

Proverbs 18:21

The Tongue

Proverbs: Wisdom for Life

Sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me!

A)Whoever wrote that was an idiot!

B)We all know that Words can hurt and wound and even Kill!

C)Our text today makes that very clear –

Death and life *are* in the power of the tongue

Today we come to week 3 in our study in the book of proverbs calling - “Wisdom for life”

A) Proverbs is NOT a bunch of pithy little statements of Not rules and regulations –

B)Not little ideas to mull over

1)Insight and understanding from the heart of Jesus that tells what a redeemed person looks like

C)Today we are talking about the tongue – this is the Natural progression – In our series

Started with the Definition of Wisdom _Proverbs 9:10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and the knowledge of the Holy one is understanding.

A)Starts with a right relationship with God – not afraid of him but awe and reverence – and Adoration

B)The more I grow in my knowledge and understanding of who he is the more I fall in love with him!

1)There is a heart change that happens

C)My heart begins to be transformed - Last week part we noted that this all starts in the heart - Proverbs 4:23 Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it NIV

D)When the heart is right everything else is right!

E)Although we have been redeemed – we live in this world that is constantly challenging our flesh

1)Why we need to guard our hearts – Our hearts affects everything else that we do!

Jesus said: Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks

A)What comes out of the mouth is can reveal the condition of our hearts!

B)Which is the reason why Proverbs, has a lot to say about what we say.

1)In fact, Proverbs refers to our tongue, our mouth, or our lips over 150 times in just 31 chapters!

C)The book of Proverbs has more to say about our words than anything else it addresses in our lives—

1)more than money, sex, or family

Words are very important.

A)Words mark us as human, in the image of God.

B)Like God, we use words to create trust and form relationships and build community.

“Glorify God in your body” (1 Corinthians 6:20).

C)Proverbs is saying, “That starts with your tongue.”

One body of research reports that the average American speaks about 700 times per day.

A)If that number sounds high to you, cut it in half to 350 times per day.

B)If it still sounds high, cut it in half again to 175 times a day.

C)Think about this: Is there anything else you do in life 175 times a day?

1)We talk a lot - Death and life are in the power of the tongue

Words are Powerful! Here is what I want to do today:

A)First talk about how Proverbs describes the wrong uses of words – probably all been guilty of.....

B)Then we will consider what Proverbs has to say about the right uses of words

C)finish up by considering How do we become people who are using our words to bring LIFE?

1)Instead of DEATH

Wrong uses of our words

A) 1st Hurtful words:

B) James the tongue is like a little fire – this and it is capable of this

1) Whole forest burn down

C) Words penetrate within. Proverbs 12:18:

“Reckless Words pierce like a sword.”

When we speak reckless rash hurtful words

A) It is like 100's razor blades flying out of our mouth right into the body of the other person.

B) Those wounds and scars remain long after the words have faded away

1) I heard about a woman in LA who took her own life. All she wrote in her suicide note was this: “They said.”

C) I can tell you stories of kids who are a mess – big daddy issues

1) because their dads never said anything constructive to them

D) Always destructive – always negative - Hurtful

Parents who constantly criticize and compare – “how come you are not like so and so”

A) Wives who feel so unloved and unbeautiful because all their husbands always focus on is what is wrong.

B) Why is the house a mess – you forgot to do such and such

1) Why are you gaining weight

Proverbs 29:22: “An angry man stirs up dissension, and a hot-tempered man commits many sins.”

C) I meet People who have had their confidence and sense of self worth – destroyed because of a boyfriend a girlfriend – coach

1) A teacher – someone who told them they would never amount to anything and they grew up believing that.

D) I read about a woman in Los Angeles who took her own life.

1) All she wrote in her suicide note was this: “They said.”

I know People who have a hard time with Church and Pastoral authority because a Pastor or church people verbally abused them

A) You wouldn't think this wouldn't be a problem in the church – because we are supposed to be known for our love right ?

B) Yet – it has been rightfully said that the church is the only army that shoots it's wounded.

C) Someone shows up wounded – wounded because of their own stupid mistakes – show up bleeding

1) The members of the church – shoot them – not with guns or arrows but with words

And if that has ever happened to you here at CV – I am sorry!

A) Why I always remind you – we are not perfect – we are a bunch of broken people

B) Who are in the process of being transformed.... we are not always going to get it right!

1) Not a cop out – but reality – FLAWED SINNERS

Wrong uses of words – 1ST Hurtful words

2nd Gossip: Proverbs 18:8 “The words of a gossip are like choice morsels; they go down to a man's inmost parts.”

A) Proverbs is telling us that some people feed on gossip like others enjoy food:

B) Let's all admit it. There is something about gossip that appeals to our flesh.

1) It appeals to our desire for information and details. We love to be in the Know – inside connection

C) The writer of proverbs says We find it delicious. Choice morsels

1) It is a delicacy—to our corrupt hearts.

When I was growing up – nickname for my dad – we called him the Garbage collector.

A) At dinner he would finish would everyone else left on their plates.

B) Problem with that definition is my mom is a good cook – what she made wasn't garbage.

C) But you know what that is a good description of a person who listens to Garbage –

1)you become a human garbage disposal

D)Filling your heart with garbage – taints your view of others

E)Gossip can become an addiction - when we feed on gossip we'll always crave more.

F) Three men on a fishing trip – decided to get vulnerable – share their struggles

1)Gambling – 2nd Lust – 3rd guy – gossip can't wait to get home and tell someone!

Proverbs 20:19: **“A gossip betrays a confidence; so avoid a man who talks too much.”**

3rd Lying: Lying might not bother us that much

“Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord.”

Prov12:22

A)There are not many things the Lord gives that title too ABOMINATION about as bad as it gets!

B)There are not a lot of things the Bible gives that title of abomination to: Some on the list ...

1)Murder, Idolatry, Worship of the Anti-Christ, the Homosexuality, and Prostitution

C)But also on that list is lying – and some people do it every day!

Jesus said the devil is **“a liar and the father of lies”**
John 8:44

Wrong uses of words

4th Flattery. “Whoever flatters his neighbor is spreading a net for his feet” Proverbs 29:5

A)Most of us secretly enjoy flattery.

B)But Proverbs warns us to be on our guard against those who sweet-talk: **Been said**

A flatterer is one who pats you on the back today only to locate a soft spot where he can insert a knife tomorrow.

5th Impulsive speech. Proverbs 29:20: **“Do you see a man who speaks in haste? There is more hope for a fool than for him.”**

A)We've all experienced the horror of saying something too quickly as we open mouth/ insert foot.

B)I said to a woman once – How far along are you? – Not pregnant

C)My wife knows me so well – sometimes we will be in a conversation with someone

1)She senses I am about to say something I shouldn't – rubs my leg pats my back – I have learned to listen

D)Even better than that is learning to listen to the Holy Spirit! – His nudges and promptings

Prov 15:28, **“The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things.”**

Proverbs is 17:28: **“Even a fool is thought wise if he keeps silent, and discerning if he holds his tongue.”**

Abraham Lincoln was fond of saying, **“It is better to remain silent and be thought a fool, than to open your mouth and remove all doubt.”**

E)So those are some examples of the wrong uses of words that everyone of us can be susceptible to

Our words are powerful - Right uses of words

1st Words that are refreshing: Proverbs 10:11: “The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life.”

A) When we listen to the words of someone who is wise it's like taking a long drink from a fresh spring on a hot summer day.

B)A fountain of life!

A young man arrived early to pick up his girlfriend for their date. She ran to the door with wet hair and no makeup on her face.

She was embarrassed and tried to make the best of the situation and so she smiled and said, “Well, what do you think?”

He grinned and very wisely said, **“It looks like something beautiful is about to happen!”**

C))That is a wise young man!

Proverbs 10:21 **“The lips of the wise nourish many.”**

C) So wise words can bring refreshment and nourishment to others!

D) You want people to leave a conversation with you feeling refreshed, built up, and closer to Jesus!

Right uses of words

2nd Words can bring healing - Proverbs 16:24:

“Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.”

A) Honey was both a luxury and a medicine in ancient Israel.

B) When we talk tenderly with others, our words become priceless & provide healing to broken hearts.

1) Proverbs 12:18 **The words of the wise promote healing**

C) As I mentioned before – some people have been torn down and torn apart by words –

1) But God can use you to build a person back up by sharing with them the truth of God’s word

D) How He sees them!

Beautiful picture of this in 1 Samuel 23-

A) A young man David has been anointed by Samuel to be the next King! – Yrs have past since then

B) And the current King – Saul is making life miserable for him – even tried to kill him

1) David is down, discouraged – doubting –

C) Jonathan strengthened David’s hands in the Lord!

1) He reminded David of God’s promise

D) He reminded David of His calling and anointing

1) Don’t lose heart David God is going to come through

E) Your words can bring healing to their hearts
Like bandages on an open wound

1) Strengthen others in the Lord!

Early in my Christian life – I wanted to be a David – take down giants!

A) Now I see the value in being a Jonathan

B) When I got into Ministry – Joshua
lead people into Victory – promised land

C) Been at this 30 yrs – I want to be a Barnabas –
Son of encouragement

1) Encourage those whom others gave up on – Paul – John Mark

D) Helping others – to be who God wants them to be!

1) Helping others get through the hurts –

2) Helping others fulfill their dreams and callings

E) We need more Barnabas’s Jonathan’s in the Church

Right words - Bring refreshing – aid in healing – 3rd Are of great value - Proverbs 25:11 **“A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.”**

Solomon is trying to paint the picture of something that is elegant.

A) This might have been a centerpiece or a decorative motif on one of his tables in the palace –

B) Golden apples in a silver bowl

1) But his goal is to liken it to something beautiful, something luxurious, something very tasteful.

C) Aptly spoken – a timely word! –

1) That is beautiful – I needed to hear that!

D) So in these Proverbs we see that the right use of words can be refreshing,

1) bring healing and be of great Value

So How do we become people who are more consistently using our words for good instead of destruction – for life instead of death?

A) Look back at Proverbs 10:11: **“The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life.”**

B) A fountain of life: A fountain or river has a source:

C) What is the source?

Consider in proverbs some other verses where this idea of a fountain of life is used.

A) Proverbs 14:27 **The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life!**

B) We noted already where wisdom is found:

Proverbs 9:10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom –

1) Everything keeps coming back to this principle – our relationship to the Lord

C) See when we see Him for who He is – Great awesome mighty holy majestic – Reverence

1) Then we realize – what He did to make Himself known and approachable – Melts our hearts at this!

D) He loves me – He has saved me – I am righteousness because of him!

Proverbs 10:11: “The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life.”

What is coming out of the fountain is going to be connected to the source!

A) When Jesus is the source – When I am in awe of Him

B) When I am getting my nourishment from him

C) Words of life are going to be spoken – He is the word of life

Proverbs 13:14 The teaching of the wise is a fountain of life.....

Proverbs 16:22 Understanding is a fountain of life to him who has it.

The more I am growing in my understanding of who Jesus is and who I am in Him –

A) The more wise I will become

B) Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks!

1) It is about Making Jesus the ABUNDANCE of our hearts

C) So the source of the fountain is the key:

Spend time with Jesus each day: His word:

**A) Pastor Rob you are always beating that drum
Personal devotions**

B) You become like who you hang out with

1) Good marriage – become like each other
2) Good friends – take on characteristics

C) Acts 4 Peter and John – could tell been with Jesus

1) Who can people tell you have been with ?

D) If they can tell you have been with Jesus – that is the best thing they could say about you.

1) Believer here today: Jesus is the best thing about you

Start each day with Jesus

A) Ask Him to give you his eyes and His heart – people and situation that you encounter

B) Pray each day: Lord I want my tongue to be under your leadership today.

1) Help me to be one who in builds up rather than tears down

C) Help me to realize my opinions are not that important – it is your heart that matters!

Think more: Proverbs 15:28, “The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things.”

A) We need to ponder before we pour.

James 1:19 “let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.”

Talk less: Proverbs 10:19 “When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise.”

B) The more we talk the more we SIN; the less we talk, the wiser we are.

C) Someone has said that the reason we’ve been given two ears and one mouth is so that we would listen twice as much as we talk.

Seek to encourage others: Proverbs 15:4 “The tongue that brings healing is a tree of life.”

A) Imagine what our church our families our friendships would be like

B) If we tried to be more INTENTIONAL about being encouragers!

C) To speak words that are profitable –

D)The book of proverbs tells us what would happen

- Proverbs 10:21 "The lips of the righteous feed many." **Others NOURISHED**
- Proverbs 12:18 "The tongue of the wise brings healing." **OTHERS HEALED**
- Proverbs 12:6 "The mouth of the upright delivers men." **OTHERS DELIVERED**

E)May that we true of CV!

Closing: As we consider these proverbs about our use of the tongue,

A)Every one of us is responding right now in either of two ways.

B)Some of you are thinking: this is great – now I know what to aim at – what to pray about

C)But others of you are thinking “Oh no, now I see how stupid I’ve been.

1)I’ve alienated my wife. I’ve injured my kids. I’ve lost friends.

D)**I’ve been a fool, and I am so defeated.** What’s the point of even trying?”

Reminder today: Jesus paid the price at Calvary for every stupid word you have uttered.

A)There is forgiveness in Jesus his blood.

B)But you have to own it – you need to confess it to Jesus and to the people you have hurt!

C)He will forgive you instantly!!!!

The People you have hurt – it might take them a while!

A)And even after they forgive you - It will take time for them to trust you! Be patient

B)Don’t force it – don’t push –

C)But realize like everything else – your tongue can be redeemed!

D)When submitted to Jesus the tongue that has uttered so much death

1)Can become a tongue that begins to speak words of life, healing, and comfort to others

Jesus is MORE THAN ABLE –

JESUS IS MORE THAN WILLING

THE QUESTION IS: ARE YOU?