**Speaking to One Another**

**The Word**

Read together Ephesians 5:15-21

**The Big Idea**

We are called to speak to one another in ways that are encouraging, God-honoring, and loving. Our speech reveals what’s going on in our hearts, and our words carry a lot of power in impacting people for good or ill.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. Consider the deep connection between our speech and our inner life made by both Paul and Jesus. What ideas, questions, or issues does that connection raise for you?

2. Share a time when you’ve experienced the power of words to shape a person’s life in significant ways.

3. What is one specific way you’d like to be intentional with your speech in the coming weeks? It could involve engaging in a type of speech or disengaging from a type of speech.

**Digging Deeper: Sermon Outline**

A. This summer we are exploring the “one anothers” in Scripture as a way of considering what the church is. Today’s one another is found in v. 19: “Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.”

B. The kind of speech we’re invited into

 1. Speak with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (v. 19)

Most likely this means speaking to one another in ways consistent with songs of praise: pointing each other to God’s goodness, grace, faithfulness, power in encouraging ways

 2. No unwholesome talk but only what builds up and benefits others (Ephesians 4:29)

a. This precludes any speech that is crass, crude, empty, fatalistic, gossip, judgmental, proud, rude, etc.

 b. This involves speech that encourages and fills with hope, truth, grace, joy

C. The connection between our speech and our inner life

1. The main command is “be filled with the Spirit” and there are four participles that give examples of what a Spirit filled life looks like. The first is “speaking to one another.”

2. So speaking to one another in a certain way is just a natural overflow of an inner life that is filled with the Spirit. The analogy with wine and debauchery is helpful: getting drunk naturally leads to debauchery just as being filled with Spirit naturally leads to certain kinds of speech.

3. Paul makes the same connection in 4:29-30: After commanding us to “let no unwholesome words out of our mouths” he says “don’t grieve the Spirit.” So unwholesome talk reveals the fact that the Spirit isn’t the guiding principle within.

4. Jesus makes the same connection in Matthew 12:34: Out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks.

 5. Observe your speech, and it will tell you a lot about your inner life.

D. The power of our words

 1. God created the world by speaking

2. As God’s image bearers, our words carry a lot of power with one another, for good or for ill.

3. Consider the “wake” of your words: When you speak to others and then leave their presence, what is the wake that you leave behind with your words?