



Be Careful What You Say

I HAVE THIRTY-SIX of my family members living on the same street – crazy, I know. And we love it! We don’t even get tired of each other. In fact, we wish we weren’t so busy so we could see each more. It’s the best when I drive past my great-grandma’s house and get to wave to her as she comes home from work, or when I honk at my uncle as he pulls up into the driveway on his motorcycle, or when all my cousins come over and we decide to put baby shampoo on the trampoline and slide around on a rainy day. Many people want to know how we do it. “How do you live so close to each other and still get along?” I’ve been asked that question over and over.

There really is no secret formula, but there is one thing my great-grandma has always told us that we try hard to put into practice. Mamaw Jo says that *nothing* (and she stresses the word nothing) is worth hurting the feelings of someone else. That means we are careful to use words that build each other up and not tear each other down. That means we keep our mouths closed if we can’t think of something nice or pleasant to say. It also means that when there’s a choice to include

others, we do so. Life in a family as large as ours could be challenging, but it’s not because all the adults in our family have shown us how to be careful with our words. They follow my great-grandma’s advice and treat each other with kindness.

I’m so blessed to see how people can get along with each other by having it modeled for me. It’s how God wants us all to live both within our immediate families and in our church families—



What Does the Bible Have to Say About It?

Romans 12:18 (NIV)

If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.



Dig a Little Deeper

Romans is an important book in the Bible because it tells us what the gospel is and gives us practical advice for how to live a Christ-centered life. When reading Romans 12:18, Paul, the author of Romans, says to live at peace with everyone but there is a specification.

What is that?

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If you wrote “as far as it depends on me” you got it right. Those words are important because God understands that relationships are difficult and we can’t make everyone happy all the time, but we can do our part to help in every situation.

Read Romans 12:16. How does this verse tell us to live with everyone?

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In what other situations is harmony important?

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How does harmony make a relationship better?

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 **Live It!** 

Teenage girls can get a bad reputation for being mean to other girls, but don’t get caught in that trap. If you see or hear others talking unkindly to or about others, stand up and let them know it’s not right to talk like that. I know it can be uncomfortable to take a stand when others are doing wrong, but God is pretty

clear about this. We aren’t going to get excused because we’re uncomfortable or afraid or because we’re a teenager. Nope, it’s up to each one of us to show others how people who love God are supposed to act. Come on, girls, let’s show the world that teens can be kind and respectful of each other.

 **Ready, Set, Grow!** 

This week I will do my best to keep peace when I am

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