Southern Sayin’s—Week One: Bless Your Heart

Connect: If you grew up in the south, what’s your favorite “southern sayin”? If ya ain’t from around here, what do you think of all the twang and odd sayings?

Grow
1. When have you heard people use the phrase “bless your heart”? Was it a polite blessing or more like nice meanness?
2. Read Matthew 7:1-5. Most of us have got a piece of dirt or sawdust in our eye at some point, but hopefully not a full log in your eye. Why would Jesus use this analogy? How do we tend to minimize our shortcomings while maximizing those of others?
3. What is Jesus’ instruction in those verses? Why is the order of actions important?
4. “Most people struggle deeply and change slowly.” Have you seen that to be true in life? How does that impact how we should love people?
5. Do you view God as delighting in finding our faults? What does Jesus’ gentleness and humbleness teach us about God’s character?
6. Jon pointed out three distinctions that set us apart. Which one stuck out to you the most?
   a. We follow a different leader
   b. We live by a different law
   c. We speak a different language
7. What were some of the differences Jon stated between Judgemental People and Jesus People?
8. In the course of your life, researchers estimate that you will say around 860 million words. You have the choice if those words will help people or hurt people. What can we do to watch what we say?
9. Read Matthew 12:34, Psalm 141:3, and Ephesians 4:29. What does God want us to understand about our words?

Pray: Thank God for giving us the example of Jesus and for His wisdom of how we should humbly love people. Our words are an indicator of our hearts, so ask God to continue to renovate your heart and mind daily through His Word.

Next: This week use your words to love those around you. Look for opportunities to build others up. Ask yourself practically if what you are about to say is true? Is it helpful? And is it kind? If the answer to all three isn’t yes, then don’t say it.