

# THE WEIGHT OF YOUR words

## PART 3: INTENT DOESN'T REMOVE THE DENT

When it comes to broken things, there is no necessary correlation between *intent* and *outcome*. Intent is usually irrelevant. If you have ever broken a window, whether you meant to or not, it still needs to be replaced. There's something you need to do beyond explaining.

The same is true of our words. Saying things like...

*"I didn't mean it that way."*

*"That didn't come out right."*

*"I was trying to be funny."*

*"It wasn't my intent to hurt you."*

...actually communicates blame. These statements blame the person that was hurt for taking what was said the wrong way.

### CONNECT

Have you ever had someone do harm with their words that they never intended? When they explained their intent, did it repair the damage that was done? Why or why not?

### LEARN

You will watch a shortened version of a message from this series to set up your group discussion. Watch the full message sometime this week as a reminder of what was talked about today.

### APPLY

After sharing what stood out from the video, discuss the following questions as a group:

1. Many times, explaining ourselves feels urgent and appropriate in the moment so we rush to explain ourselves rather than simply owning our guilt? Why do you think that is?
2. Read **James 3:3–6**. When is your tongue most likely to create a word fire?
3. What can you do to remind yourself to opt for humility and sensitivity rather than an explanation next time you start a word fire? Why are those two components so important?



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4. At the end of the video, Andy shares some practical guidelines on how to apologize.
  - Say “I’m so sorry.” Sit in your guilt while they sit in their hurt.
  - Allow them to choose the speed and the method of restoration of the relationship.
  - Don’t tell them how bad you feel. This is a request for empathy.
  - Don’t ask for a hug. This is a request for proximity.
  - Don’t ask for forgiveness. This is a request for a gift.
  - Instead of asking something of the person you hurt, submit yourself to them.

What stands out to you from this list? Do any stand out as particularly difficult for you? Is there anyone you have crushed with your words recently that you need to ask for forgiveness?

## WRAP UP

In this series, we’ve gone over three dynamics that are present in every conversation.

- Words aren’t equally weighted.
- Source determines weight.
- Intent is usually irrelevant.

As we wrap up this series, take time to listen to Andy’s full message for Part 3. Then journal and explore a simple way to remind yourself to opt for humility and sensitivity rather than an explanation the next time you start a word fire.

## PRAY

Pray as a group and thank God for the wisdom of his word, and for giving us the Holy Spirit to empower us to use our words to build and bring life. Ask him to show you areas of your life where you need to apologize for how you use your words, and the courage to do it.

