



## Speak Good Not Evil **JAMES 4:11&12** Message Reflection Guide

In ancient Greek dramas, a person behind a curtain spoke the lines while the performer on stage acted out the role. We might refer to the speaker behind the scenes as one who didn't "practice what he preached."

This person behind the curtain reminds me of a problem we as Christians experience today. Many of us are skilled at sounding religious, but we don't put our words into action. This is hypocrisy.

When there is a discrepancy between what we say and what we do, we create confusion in the minds of our "audience." That's why many nonbelievers do not take the gospel message seriously. Our role as Christians is vastly different from the ancient Greek actors. They had speakers who didn't do, and doers who didn't speak. We are to be people who speak and do the truth.

**Conversation Starter** In what way is a judgmental attitude toward a Christian brother or sister like putting yourself in God's place? How is it arrogant towards your brother? Towards God?

### **Getting Into The Scriptures** Read James 4:11&12

Pastor Jason said: "Humbling ourselves and getting right with God must result in our getting right with other people. When we are right with other people, it will show in the way we speak." How would people describe you based on the conversations you have with them? Would they find you to be an encouraging or critical person?

**Speak good to others.** Have you ever noticed that speech that tears others down travels like a brush fire, but news of repentance and restoration seems to move along at a snail's pace? Why is it that we often immediately believe and embrace negative assessments of people, but reports of repentance, change, or the dispelling of a false rumor are met with skepticism?

**Speak good of others.** Can you think of examples where you have been hurt by the critical comments of others? What happened? Were things ever resolved?

**Speak good to yourself.** How are you your own worst critic or enemy? What thoughts about yourself do you need to change? What scriptural truth can counter-act those lies?

### **Making It Real**

Is there someone in your life who you may have judged wrongly and as a result rejected them? What steps can you take to get to know that person and give them a second chance? Is there someone you have recently criticized or slandered? How can you go about apologizing and seeking forgiveness?