

“You may wonder why I’m carrying an ax.”

That was my opening line when I walked on stage to speak at chapel. I had the students undivided attention, so I began, “If you’re ever going to make a campfire, an ax is helpful.”

Looking around the stage, I said, “You know, we could make a camp fire here. I’ve got matches and paper. I just need some wood we can chop up for kindling.”

I paused, looked around, then headed towards the grand piano. “Look! Here’s some wood! This will burn.” I swung the ax back as if I were about to bring it down on the piano.

“NO!” the students shouted.

I stopped mid-swing. “What’s wrong?” I listened to their protests, then said, “Oh, I get it. You think the piano is too *valuable*. I guess you’re right.”

I leaned the ax against the piano and asked the students, “Have you ever had someone cut you down with words? Using words to destroy someone show what we believe about that person’s value.”

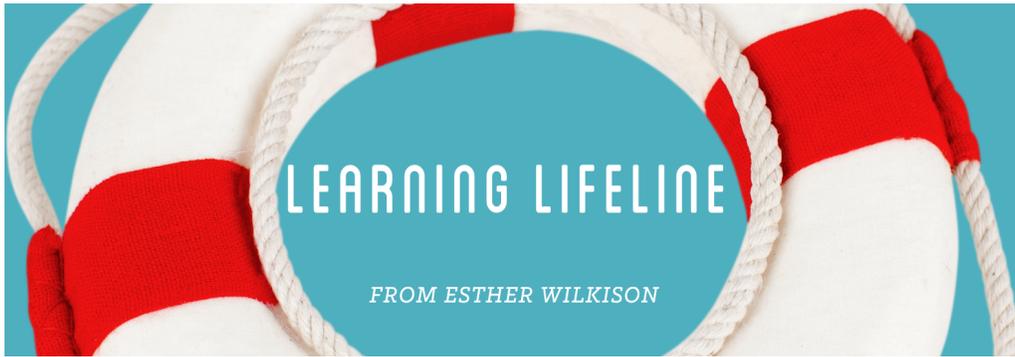
I want on to share truth about our God-given value and how we side with the enemy of God when we attempt to devalue and destroy others with our words. Today I want to talk about an even more destructive force: the way we talk to ourselves. The defeated enemy has been at work to shape our internal monolog so that we devalue and destroy ourselves with everything from self-condemnation to suicidal ideation.

In last week’s *Lifeline*, I spoke of how deep learning begins with deep listening. I’m asking you this week to listen to yourself. Do your words and tone align with your God-given value?

When I stopped to notice my self-talk, I started condemning myself for being so self-condemning. Not helpful. Jesus did not come to condemn. His Spirit brings power, love, and sound-mind. I believed all that—yet, I didn’t know how to tap into the Spirit’s power or love to make my own mind sound. I reached out for help, but was given information. There’s a reason Jesus did not tell us to give information to the ends of the earth. Making disciples the way Jesus did requires deep human connection with intentional practices that form us.

Thank God, He directed me to work regularly with a wise therapist who helped me process the root causes of my faulty core-beliefs. After decades of my own negativity, I needed gentle support so I could learn how to gently support myself and talk to myself in ways that aligned with my God-given value.

My prayer is that you will recognize that you are valuable, and therefore worth the investment of finding someone who can walk this road of transformation with you.



Note: As a Trauma-Informed Learning Coach, I help others remove obstacles and learn the skills they need to thrive—both in a school context and in life. To find out more, [email me](#) and we can set up a free consultation.