



Courage and Compassion

In our lives today there are many people with dissenting opinions and views, and lately those opinions and views have become more vehement than I could ever have imagined. So many seem to believe polar opposite of what God says in the Bible about life. So, how do we talk to people who have such disparate ideas from what we believe God says?

1. **Be confident.** As you have been reading these devotions, you know from Ephesians 2:10 that you were created in Jesus for the good works that God has already prepared for you. We are all God's creation—at all ages, sizes, and abilities. Our purpose is to make known that each of us has been created, redeemed, and called to spread God's Word to the nations.
2. **Be calm but be bold.** God promises success! **"So shall my word that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I propose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it"** (Isaiah 55:11). It is not up to you! God will use you and your words for His purpose.
3. **Listen more than you speak.** Actually listen carefully to what the other person is saying to understand the speaker's point of view. *Listen* and *silent* are spelled with the same letters. Think about that! Proverbs 18:2 says, **"A fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only in expressing his opinions."** Understanding could lead to dialogue!
4. **Don't get angry or snarky.** **"Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God"** (James 1:19-20). Getting angry or making snarky comments will only end any kind of dialogue that may be happening—maybe before it gets started. **"A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger"** (Proverbs 15:1).
5. **State God's truth about Life.** It is not what you say, but it is God's truth. You know what God says about His creation! God loves Life! **"I can do all things through him who strengthens me"** (Philippians 4:13).

Prayer: I praise You as the God of Life! Be with me as I interact with others and help me to prepare myself to speak gently and carefully after listening. Help me remember that it is not up to me, but that You are in control and that Your purpose will be fulfilled through me. Thank You, God, for creating me, redeeming me, and calling me into this life work. In Jesus' name. Amen.