A COMPANION FOR THE HARD MOMENTS

Say It Plainly

15 Hard Conversations Made Easier

Ready-to-use words for overwhelmed Christian men at home, at work, and when asking for help.

Spoken scripts • Text messages • Phone cards / A one-page conversation planner

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You do not need a perfect speech.

Start with one situation

Use the next page to find the conversation you need. You do not have to read this kit in order or complete every page.

Borrow the words. Make them yours.

Each page offers a spoken script, a shorter text message, one next step, and a brief prayer. Change names, timing, and details so every sentence is true. Replace anything in brackets before sending.

Keep your part small and honest

Name what happened, own your part, and make one clear request. The other person may need time or may say no. An apology does not purchase forgiveness.

Use it where you are

Save a phone card for quick access. The included text-message file makes copying easy. Print the planner on page 19 when you want room to think.

Choose safety first

These scripts are for ordinary conversations, not situations involving threats, violence, or coercion. You do not owe an unsafe person a face-to-face conversation. Seek appropriate local support. This kit offers practical and spiritual encouragement, not professional care.

Find the words you need

Choose one. Begin there.

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01 / When You Are Overwhelmed

When pressure builds at work and home and you feel close to shutting down or snapping.

SAY IT OUT LOUD

I am feeling overwhelmed, and I wanted to tell you instead of going quiet without explanation. I do not have everything sorted out yet. Could you listen for ten minutes while I name what is weighing on me? You do not have to solve it. If now is not a good time, could we find another time?

SEND A TEXT

I am having a heavy week and could use someone to listen. Do you have ten minutes today or tomorrow? I am not asking you to solve it.

ONE NEXT STEP

Choose one thing to share first. Ask whether they have time to listen. You can request support before you have a complete explanation.

A SHORT PRAYER

Lord, calm my crowded mind. Help me speak honestly and rest in Your steady care today.

02 / Sharing a Task at Home

For partnered men who need to discuss one household task while recognizing the work both people already carry.

SAY IT OUT LOUD

Could we look at dinner cleanup together? I am struggling to keep up, and I know you have a lot to carry too. Would taking cleanup on Monday and Wednesday be workable for you? I can keep Tuesday and Thursday. Let us check what each of us is already doing before we decide.

SEND A TEXT

Could we look at dinner cleanup together tonight? I need to adjust my load, and I want to understand yours too. Could we agree on who owns which evenings?

ONE NEXT STEP

Do your part without reminders. Notice what still falls on them. Thank them specifically. Adjust the plan together after one week.

A SHORT PRAYER

Father, teach me humility and teamwork. Help me ask clearly and serve gladly at home.

03 / Clarifying Work Priorities

When your manager adds new work on top of full deadlines and you need clear guidance on what matters first.

SAY IT OUT LOUD

Do you have ten minutes to help me set priorities? I want to do good work on the report, the client fixes, and this new request. I cannot finish all three well by Friday. Which one should come first and what can shift? I will send a short recap after we talk.

SEND A TEXT

Hi, could we take ten minutes to set priorities? I have the report, client fixes, and the new request. I want to focus right. Please tell me what should come first. Thanks.

ONE NEXT STEP

Write down what was agreed. Meet the order you discussed. If new tasks arrive, ask again rather than guessing alone.

A SHORT PRAYER

God, give me diligence and respect. Help me work faithfully and accept guidance with a willing heart.

04 / Owning a Missed Deadline

When you failed to deliver on time and need to own the miss and offer a workable path forward.

SAY IT OUT LOUD

I need to own this. I missed the deadline we agreed on and I know that affects you. You deserved an earlier heads up. I can have a solid draft to you by Thursday noon. Would that timing still be useful? I will send a progress update Wednesday.

SEND A TEXT

I missed our deadline and I take responsibility. Sorry for the late notice. I can send a solid draft by Thursday noon. Please let me know if that works. I will update you Wednesday.

ONE NEXT STEP

Deliver what you promised or give early warning. Review what caused the slip. Set a reminder system you will actually use.

A SHORT PRAYER

Lord, help me own what happened without hiding or condemning myself. Guide my next honest step.

05 / Setting a Clear Boundary

When someone keeps asking more than you can give and you need to state a clear respectful limit.

SAY IT OUT LOUD

I care about staying in touch, and I need to protect my evenings. I will not be taking calls or checking messages after nine. I can usually talk earlier, if we arrange a time. If you message late, I may not see it until the next day. Could we plan our calls before nine?

SEND A TEXT

I am keeping evenings after nine free from calls and messages. Could we arrange a time earlier in the day? I may not see late messages until tomorrow.

ONE NEXT STEP

Hold the limit kindly and evenly. Do not punish or lecture. If pressure continues, restate once and step back for now.

A SHORT PRAYER

Father, grant me courage and kindness. Help me honor others while caring wisely for my limits.

06 / Pausing Without Disappearing

When a discussion grows tense and voices rise, and you need a short break before words cause harm.

SAY IT OUT LOUD

I care about resolving this and I am getting worked up. I am starting to speak harshly and I do not want that. Can we pause for thirty minutes and come back at seven? If you need a different time, I am open. I will be ready to listen and take the next step together.

SEND A TEXT

I want to work this out well. I am getting worked up. Can we pause for thirty minutes and talk at seven? If another time suits you better, tell me. I will be ready to listen.

ONE NEXT STEP

Use the pause to cool down and pray. Do not rehearse attacks. Return at the agreed time or propose a new one promptly.

A SHORT PRAYER

Jesus, slow my tongue. Fill me with patience so I listen well and speak with grace.

07 / Apologizing to Your Partner

For married or partnered men who spoke harshly or broke trust and need to apologize fully without defending themselves.

SAY IT OUT LOUD

I was wrong to raise my voice last night. I am sorry. Being frustrated did not make it okay to speak to you that way. Next time I notice my voice rising, I will ask for a pause and agree with you on when to return. You do not owe me reassurance or an answer right now.

SEND A TEXT

I am sorry I raised my voice last night. You did not deserve that. I will ask for a pause before I keep speaking harshly. You do not need to respond now.

ONE NEXT STEP

Let them respond in their own time. Do not demand quick forgiveness. Change the pattern and follow through daily and consistently.

A SHORT PRAYER

Lord, I confess my harsh words. Soften my heart and teach me to love with patience and truth.

08 / Apologizing to Your Child

For fathers who lost their temper or missed something important and need to make it right without pressure.

SAY IT OUT LOUD

I need to say I am sorry. I raised my voice at you this morning and that was wrong. You did nothing to deserve that. It is my job to control my temper, not yours to fix my mood. I love you. You do not need to say anything back right now.

SEND A TEXT

I am sorry for raising my voice this morning. That was wrong and you did not deserve it. I love you very much. You do not need to reply. I am working on pausing before I speak when I am upset.

ONE NEXT STEP

Give them space to feel. Stay calm if they are upset. Show change by speaking gently and keeping your promises.

A SHORT PRAYER

Father, help me care for my child gently. Teach me to take responsibility and practice patient love.

09 / Repairing a Forgotten Promise

When you forgot something you promised and need to admit the lapse and set things straight quickly.

SAY IT OUT LOUD

I dropped the ball and I am sorry. I said I would bring the paperwork today and I completely forgot. I take responsibility for keeping track. I will drop it off tomorrow by ten. If that causes a problem, tell me. I will set a reminder to help me remember.

SEND A TEXT

I am sorry I forgot the paperwork today. That is on me. I will drop it off tomorrow by ten. Let me know if you need it sooner. I have set a reminder.

ONE NEXT STEP

Check that your repair is useful and the timing is realistic. Put the commitment somewhere you will see it, with a reminder you can act on.

A SHORT PRAYER

Lord, sharpen my follow-through. Help me keep my word and serve others with care and reliability.

10 / Reconnecting With a Friend

When you drifted from a good friend and want to reach out warmly without guilt or awkward pressure.

SAY IT OUT LOUD

Hey man, you have been on my mind. I know I have gone quiet the last few months and I miss catching up. No pressure to fix that all at once. Would you be open to coffee next week for thirty minutes? I would love to hear how you are doing.

SEND A TEXT

Hey man, you have been on my mind. I have gone quiet lately and I miss catching up. Would you like coffee next week? No pressure if timing is tight. Let me know.

ONE NEXT STEP

If he answers, set a clear time. If not, wait a week and try once more. Keep the door open without chasing.

A SHORT PRAYER

God, thank You for friendship. Give me courage to reach out and grace to love faithfully.

11 / Asking for a Check-In

When life feels heavy and you want a trusted friend to ask how you are doing now and then.

SAY IT OUT LOUD

Can I ask a favor? Life has felt heavy lately and I tend to go quiet instead of reaching out. Would you be willing to check in once a week by text? A simple "How are you?" helps. If you miss a week, no guilt. I will answer honestly and do the same for you.

SEND A TEXT

Could I ask a favor? Life feels heavy lately and I go quiet. Would you check in by text once a week? No pressure if you miss. I will answer honestly. Thanks man.

ONE NEXT STEP

Reply when he checks in. Do not test him or keep score. If you need more support, tell another trusted person too.

A SHORT PRAYER

Lord, help me stay open. Bless my friend and teach me to give and receive honest care.

12 / Talking With Your Pastor

When you want prayer and pastoral support but feel ashamed or uncertain about sharing something personal.

SAY IT OUT LOUD

Could we arrange a time to talk privately? I have been struggling with anger at home, and I need to be honest about it. Before I share details, could you explain the limits of confidentiality? I would value prayer and help thinking through responsible next steps, including professional support if that would be appropriate.

SEND A TEXT

Could we arrange a private conversation? I would value prayer and support with something I am struggling with. Before we begin, I would like to understand the limits of confidentiality.

ONE NEXT STEP

Ask about privacy before sharing sensitive details. You may ask questions about advice or seek another perspective. Pastoral support can accompany qualified professional care.

A SHORT PRAYER

Father, remove my shame. Lead me to wise counsel and help me walk humbly in Your truth.

13 / Speaking With a Health Professional

When stress, sleep, or mood problems persist and you consider asking a doctor or counselor for guidance.

SAY IT OUT LOUD

I have been having trouble with sleep and focus for several weeks. It is affecting my work and the way I manage things at home. I would like help understanding what may be contributing and what options are appropriate. I wrote down a few examples because I sometimes lose track of what I want to say.

SEND A TEXT

Hello, I would like to schedule an appointment to discuss ongoing sleep and focus difficulties that are affecting daily life. Please let me know the next available appointment and how to prepare.

ONE NEXT STEP

Bring concrete examples, when the difficulties started, and any questions. Ask the clinician to explain options and next steps in language you understand.

A SHORT PRAYER

God, calm my nerves. Give me wisdom to seek sound counsel and courage to follow through.

14 / Asking for Practical Help

When money is tight and you want to ask a trusted person for a specific kind of practical help.

SAY IT OUT LOUD

Money is tight this month, and groceries are becoming difficult to cover. Could you help with a meal this week, or help me find local food support? I am asking for something specific rather than expecting you to solve everything. If you cannot help, I understand. Thank you for hearing me.

SEND A TEXT

Money is tight this month. Could you help with a meal this week, or help me find local food support? If that is not possible, I understand. Thanks for listening.

ONE NEXT STEP

Choose one specific request. If financial decisions need attention, consider a qualified financial counselor. Needing practical help does not mean you have failed.

A SHORT PRAYER

Father, help me ask without shame and receive kindness. Give me wisdom for the next step.

15 / Asking for Company

When grief or long lonely evenings weigh on you and you simply want someone nearby for a while.

SAY IT OUT LOUD

Evenings have been lonely lately. I do not need advice right now; I would appreciate some company. Would you be open to a short walk or a cup of coffee one evening this week? We can talk, or just sit together. If this week does not work, is there another time we could try?

SEND A TEXT

Evenings have been lonely lately. Could we take a short walk or have coffee one evening this week? I do not need advice; I would just appreciate your company.

ONE NEXT STEP

Let them simply be present. Share only what feels right. If sorrow deepens, reach out to a pastor or counselor too.

A SHORT PRAYER

Lord of comfort, meet me in loneliness. Bring kind company and fill my heart with Your peace.

Before I begin

One conversation. One honest request. Use phrases, not an essay.

What happened? Stick to what I observed.

What is mine to own or repair?

What do I need to say or ask for?

What can I realistically offer or follow through on?

When and how could we talk? Is this safe?

If the conversation changes direction, I can listen, ask a question, or pause and agree on a next step.

After the conversation

Notice what was actually said

Separate the other person's words from what you fear they meant. If you are unsure, ask rather than decide for them.

Follow through on your part

Write down one commitment and a realistic time. If you cannot keep it, tell the person promptly and propose a repair.

Leave room for their response

They may need time. They may disagree. You can be responsible for your words and actions without controlling the outcome.

Return without a performance

One imperfect conversation does not settle your worth. Pray, seek support where needed, and take the next honest step.

God, help me speak truth with kindness, hear what is hard, and follow through on what is mine. Amen.

An original companion to Scattered but Held for Men by Markus Bailey. Prayers in this kit are original, not Scripture quotations. For personal use. No purchase or review is required.