

The Lips of an Encourager

James 1:26

The Barnabas Factor Summer Series

William Arthur Ward

“Flatter me, and I may not believe you. Criticize me, and I may not like you. Ignore me, and I may not forgive you. Encourage me, and I may not forget you.”

William Arthur Ward (1921-1994)

- He is one of America's most quoted writers of inspirational maxims.
- 100+ articles, poems meditations by Ward have been published in such magazines as [*Reader's Digest*](#), *This Week*, *The Upper Room*, *Together*, *Christian Advocate*, *Adult Student*, *Adult Teacher*, *Christian Home*, *Phi Delta Kappan*, [*Science of Mind*](#), *Methodist Layman*, *Sunshine*, and *Ideals*.
- His column *Pertinent Proverbs* has been featured in the [*Fort Worth Star-Telegram*](#) & numerous service club publications in the US and abroad.
- He is one of the most frequently quoted writers in the pages of Quote, the international weekly digest for public speakers.

Key Points

1. **Good Communication vitally important**
2. **The Power of Words**
3. **Using your words wisely**
4. **Be an encourager now**
5. **How to discourage flow of communication**
6. **My own encourager's prayer for communication**



Good Communication Is Vitally Important

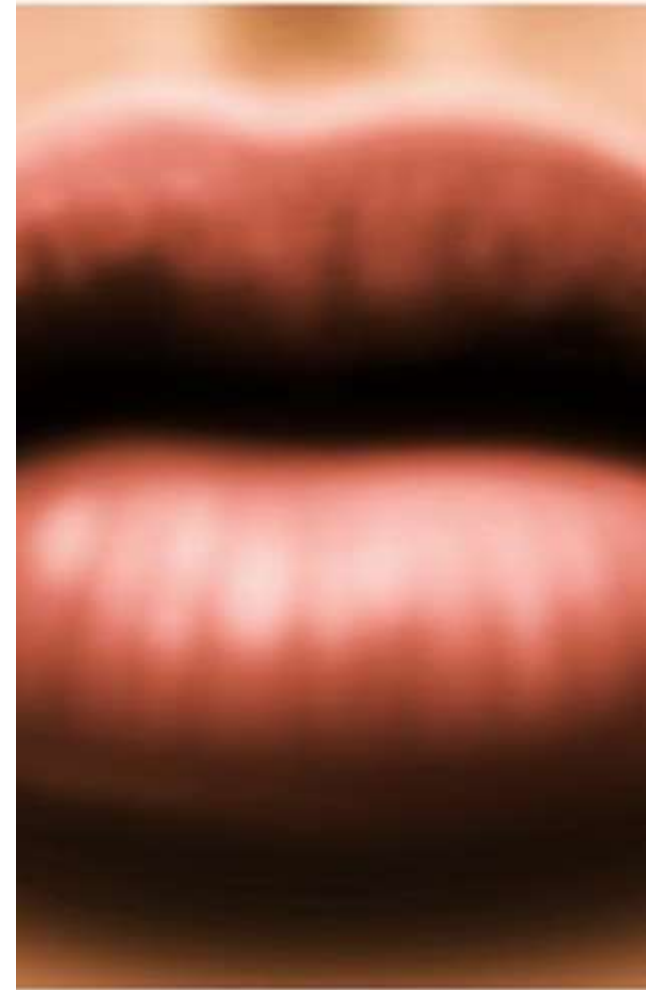
- **“Good communication is vitally important if the church is to fulfill its mission as a haven of encouragement in a disheartening world.”**
- **First and foremost, church is about relationships!**
- **How are relationships nurtured?**

Good Communication Is Vitally Important (continued)

- **Christianity is about knowing Christ more intimately (Philippians 3:8-11)**
- **1 Peter 1:22**
- **Fellowship in the church is God's unique and indispensable means of providing His followers with spiritual encouragement**
- **Hebrews 3:12-14; 10:24**

The Power of Words

- Church a building—plumbing communication metaphor! Rather, since a body, life-blood!
- The free flow of encouraging words is as essential to spiritual life as water is to physical life.
- James 3:8-12 water & speech
- Prov. 16:24; Prov. 12:25; Prov. 15:4; Prov. 18:21; Prov. 25:11



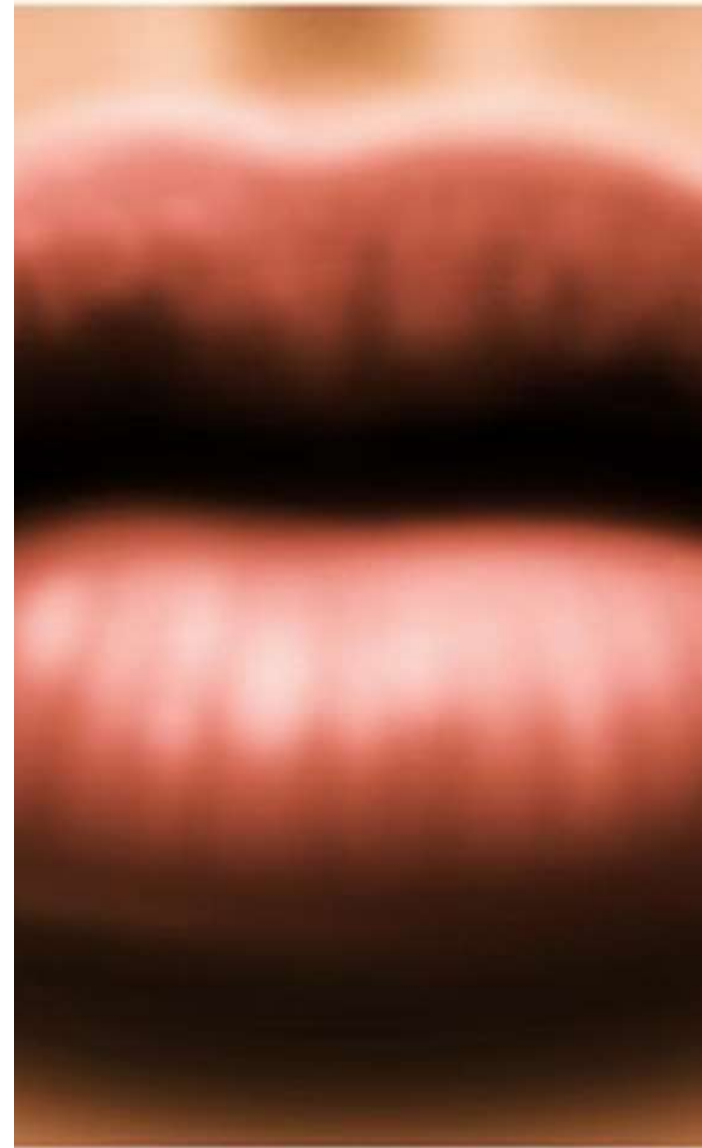


Using Your Words Wisely

- **Think carefully**
- **Compliment credibly**
- **Praise creatively**
- **Speak specifically**
- **Inspire indelibly**

Be an Encourager Now

- **Hebrews 12:1-3**
- **Hebrews 6:9 we are confident of better things concerning you . . .**
- **James 1:26—words are an indicator of a person's spiritual maturity and religion**
- **Ephesians 4:29-32**





Be an Encourager Now (cont'd)

What is the standard for Christian speech?

- 1. Is what I am saying true both in fact and impression?**
- 2. Is what I am saying helpful to the listener? To the person about whom I speak?**
- 3. Is what I am saying tempered by kindness and consideration for other's feelings?**

How to Discourage Flow of Communication

- Interrupt
- Criticize
- Advise
- Embarrass
- Condescend
- Blame
- Distort
- Overlook
- Forget to empathize



My Own Encourager's Prayer for Communication

- **O God, the Great Encourager...**
- **We praise you for your encouragement toward us in Christ Jesus as our ultimate gift of salvation. Lord, we ask for forgiveness and grace when we fail so often to encourage with our lips! It is so easy to discourage the flow of healthy, open communication.**

- **Please forgive us when our words hurt, instead of help.**
- **Give us the ability to empathize, and let all of our communication seek to build up instead of tear down. Let us model for others communication seasoned with grace. Let us be, with our lips, a light in a dark world.**

In the name of Jesus, Amen.

