



Faith Adventures for Children Together



Free to use – please acknowledge when using beyond local church children's and youth work
so others can find and use the resource themselves.

*Committed to URC Children Together:
enabling everyone to grow more like Jesus
together in the home, church and beyond.*

For guidance on the purpose of the resource
and how to use it as a launch pad for your
engagement with children and families, please
use this link: www.bit.ly/FACT-how-to-sheet

Title: Ephesians 4:29

Theme: Kind words are a blessing

Contents:

Introduction	1
Together	2
Experience	3
Explore	4
Express	5
Handouts	10

Introduction: What would be helpful to know in my planning?

Our new theme for the four sessions in February is “Wise Words” This is also the 2026 theme within Children, Youth and Intergenerational Discipleship. The themed resource will be available soon and has a very intergenerational flavour. Therefore, we have tried, where possible, to ensure all areas of this session can be used or slightly adapted for intergenerational contexts.

The letter of Ephesians was thought to be written by Paul, though there is some doubt, to the church of Ephesus. They describe how we as a people should always aim to be united in Christ and invites the church to encourage unity through reconciliation across ethnic boundaries and holy conduct in everyday relationship.

“Wise words” not only describes wisdom that people share with their words but also implies that the words we use with each other should be considered and kind. In fact, the Bible passage says words can be a blessing from one person to another.

The children’s rhyme ‘Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me’ is not true. Words can be very damaging, and this is what Paul was trying to convey. Words have the power to break people or to build them up. This session looks at how we can be honest and authentic while remaining kind.

Be aware of those who have only known mean and unkind words, this can be a very emotive session for them.

Together – prayer and games

How do I help my group to come together and get started with the theme?

Gathering prayer

Jesus, our friend

(use alternate index fingers to point and tap the middle of opposite palms)

Be with us today

(two hands, palms up in front of you, move up and down twice)

As we share together,

(two hands, palms up in front of you, move one forward and one back and alternate twice)

Pray together,

(hands together, palm against palm, as though praying)

Play together,

(hands to each side, palms up, make two small circles outwards)

And get to know you better,

(point up with one hand)

As children together in your family

(one hand out, palm down in front of you, move it sideways and up in three 'steps' as though to indicate children of three different heights)

AMEN

(Two thumbs up, and bring fists slowly together to meet in front of you)

OR

Thank you, God, for bringing us together today.

Help us to grow closer to you in all we do.

**Help us to speak and to listen, to learn and to grow together,
adventuring together with you wherever we may go.**

Amen

Active game – Wise words parachute game

What you need:

- parachute or, if you do not have a parachute, you can use a fitted sheet instead
- red and green balls

What you do:

Everyone should hold the parachute at about waist height.

Place an even amount of red and green balls on the parachute.

The green balls represent the good words we use; the red balls represent the hurtful words we use.

Alternatively, you can use soft and lightweight items, such as beanbags, small plastic balls or ping pong balls.

The aim is to keep the green balls on and pop the red balls off.

In life we should be aiming to only include the green type of words in our life.

Quieter game - Jenga

You will need:

- Jenga set – use big garden version for an intergenerational feel
- red and green stickers – have more green stickers available

What you do:

Place red and green stickers onto the Jenga blocks. Red stickers indicate unkind words; green stickers represent words that build people up.

Play Jenga in the usual way, except ask those present to only remove the bricks that contain red stickers. When the block is removed, change the sticker on it from red to green before placing on the top of the stack.

This game should help show that unkind words bring people down.

Experience – Bible story and songs

Hear, watch and sing the Bible story

For this story we recommend using the Easy to read version <https://bit.ly/Ephesians429>

Where can I find the story online?

Under fives: Gizmo's Daily Bible Byte by Superbook

<https://youtu.be/4DWJwogng9A?si=xvRZ1sOMyFAXqjTR>

Five to elevens: The Power of Words, Ephesians 4:29 – Mpilo & Zoe Bible Devotions & Crafts for Kids

https://youtu.be/Qnt6fa4x_iY?si=hgC1d71Y4SidMXB7

Songs to support the story

Under fives: Kind Words song by 123 Andres

https://youtu.be/D6x57q_WzwM?si=baezdo9qCKYHzNAC

Five to elevens: Unwholesome Talk by CCBC kids sing

<https://youtu.be/lZwr1MLHjL0?si=dVdxGYMJchFQIW3P>

Explore – ways into the theme

Ideas and activities to explore this week's Bible passage together

A new way to explore the theme

Words matter

Invite everyone to come and join you in a new circle/gathering. Welcome everyone individually, with phrases like, "Thank you for joining us", "You're welcome" etc. Make eye contact and smile at everyone.

Read Ephesians 4:29: *When you talk, don't say anything bad. But say the good things that people need – whatever will help them grow stronger. Then what you say will be a blessing to those who hear you.* Discuss what it means to say "Good things that people need" – ask for suggestions.

You could have words around the room that the children go and find, returning to the circle to then discuss whether the word they found is hurtful or unkind or helpful and kind.

It is especially difficult to say nice things to people we don't like. Do those gathered have any experience of this? How did it make them feel?

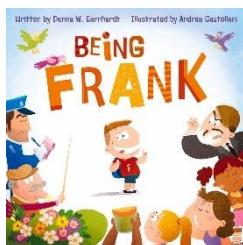
Discuss phrases that can be used, such as: "You did a good job on that", "That took courage", "Thanks for coming", "Good to see you". What other phrases can they think of?

Have you ever sneezed and expected someone to say "Bless you" but they didn't? How did that feel?

Encourage each child to say one helpful or kind phrase they'll try to use this week, with someone they don't particularly like.

Modern parables

Jesus used stories to help people understand the things of God, even though they weren't necessarily overtly Christian stories. Lots of children's books can be used in a similar way as a conversation starter on the week's theme. Examples are shared here but you may think of others too. If you are to use the modern parable, consider buying a copy or borrowing it from the library so children see the actual book and can explore the illustrations more (and support the author).



Being Frank by Donna W. Ehardt (2015: Flashlight Press)

Frank follows the motto, "Honesty is the best policy." He tells the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. With a few lessons from Grandpa, Frank begins to understand that the truth is important but so is not being hurtful. A story which nicely mirrors the Bible words for today.

https://youtu.be/sBq_kUfb0Pw?si=XuNR_yGhFyHf305T read by story time at Awnies house

Talking together: How might we talk about the Bible story together?

- How can you be honest but not rude with your words?
- Can words make you feel better?
- Can we say good words in a way that still hurts people?

Wondering reflection on the theme

- I wonder when you've been hurt by other people's words
- I wonder when you have felt blessed by other people's words
- I wonder if actions do speak louder than words

What's in the box (for under fives)

Use the special box or bag and sing, "What's in the box/bag? What's in the box/bag? Let's see, let's see, what's in the box/bag" (to the tune of The Farmer's in the Dell). Pull out the things one by one and then let the children play with them, talking about the theme or the story in simple terms.

This week's box could include:

- A selection of words, some kind some unkind (ugly, beautiful, clever, stupid etc.) – talk to the children about the words and how some are kind and some are unkind. Can they tell you which ones are nice?
- A spoon with happy and sad faces on each side – talk to the children about how words can make us feel. Kind words make us feel happy, unkind words make us feel sad.
- Welcome mat – how do our words make people feel welcomed?
- Speech bubbles – together fill out words which are kind into the speech bubbles
- A tactile cross of wood or fabric (a cross shape reminds us of Jesus. Jesus/God loves us and it's always in the box because Jesus/God always loves us!)
- A set of play people to act out the story or random shapes/bits you can move around to make pictures from the story as you tell it (eg stones, felt, twigs etc)

Express – prayer and creative activities

Praying together: enabling your group to respond spiritually

Prayerful activity - Word Cloud Prayers

You will need:

- magazines or newspapers
- scissors
- glue
- large sheet of paper

Invite participants to search the newspapers and magazines for **positive words or phrases** and stick them onto the large sheet to create a word cloud. As it grows, pause to look at the words and pray for people and situations they remind you of.

You may notice negative words too. Reflect on how they make you feel. Pray for those hurt by unkind language and say sorry for times when your own words may have caused harm.

Finish by looking at the completed word cloud. Finish with some of the spoken prayers.

Spoken prayer

Under 5s

Dear God above, so good and kind,
help me to use my mouth and mind
to speak kind words in all I do,
so others see your love shine through.

When I feel cross or want to shout,
please help me stop and think it out.
Thank you, God, for loving me –
I'll share kind words for all to see!
Amen.

5-11s

Dear God,
Thank you for my friends and family.
Help me to use kind words every day –
words that make people smile,
words that show your love.
When I feel cross or sad,
please help me to stop and choose gentle words instead.
Thank you for loving me and helping me to be kind.
Amen

Responding together

Here are some suggested crafts and activities, and there is a colouring sheet at the end of this resource. You could also use small play toys and/or have a basket of resources available so children can choose their own way to respond.

With an online group, plan whether to deliver any resources in advance or how you will encourage them to use what they've got to hand in their response.

However you do it, it is good for the adults to engage in the response too, and all chat together.

Wise words badges and bracelets

You will need:

- piece or card, or a small paper plate
- safety pins
- beads and cord
- piece of ribbon



What you do:

Decide together what words of affirmation you might want to share with the world. You can make a giant badge, a small badge, keyring, bracelet or wristband.

For a badge, you can simply stick a safety pin on the back of a piece of card.

Decorate it with words of affirmation.

For bracelets, choose the beads to spell out your affirmation. You can also create a wristband or keyring by writing words of affirmation onto some ribbon.

Everyday with Jesus – Walking the Way

What could we do this week to carry on what we've learned? Maybe members of the group could come up with a suggestion. If not, get them to choose from these two challenges:

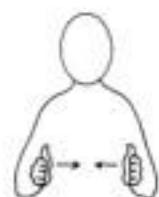
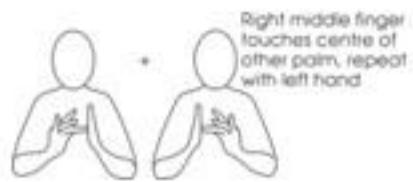
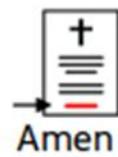
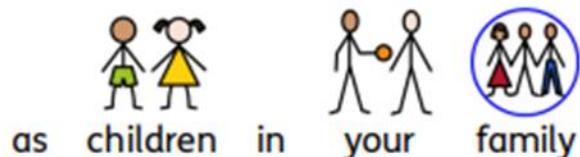
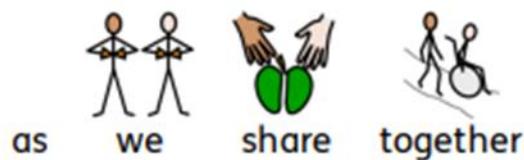
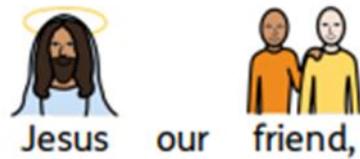
- Talk to someone older or younger than you and ask them to tell you the kindest thing someone has ever said to them.
- Could you leave a message or picture for someone to brighten up their day.

We hope you enjoyed exploring the story of using **wise words** with us.

Please let us know what you liked or what you would find useful by emailing
sharon.lloyd@urc.org.uk

Please join the Faith Adventures Facebook Group **bit.ly/FACT_FB**

Why not have a look at next week's resource on **Parable of the Sower**





The Lord's Prayer

 Our  Father, who art in  heaven,  hallowed be  thy  name.
 Thy  kingdom come,  thy  will be  done
 on  earth as it is in  heaven.
 Give us  this day our  daily  bread
 and  forgive us  our  sins As  we  forgive  those  who sin  against us
 Lead us not  into  temptation but  deliver us  from evil
 For thine is the  kingdom, the  power and the  glory
 +   For ever and ever Amen

