

## **Word Power**

### **Ready:**

*“Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.” – 1 Thessalonians 5:11*

### **Set**

The team is in the locker room getting ready to play in the championship game. At the very moment the players most need to be filled with courage, there are people in the locker room doing the opposite – they are stealing courage from the hearts and minds of the athletes who are about to compete. Who are these courage thieves and how did they get into the locker room? Shockingly, they are members of the same team as several teammates revert back to their familiar habits of sarcasm and put downs!

The root word of encouragement is *courage*. To encourage someone is to put courage in them. To discourage them is to take courage out of them. Think about it. The only one who would want to take courage out of a competitor would be the opposition. When my words and actions serve to remove the needed courage to help our team succeed, I just as well be wearing the opponent’s jersey!

Proverbs 18:21 reads “Life and death are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit.” In The Message Bible it reads “Words kill, words give life; they’re either poison or fruit—you choose.” Our words can be life or death, fruit or poison.

Let’s fill our teammates with courage, life, and fruit and never discouragement, death, and poison. And let’s not forget that since Jesus called us to love our enemies, our “team” is much bigger than we have realized.

### **Go**

1. Does talk on your team build up or tear down?
2. Are you more polite to strangers than those closest to you? Why?
3. How could the Lord use you to fill your teammates and coaches with words that are courage, life, and fruit?

### **Workout**

Ephesians 4:29

Acts 16:20

Proverbs 12:28

Matthew 12:36

## Overtime

*James 3:1-12*

*Father, make me mindful to use words that build up and bring life and courage in others, amen.*

### **Bible Reference:**

Ephesians 4:29

Acts 16:20

Proverbs 12:28

Matthew 12:36



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