

# FOOL-PROOF

## The Week of August 29, 2021 Say This Instead Conversation Guide

### This Week's Take-Aways

- **I make disciples:** (2 Timothy 2:2) I am engaged in intentional relationships with other believers to encourage them in their spiritual growth.
- **Love:** (1 John 4:7-21) I choose to sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others because I have personally experienced God's love for me.
- **About Humanity:** (John 3:16) I believe all people are fallen in sin, but loved by God who has taken the initiative to save humanity from its sinfulness.



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## Intro Questions

- On a scale of 1-10 how well do you take correction and constructive criticism?
- Who do you get your best advice from?
- Who are people that you advise? What kind of relationship do you have with them?

## Why have the hard conversations?

Read Proverbs 18:1–2

*One who isolates himself pursues selfish desires; he rebels against all sound wisdom. A fool does not delight in understanding, but only wants to show off his opinions.*

Read Proverbs 27:5–6 (NLT)

*An open rebuke is better than hidden love! Wounds from a sincere friend are better than many kisses from an enemy.*



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Read Proverbs 15:31-32

*One who listens to life-giving rebukes will be at home among the wise. Anyone who ignores discipline despises himself, but whoever listens to correction acquires good sense.*

- How can wounds be beneficial?
- How do you define a sincere friend?
- How do you determine what is “sound wisdom”?
- How important is timing and your mindset when offering correction to a friend?

Read Proverbs 12:1 (CSB)

*Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but one who hates correction is stupid.*

Read Matthew 5:9

*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.*



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- What do these passages tell us about the way the wise and the fool receive correction?
- What are the qualities of a person that you would receive correction from well?
- How do you find people that will speak good correction to you? Where can you and should you find these people?
- Give an example of a person in your life that has offered you good correction.

Read these verses from Proverbs 15

*v2 The tongue of the wise makes knowledge appealing, but the mouth of a fool belches out foolishness.*

*v5 Only a fool despises a parent's discipline; whoever learns from correction is wise.*

*v7 The lips of the wise give good advice; the heart of a fool has none to give.*

*v10 Whoever abandons*



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*the right path will be severely disciplined;  
whoever hates correction will die.*

*v12 Mockers hate to be corrected, so they  
stay away from the wise.*

*v14 A wise person is hungry for knowledge,  
while the fool feeds on trash.*

*v21 Foolishness brings joy to those with no  
sense; a sensible person stays on the right  
path.*

*v22 Plans go wrong for lack of advice; many  
advisers bring success.*

*v23 Everyone enjoys a fitting reply; it is  
wonderful to say the right  
thing at the right time!*

- Grab your markers!  
Make a list of the  
characteristics of a wise  
person and a foolish  
person shown in these  
verses.
- These are the verses  
Pastor David picked for



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the sermon. Look at Proverbs 15 and see what other verses address how the foolish and wise give and take correction and discipline.

## How to have hard conversations

### 1. Does it need to be said at all?

Read Colossians 3:12–13

*Therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and dearly loved, put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another if anyone has a grievance against another. Just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you are also to forgive.*

Read Ephesians 4:1–3

*Therefore I, the prisoner in the Lord, urge you to walk worthy of the calling you have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making*



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*every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.*

Read Ecclesiastes 3:1, 7b

*There is an occasion for everything, and a time for every activity under heaven:  
... a time to be silent and a time to speak;*

- What does it mean to bear with someone?
- How do we know when it's time to confront and when it's time to bear with someone?
- What characteristics should we have when offering correction?
- Why is it important to exhibit the Fruit of the Spirit when offering correction?

## **2. Is it the right time?**

Read Proverbs 25:11–12

*A word spoken at the right time is like gold apples in silver settings. A wise*



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*correction to a receptive ear is like a gold ring or an ornament of gold.*

Read James 1:5

*Now if any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God—who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly—and it will be given to him.*

- Give some examples of the wrong time or place to offer correction?
- When is it appropriate to schedule a conversation for later?

Pastor David said...

*It's usually not God's time for you to correct someone if you haven't spent time praying about it. A good rule is, "Don't approach a person about a problem until you have approached God about the person."*

*Sometimes God answers your prayers and you don't even have to go to the person. At other times, He will often work to prepare the other person's heart,*



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*and He will work on you to give you the right motives and goal.*

- What should step one be when we need to have a crucial conversation with someone?
- What should we be asking God for before having crucial conversations?
- For further study, read the book of Esther. How did she handle the crucial (and dangerous) conversations she had to have?

## 3. Am I the right person?

- ***Authority***

Read Matthew 8:5–10

*When he entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, pleading with him, “Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, in terrible agony.”*

*He said to him, “Am I to come and heal him?”*



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*“Lord,” the centurion replied, “I am not worthy to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I too am a man under authority, having soldiers under my command. I say to this one, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes; and to my servant, ‘Do this!’ and he does it.”*

*Hearing this, Jesus was amazed and said to those following him, “Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with so great a faith.”*

Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17

*All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*



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- What gives the authority to offer correction to others?

- ***Relationship***

Read Proverbs 26:17

*A person who is passing by and meddles in a quarrel that's not his is like one who grabs a dog by the ears.*

Read James 5:16

*Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is very powerful in its effect.*

- Why is it vital to develop solid Christian friendships?
- “We must built a bridge of trust before you can carry a heavy load.” How do we build bridges of trust?



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- **Permission**

Read Galatians 6:1

*Brothers and sisters, if someone is overtaken in any wrongdoing, you who are spiritual, restore such a person with a gentle spirit, watching out for yourselves so that you also won't be tempted.*

- What disciplines does a spiritual person have?

Read Proverbs 9:8–9 (NLT)

*So don't bother correcting mockers; they will only hate you. But correct the wise, and they will love you.*

*Instruct the wise, and they will be even wiser. Teach the righteous, and they will learn even more.*

- Give some examples of people that you care about who won't accept correction (don't name names). How does it affect your relationship



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with them?

- How do you set up biblical boundaries with them?
- How have you seen this play out in the public forum in the last couple of years?

## 4. Can I say the right thing?

Read Proverbs 18:13

*The one who gives an answer before he listens – this is foolishness and disgrace for him.*

Read Proverbs 2:6

*For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.*

- Who should be the ultimate source when offering correction?
- According to these passages, what are two steps we must take before having a crucial conversation?



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Read 1 Timothy 5:1–2

*Don't rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and the younger women as sisters with all purity.*

Read Ephesians 4:15

*But speaking the truth in love, let us grow in every way into him who is the head—Christ.*

Proverbs 15:1 (CSB)

*A gentle answer turns away anger, but a harsh word stirs up wrath.*

- What should be our attitude when having crucial conversations?
- How important is mutual respect in fostering healthy communication in our relationships?

2 Timothy 2:22-26

*Flee from youthful passions, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a*



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*pure heart. But reject foolish and ignorant disputes, because you know that they breed quarrels. The Lord's servant must not quarrel, but must be gentle to everyone, able to teach, and patient, instructing his opponents with gentleness. Perhaps God will grant them repentance leading them to the knowledge of the truth. Then they may come to their senses and escape the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.*

- How do we differentiate between “foolish and ignorant disputes” and crucial conversations that we need to have?
- If we've approached these crucial conversations in the right way, what is God's role in bringing change in their lives?
- What should our ultimate goal be when correcting someone?



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Ezekiel 33:6

*However, suppose the watchman sees the sword coming but doesn't blow the ram's horn, so that the people aren't warned, and the sword comes and takes away their lives. Then they have been taken away because of their iniquity, but I will hold the watchman accountable for their blood.*

- What is our responsibility when we know someone is heading toward sin?

## Next Steps

- Learn more about how to handle sin and correction with in the church family by reading Matthew 18:14-18.



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Study questions from *Exalting Jesus in the Proverbs* by Jonathan Akin:

- Why is it difficult for us to be critical of others and confront them face-to-face?
- Why does the Bible not give us the option of isolating ourselves from conflict with other people?
- How can we create an open culture of confession and accountability in our churches?
- Why do you need a friend who can get in your face and tell you that you are in the wrong?
- How can you be that kind of friend to someone else?
- How can you discern if you are the right person to confront someone else?
- What are some things that typically motivate us to confront someone else?  
What should our motivation be?



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- What does it mean to speak up at the right time?
- How does knowing that change may not be immediate help you?
- What should your first course of action be when you are confronted?
- How does the gospel empower us to confront and be confronted?

