

Practice Guide: Simple Speech

Goal	To honor God with your speech and actions by accepting who you are and depending on God to use you in His mission to redeem and restore the world
Define	To clearly and honestly communicate who you are and what you can do
Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluating your daily conversations to ensure that you are being honest • Seeking help from others in order to do youth ministry • Being honest with yourself and others about your strengths and weaknesses • Learning what your strengths and weaknesses are • Not using clichéd, emphatic, and exaggerated speech when communicating with others in order to cover up the truth • Being accountable to another person about your speech
Scripture	<p>Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, “Do not break your oath, but keep the oaths you have made to the Lord.” But I tell you, Do not swear at all: either by heaven, for it is God’s throne; or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. Simply let your “Yes” be “Yes,” and your “No,” “No”; anything beyond this comes from the evil one. (Matthew 5:33-37, <i>NIV</i>)</p> <p>Above all, my brothers and sisters, do not swear—not by heaven or by earth or by anything else. Let your “Yes” be yes, and your “No,” no, or you will be condemned. (James 5:12, <i>NIV</i>)</p> <p>Good leaders cultivate honest speech; they love advisors who tell them the truth. (Proverbs 16:13, <i>MSG</i>)</p>

* The form of this chart was adapted from Adele Ahlberg Calhoun “Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices That Transform Us.”

Evaluate

1. Create a list of all the commitments you’ve recently made.

Commitments	Yes	No

2. Will these commitments lead you and others you serve deeper into loving God and loving others? If not, then think about declining to follow through on these commitments.
3. Check the Yes box next to those commitments you're able to follow through on.
4. Check the No box next to the ones that you're not able to follow through on because of time, talents, or resources. Are there other people who could meet these commitments?

Accountability

The following three questions could be added to an accountability time with a friend or to your daily prayer time. The purpose of these questions is to be honest about your communication with others. Remember, the desire to honor God must drive these accountability and reflection questions.

1. Am I creating the impression that I am better than I really am?
2. Am I honest in all of my acts and words, or do I exaggerate?
3. Do I use cliché or exaggerated speech to talk about my life?