse) wouldn’t want you to be sad”
- “I don’t understand why you’re crying. Life goes on you know.”
- “Don’t you appreciate what you have left?”
- “You shouldn’t feel that way. After all, you have the LORD.”
  
- Don’t Teach...
  - Don’t lecture on theology, or doctrine,
  - Don’t lecture on the physics of an auto crash, or a boating accident, or a disease process,

- Nobody in anguish cares about what *YOU* know. This is NOT about *YOU*. The person that you are visiting is in pain. Focus on their needs.
- If you cannot bring comfort to the person in grief and pain through your words – then just be quiet and don't talk at all. Just be patient and wait for an opportunity to serve with your hands, or feet, or smile.