

The Ways of Wisdom

Wisdom For Our Words

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Proverbs 18:20–21 (NKJV)

A man's stomach shall be satisfied from the fruit of his mouth; from the produce of his lips he shall be filled. Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit.

Understanding the Power of our Words

- 1. Words are nuclear in the realm of the Spirit, and there are no such things as meaningless or inconsequential words.**

Matthew 12:31–37 (NKJV)

Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come. Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by *its* fruit. Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.

- 2. Words are disproportionate in their influence in our lives.**

Proverbs 18:22 (NKJV)

He who finds a wife finds a good thing...

James 3:2–6 (NKJV)

For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.

Understanding the Perversion of our Words

Five Sins of our Words

1. Lying; bearing false witness; slander

Proverbs 6:16–19 (NKJV)

These six things the Lord hates, yes, seven are an abomination to Him: a proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that are swift in running to evil, a false witness who speaks lies, and one who sows discord among brethren.

Proverbs 12:19 (NKJV)

The truthful lip shall be established forever, but a lying tongue is but for a moment.

Proverbs 12:22 (NKJV)

Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, but those who deal truthfully are His delight.

2. Divisiveness; sowing discord

Proverbs 6:19 (NKJV)

A false witness who speaks lies, and one who sows discord among brethren.

Proverbs 6:12–15 (NKJV)

A worthless person, a wicked man, walks with a perverse mouth; he winks with his eyes, he shuffles his feet, he points with his fingers; perversity is in his heart, he devises evil continually, he sows discord. Therefore his calamity shall come suddenly; suddenly he shall be broken without remedy.

3. Gossip

Gossip: 1. Rumor or talk of a personal, sensational, or intimate nature. 2. A person who habitually spreads intimate or private rumors or facts (American Heritage Dictionary)

Proverbs 20:19 (NKJV)

He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets; therefore do not associate with one who flatters with his lips.

Proverbs 16:28 (NKJV)

A perverse man sows strife, and a whisperer separates the best of friends.

Proverbs 26:20–26 (NKJV)

Where there is no wood, the fire goes out; And where there is no talebearer, strife ceases. As charcoal is to burning coals, and wood to fire, so is a contentious man to kindle strife. The words of a talebearer are like tasty trifles, and they go down into the inmost body. Fervent lips with a wicked heart are like earthenware covered with silver dross. He who hates, disguises it with his lips, and lays up deceit within himself; when he speaks kindly, do not believe him, for there are seven abominations in his heart; though his hatred is covered by deceit, his wickedness will be revealed before the assembly.

4. Cursing

Proverbs 15:4 (NKJV)

A wholesome tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit.

Romans 3:13–14 (NKJV)

Their throat is an open tomb; with their tongues they have practiced deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.

Psalm 109:17–19 (NKJV)

As he loved cursing, so let it come to him; As he did not delight in blessing, so let it be far from him. As he clothed himself with cursing as with his garment, so let it enter his body like water, and like oil into his bones. Let it be to him like the garment which covers him, and for a belt with which he girds himself continually.

5. Hurtful, hateful speech

Proverbs 12:18 (NKJV)

There is one who speaks like the piercings of a sword, but the tongue of the wise promotes health.

Ephesians 4:29-31 (NKJV)

Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.

Understanding the Prohibition of our Words

Five Prohibitions or Cautions from Proverbs for Protecting our Speech

Proverbs 12:13 (NKJV)

The wicked is ensnared by the transgression of his lips, but the righteous will come through trouble.

Proverbs 16:23 (NKJV)

The heart of the wise teaches his mouth, and adds learning to his lips.

Proverbs 21:23 (NKJV)

Whoever guards his mouth and tongue keeps his soul from troubles.

- 1. Do not respond too quickly to the comments of another person, especially when you are hurt or angry.**

James 1:19 (NLT)

My dear brothers and sisters, be quick to hear and slow to speak...

Proverbs 15:23 (NKJV)

A man has joy by the answer of his mouth, and a word spoken in due season, how good it is!

Proverbs 15:28 (NKJV)

The heart of the righteous studies how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil.

Proverbs 18:13 (NKJV)

He who answers a matter before he hears it, it is folly and shame to him.

Proverbs 29:20 (NKJV)

Do you see a man hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than him.

2. Do not respond in the same spirit to angry or abusive words.

Proverbs 15:1 (NKJV)

A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

Luke 6:27–28 (NKJV)

But I say to you who hear: love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you.

Proverbs 16:21 (NKJV)

The wise in heart will be called prudent, and sweetness of the lips increases learning.

You can only defeat a spirit with the opposite spirit.

3. Do not talk too much.

Proverbs 10:19 (NKJV)

In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, but he who restrains his lips is wise.

Proverbs 17:27–28 (NKJV)

He who has knowledge spares his words, and a man of understanding is of a calm spirit. Even a fool is counted wise when he holds his peace; when he shuts his lips, he is considered perceptive.

4. Do not brag or praise yourself.

Proverbs 25:6–7 (NKJV)

Do not exalt yourself in the presence of the king, and do not stand in the place of the great; for it is better that he say to you, “Come up here,” than that you should be put lower in the presence of the prince, whom your eyes have seen.

Proverbs 27:2 (NKJV)

Let another man praise you, and not your own mouth; a stranger, and not your own lips.

5. Do not respond to the words of a foolish person or those who scoff at God or His Word. Do not try to convince them you are right or argue with them.

Proverbs 9:8 (NKJV)

Do not correct a scoffer, lest he hate you; rebuke a wise man, and he will love you.

Proverbs 23:9 (NKJV)

Do not speak in the hearing of a fool, for he will despise the wisdom of your words.

Proverbs 26:4 (NKJV)

Do not answer a fool according to his folly, lest you also be like him.