

## **AN ENCOURAGING WORD FOR TROUBLING TIMES #113 (by Rev. Dr. Alice Wolfe, 8/19/20)**

### **“T.H.I.N.K. Before You Speak”**

All of us have probably had our parents tell us (at least once), “Think before you speak” (or something like that). I believe it is a good reminder for all of us in our world today—especially since what we say can be repeated over and over again and perpetuate forever in online purgatory. A hasty or careless word or Twitter here, or an unkind or judgmental comment or Facebook post there—can hurt and harm relationships and reputations—especially in this day and age with so many volatile and divisive topics and opinions.

However, what if we stopped... and really did pray and T.H.I.N.K. before we speak? Someone created this nice acronym for the word THINK—that includes questions we should ask ourselves before we speak:

T = Is it True?

H = Is it Helpful?

I = Is it Inspiring?

N = Is it Necessary

K = Is it Kind?

We might want to add an S for another question, “Do I have permission to Share it?”

We should take our words seriously... because others certainly do. We may say, “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me,” but we know it’s not true. Words can hurt... deeply. Do we want to use our words to help and build others up or tear them down? God, of course, wants us to use our words for good, not evil. King David understood this. Although he was not perfect, he strived to honor God with his words. We see this in Psalm 17:

“You have tested my thoughts and examined my heart in the night. You have scrutinized me and found nothing wrong. I am determined not to sin in what I say.” (Psalm 17:3, NLT)

Are you?

### **PRAYER:**

Kind and loving God, forgive me for all my words that have been anything but kind or loving. I am determined not to sin or hurt others in what I say. Help my words to encourage and build up others and not tear down. Help me to always pray and T.H.I.N.K. before I speak—so every word that comes out of my mouth (or typed by my fingers) points people to you and brings glory and honor to you! Amen.

**LIVE IT!**

Memorize Psalm 17:3 (above), ask for God’s help to live it, and pray it daily for at least the next three weeks.

